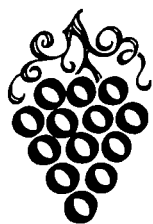


THE MODERN LANGUAGE BIBLE



*The New
Berkeley Version*

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*The New
Berkeley Version
in Modern English*

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in Modern English*

Revised Edition

A Completely New Translation From the
Original Languages With Informative Notes
to Aid the Understanding of the Reader

GERRIT VERKUYL, PH. D.
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



ZONDERVAN BIBLE PUBLISHERS
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The Modern Language Bible
The New Berkeley Version
in Modern English
Revised Edition

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PREFACE

This is not just another revision; it is a completely new translation. We have turned to the original languages of both Testaments, assured that "holy men from God spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." Neither is this a paraphrase, for that leads so readily to the infusion of human thought with divine revelation, to the confusion of the reader. Instead of paraphrasing, we offer brief notes, related to, but apart from, the inspired writings, to clarify and to give a sharper view of the message.

Throughout both Testaments we employ our language according to its choicest current usage. Even mention of weights, measures and monetary values is made in modern terms, so that the reader does not need to be a linguist to understand the information. As far as possible this is a complete translation of every word in the Bible.

We are in tune with the "Authorized Version" of 1611 in fidelity to the Messianic Promise, first made as soon as man had sinned, renewed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, narrowed to Judah's offspring and later to David's descendants. This promise remained the hope of the worshiping Hebrews, whose prophets stimulated their faith, and Jesus reminded the Emmaus pilgrims of it, "starting from Moses and through all the prophets . . . in all the Scriptures that referred to Himself." To be faithful to this everlasting Evangel we needed to be faithful to the original Scriptures. Where, in the Old Testament, Hebrew words were lacking or hard to decipher, we have made use of available Greek or Aramaic. Where the Old Testament is quoted in the New (taken from the Greek), the language may differ, but the thought is the same.

Hebraic scholars of various denominations, mostly professors of their respective seminaries, have labored diligently to prepare this Berkeley Version. Each translated portion has been reviewed by at least two other members of our staff but no translator is responsible for the work of any other translator. The responsibility remains with the translator, the editors and the publishers. The notes below the translation are not necessarily in every case those of the translator; some of these were supplied by the editor-in-chief and his assistants.

We are grateful for the cooperation of these men who were so unstintedly devoted to this exacting task, and we marvel at their endurance. We thank God that not one of them who started the work was laid aside by illness while the actual work of translation was in progress. It pleased the Lord, however, shortly before we went to press, to take unto Himself our esteemed friend and colleague, Dr. George L. Robinson.

With expectant joy and acknowledgment of our Father's sustaining grace we surrender the results of our endeavors to the readers of the Bible, supremely grateful to Him who first inspired its contents. We pray that this version may be instrumental in the fulfillment of God's purpose, a translation of His teachings into Christlike living. This will most amply reward our labors.

GERRIT VERKUYL

Berkeley, California, February 10, 1959

PREFACE TO THE 1969 EDITION

The Berkeley Version of the Bible has gained for the late Dr. Gerrit Verkuyl a place among the first rank of translators of the Bible into modern English. Its growing readership since the initial publication of the New Testament in 1945 bears witness to his success in combining freshness of expression with fidelity to the original Greek. The Berkeley Version of the Old Testament (1959), which was made by a staff of translators and consultants working under Dr. Verkuyl as editor-in-chief, exhibits the same characteristics of faithful rendering of the original texts into lively modern English that mark his New Testament. While some modern translations of the Scriptures tend to be paraphrases, this version of the Bible aims to achieve plain, up-to-date expression which reflects as directly as possible the meaning of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. As Professor F. F. Bruce says, "*The Berkeley Version of the whole Bible (1959) is the most outstanding among recent translations of both Testaments sponsored by private groups*" (*The Books and the Parchments*, Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963, pp. 236, 237).

Approximately twenty-five years have passed since The Berkeley New Testament first appeared in 1945. During this quarter century, the need for its revision has become evident. As is inevitable with any Bible translation — and perhaps most of all with a one-man version — idiosyncrasies and other matters requiring correction have come to light.

In response, therefore, to suggestions and criticisms, the publishers appointed three experienced Bible scholars to revise The Berkeley New Testament, namely, E. Schuyler English, Litt.D., chairman; Frank E. Gaebelcin, A.M., Litt.D.; and G. Henry Waterman, A.M., Ph.D. The present edition is the result of their work. While not a retranslation, the revision is a very extensive one. In making it, there was constant reference to the Greek. Recent findings of textual criticism were considered. Explanatory notes were not only revised but a great many new notes were added. Topical headings were in many cases rephrased.

This is still The Berkeley Version. It rests upon the foundation Dr. Verkuyl laid. Nevertheless, the numerous changes in the New Testament text, explanatory notes, and headings warrant calling this 1969 edition *The Modern Language Bible* — The New Berkeley Version in Modern English.

THE PUBLISHERS

THE STAFF OF OLD TESTAMENT TRANSLATORS

- Prof. Gleason L. Archer, B.D., Ph. D., Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena.
Prof. John W. Bailey, Ph.D., D.D., (Emeritus), Berkeley Baptist Divinity School.
Prof. David E. Culley, Ph.D., D.D., (Emeritus), Western Theological Seminary (Presbyterian), Pittsburgh.
Prof. Derward W. Deere, Th.D., Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, San Francisco.
Prof. Clyde T. Francisco, Ph.D., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
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Prof. William Sanford LaSor, Ph.D., Th.D., Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena.
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Prof. J. Barton Payne, Th.D., Trinity Theological Seminary (Evangelical Free Church), Chicago, and Wheaton College, Graduate Division.
Prof. George L. Robinson, Ph.D., S.T.D., (Emeritus) McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago.
Prof. Samuel J. Schultz, Th.D., Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.
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The Rev. Gerard Van Groningen, Th.M., Reformed Theological College, Geelong, Vict., Australia.
The Rev. Gerrit Verkuyl, Ph.D., D.D., (Emeritus) Presbyterian Board of Education, Berkeley, Calif.
Prof. Leon J. Wood, Th.M., Grand Rapids Baptist Theological Seminary and Bible Institute.
Prof. Martin J. Wyngaarden, B.D., Ph. D., Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids.

We desire also to express appreciation to others who gave their critical reading to portions of the manuscript and rendered valuable suggestions. Among these we include Prof. Dewey M. Beegle, Ph. D., Biblical Seminary of New York; Prof. Gerhard E. Lenski, Ph.D., Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, California; the Rev. Charles D. Krug, Th.M., San Francisco Theological Seminary (Presbyterian); the Rev. Sidney A. Hatch of Los Angeles; Prof. L. M. Farr, Baptist Bible College, San Francisco, who rendered valuable assistance twice a week over a period of many months; and to Mr. Robert E. Hink of Berkeley, whose special help contributed much to the project. Also to the Rev. Garrett Pars of Cleveland, Ohio, and the Rev. Peter De Jong of Seattle, Washington, who made valuable suggestions and criticisms on the basis of their reading portions of the manuscript, and to Mrs. Frances E. Siewert of Pasadena, California, who gave much valuable editorial assistance.

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Their Names and Order, and the Pages at Which They May Be Found

	Page		Page
Genesis	1	Ecclesiastes	670
Exodus	54	The Song of Solomon	679
Leviticus	97	Isaiah	686
Numbers	130	Jeremiah	743
Deuteronomy	179	Lamentations	807
Joshua	220	Ezekiel	815
Judges	248	Daniel	872
Ruth	275	Hosea	890
I Samuel	279	Joel	899
II Samuel	314	Amos	903
I Kings	347	Obadiah	910
II Kings	380	Jonah	912
I Chronicles	412	Micah	915
II Chronicles	445	Nahum	920
Ezra	483	Habakkuk	923
Nehemiah	494	Zephaniah	926
Esther	510	Haggai	929
Job	519	Zechariah	931
Psalms	547	Malachi	941
Proverbs	642		

The Names, Order and Pages of the Books of the New Testament
follow immediately after the above.

The Old Testament

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

IN THE BEGINNING^a GOD CREATED the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was formless and empty, and darkness lay upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.^b

³God said: Let there be light, and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵The light God called Day and the darkness He called Night. There was evening and there was morning, one day.

⁶God said: Let there be a firmament between the waters to divide waters from waters; ⁷so God made the firmament and separated the waters under the firmament from the waters above the firmament; and it was so. ⁸God called the firmament Heaven. There was evening and there was morning, a second day.

⁹God said: Let the waters under heaven be gathered into one place and let the dry land appear; and it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth and the gathering of the waters He called Seas, and God saw that it was good.

¹¹God said: Let the earth produce vegetation, various kinds of seed-bearing herbs and fruit-bearing trees with their respective seeds in the fruit upon the earth; and it was so. ¹²The earth produced vegetation, various kinds of seed-bearing herbs and fruit-bearing trees with their respective seeds in the fruit,

and God saw that it was good. ¹³There was evening and there was morning, a third day.

¹⁴God said: Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; let them be for markers of seasons, days and years, ¹⁵and for luminaries in the firmament of heaven to shed light upon the earth; and it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great luminaries, the greater light for ruling the day and the lesser light with the stars for ruling the night. ¹⁷God set them in heaven's firmament to shed light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule during the day and at night and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. ¹⁹There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

²⁰God said: Let the waters teem with shoals of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth along heaven's firmament. ²¹God also created the large sea-monsters, and all living, moving creatures with which the waters swarm according to their kind and every kind of winged bird. God saw that it was good ²²and God blessed them; He said: Be fruitful; multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let birds multiply on earth. ²³There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

²⁴God said: Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, livestock, reptiles and wild beasts after their

a) Attempts at dating that beginning are not promising. Estimates of a very old age for the earth and the universe are acceptable to many devout Bible students. Cf. Hebr. 11:3 [Gr. *aionas* — eon-old worlds].

b) The Spirit's moving over the deep suggests His life-giving forces at work in the processes of creation. We do well to read also John 1: 1-5 concerning earth's forming and Ps. 139: 14-16 regarding the human body.

kind; and it was so. ²⁵God made every kind of wild beasts and every kind of livestock and every kind of creeping things; and God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said: Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness^e, and let them bear rule over the fish in the sea, over the birds of the air, over the animals; over the whole earth and over all creeping things that crawl on the earth. ²⁷So God created man in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸God blessed them; God said to them: Be fruitful; multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; bear rule over the fish of the sea; over the birds of the air and over every living, moving creature on earth.^f

²⁹God further said: Behold, I have given you every seed-bearing plant over all the earth, and every fruit-tree, the fruit of which grows seed; it will be your food. ³⁰And to all the animals on earth, to all the birds of the air and to every living creature that creeps on the earth I have given the green vegetation for food; and it was so. ³¹God saw that everything He had made was excellent, indeed. There was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2 THUS THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH and all their host were completed.

²On the seventh day God ended His work which He had been doing; He rested on the seventh day from all the works He had accomplished. ³God also blessed the seventh day and consecrated it;^g because in it He rested from all His works, which, in creating, He had formed.

⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth in their creation.^h

⁵When the LORD God made earth and heaven, there was as yet not a shrub on the earth, nor any plant sprouting in the field; for the LORD God had not made

it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the soil; ⁶but a vapor used to rise from the earth to moisten all the surface of the ground. ⁷And the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul.

⁸The LORD God also planted a garden to the east in Eden, and there He placed the man whom He had formed. ⁹From the ground the LORD God caused to sprout every tree that is pleasing to the eye and good for food; the tree of life, too, in the center of the garden, and the tree of knowing good and evil.

¹⁰There also was a river flowing out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it was divided and became four rivers. ¹¹The first is named Pishon; it flows around all the land of Havilah,ⁱ where there is gold, ¹²high quality gold; aromatic gum, too, and onyx stone. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around all the land of Cush.^j ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris,^k which flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to care for it. ¹⁶The LORD God charged the man: You may eat freely from every tree in the garden; ¹⁷but do not eat from the tree of knowing good and evil; for the day you eat from it you will certainly die.

¹⁸The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a suitable helper, completing him. ¹⁹Out of the ground the LORD God had formed all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air and He brought them to Adam^l to see what he would call them and whatever Adam called a living creature that was its name. ²⁰So Adam gave names to all the domestic animals, to all the birds of the

e) Endowed with power of reasoning, emotion and will.

f) By discoveries and inventions man has gained mastery also over elements and forces of nature.

g) Sanctifying, consecrating, dedicating, all involve a setting apart for God.

h) An account of heaven and earth and what proceeded from them.

i) The Havilah country which the Pishon branch encircles is mentioned [Ch. 25: 18] as Ishmael's region; also I Sam. 15:7, as inhabited by Amalekites, descendants of Esau, both in the Arabian desert.

j) Here Mesopotamia, later always Ethiopia. k) Hebrew—Hiddekel.

l) Man and Adam are the same word in Hebrew.

air and to all the wild beasts; but for the man himself there was found no suitable helper.

²¹So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to overcome Adam, and as he slept He took one of his ribs and filled up the place with flesh. ²²From the rib He had taken from the man, God formed a woman and brought her to the man. ²³Adam said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of a man." ²⁴For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife and they shall become one flesh.^m ²⁵Both the man and his wife were naked and they felt no shame in each other's presence.

3 THE SERPENT, WILDEST OF ALL THE field animals the LORD God had made, said to the woman, "So, God has told you not to eat from any tree in the garden?" ²The woman answered the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the garden's trees; ³but about the fruit of the tree in the center of the garden God has said, 'You shall not eat of it or touch it, lest you die.'ⁿ"

⁴The serpent said to the woman, "No, you would not die at all! ⁵But God knows that whenever you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will, like gods, be knowing good and evil." ⁶The woman saw the tree as being good for food, delightful to the eye and a tree desirable to render one wise, so she took of its fruit and ate; she also gave to her husband, who ate with her. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened and they realized that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves skirts.^o

⁸In the cool of the day^p they heard the sound of the LORD God taking a

walk in the garden and the man and his wife hid themselves among the trees of the garden from the presence of the LORD God. ⁹Then the LORD God called out to the man;^q He said to him: Where are you? ¹⁰He said, "I heard Thy sound in the garden and I was afraid because I am naked; so I hid myself."

¹¹He asked: Who made you know that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I forbade you to eat? ¹²The man said, "The woman Thou gavest me for a companion, she gave me from the tree and I ate."^r

¹³The LORD God said to the woman: Just what have you done? The woman said, "The serpent tricked me and I ate."

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you will be most cursed of all domestic animals and of all wild beasts. You will crawl on your belly and eat dust all your life. ¹⁵Also I will put enmity between you and the woman; also between your offspring and her offspring; He will crush your head and you will crush his heel.^s

¹⁶To the woman He said: I will greatly increase your pregnancy-troubles; you will suffer birth-pangs; yet, you will be drawn to your husband and he will dominate you. ¹⁷And to Adam He said: Because you have yielded to your wife's suggestion and have eaten from the tree concerning which I gave you orders, Do not eat of it, cursed is the soil on your account; by toil you shall eat from it all your life. ¹⁸Thorns and thistles it shall grow for you and you must eat herbs of the field. ¹⁹In the sweat of your brow you must make a living until you return to the ground, because out of it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you shall return.

²⁰The man named his wife Eve,^t because she became the mother of every living person. ²¹And the LORD God

m) A principle so enduring that our Lord bases a vital argument on it.

n) In reply to Satan's mock inquiry Eve adds to God's charge as given in 2:17.

o) Their happy days of innocence were over; they were guilty, knew it and would cover it themselves.

p) The hour of twilight remains a choice season for spiritual recreation—quiet communion.

q) This, too, is an eternal principle: God wants His children back.

r) Blaming someone else is as old as humanity; it shows lack of repentance.

s) First promise of the Redeemer, Victor over sin and Satan.

t) Eve means life. The early language was not Hebrew, but as thoughts were conveyed from one tongue to another, so were names adjusted to carry their original meaning, either by altering the proper nouns or by adopting them with their original meaning into the Hebrew vocabulary.

made robes of skins for Adam and for his wife and clothed them.

²²The LORD God said: Obviously in knowing good and evil man has become like one of Us. Now then, he might reach out his hand to pluck and eat from the tree of life so as to live forever. ²³So the LORD God expelled him from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the soil from which he had been taken; ²⁴He drove out the man and placed cherubim east of the Eden garden with a flaming sword turning in every direction to guard the path to the tree of life.^u

4 ADAM KNEW^v HIS WIFE EVE. SHE conceived and bore Cain; she said, "I have gotten a man with the LORD's help." ²Next she gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel became a herder of flocks and Cain a tiller of the soil.

³In course of time Cain brought an offering to the LORD from the products of the soil, ⁴while Abel brought an offering from the firstlings of his flocks, especially from their fat portions. The LORD approved of Abel and his offering, ⁵but He did not approve of Cain and his offering. Then Cain's anger grew hot, and his face fell. ⁶The LORD asked Cain: Why are you angry, and why is your face downcast? ⁷If you do right, will there not be a lifting up? But if you misbehave, sin is crouching at the door; its intention is toward you, and you must master it.

⁸But Cain had words with his brother Abel, and when they were out in the field, Cain assaulted his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹Then the LORD asked Cain: Where is your brother Abel? He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

¹⁰He said: What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground, ¹¹and now you are cursed from the ground that has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood

from your hand. ¹²When you till the soil, it shall no longer yield its full produce for you. You will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.

¹³Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is worse than I can stand. ¹⁴See, Thou hast now driven me from the land, and I shall be hidden from Thy face. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." ¹⁵The LORD said to him: On the contrary, if anyone kills Cain, sevenfold vengeance shall be taken on him. The LORD then put a mark on Cain so that none who found him might kill him.

¹⁶Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. ¹⁷Cain knew his wife, who conceived and gave birth to Enoch.^w He also built a town, which he named Enoch after his son. ¹⁸To Enoch Irad was born; to Irad Mehujael, to Mehujael Methushael and to Methushael Lamech. ¹⁹Lamech took for himself two wives, named respectively Adah and Zillah. ²⁰Adah gave birth to Jabal, who became the father of all tent-dwellers and cattle men. ²¹His brother's name was Jubal, who became the father of all players on harp and flute. ²²As for Zillah, she bore Tubal-Cain, a smith who made all kinds of sharp tools of bronze and of iron. And Naamah was Tubal-Cain's sister. ²³Lamech declaimed to his wives Adah and Zillah:

"You, Adah and Zillah, do listen to my voice;

You consorts of Lamech, give ear to my speech;

For any who wounded me, him I have slain,

Also the young man, who gave me a scratch.

²⁴If Cain be awarded revenge sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold required."

²⁵Adam again knew his wife and she gave birth to a son, whom she named

u) Cherubs or cherubim is the plural of cherub.

v) "Knew" is correct translation, it suggests the most intimate relationship between man and woman.

w) Only those of Adam's household whose genealogy is recorded, are named. There were daughters; one of them became Cain's wife and another Seth's.

a) The name "father" is used of these pioneers, as Washington, Franklin, Edison, Marconi and other leaders and founders are so thought of today.

Seth,^b for "God has appointed for me another offspring in place of Abel, because Cain killed him."²⁶ To Seth in turn a son was born whom he named Enosh, in whose time people began to call on the name of the LORD.^c

5 THIS IS THE ROLL OF ADAM'S GENEALOGY: When God created man, He made him in God's likeness; ²He created them male and female. He blessed them and called them human at the time of their creation.^d ³Adam at 130 got a son in his image, after his likeness and named him Seth. ⁴After Seth's birth he lived 800 years and got sons and daughters. ⁵So, altogether Adam lived 930 years and he died.

⁶Seth at 105 got Enosh, ⁷and Seth lived 807 years after Enosh's birth and had sons and daughters; ⁸so altogether Seth lived 912 years and he died.

⁹At 90 Enosh got Kenan; ¹⁰then lived another 815 years and after Kenan's birth got sons and daughters, ¹¹so that in all Enosh lived 905 years. And he died. ¹²At 70 Kenan got Mahalalel, ¹³then lived 840 more years and after Mahalalel's birth got sons and daughters, ¹⁴so altogether Kenan lived 910 years and he died.

¹⁵Mahalalel at 65 got Jared; ¹⁶then lived another 830 years and after Jared's birth got sons and daughters; ¹⁷so in all Mahalalel lived 895 years, and he died.

¹⁸Jared at 162 got Enoch, ¹⁹then lived another 800 years; and after Enoch's birth got sons and daughters, ²⁰living in all 962 years and died.

²¹Enoch at 65 got Methuselah. ²²Enoch walked with God 300 years after Methuselah's birth and got sons and daughters; ²³so Enoch lived 365 years in all. ²⁴Enoch walked with God and he was not,^e for God took him.

²⁵When Methuselah was 187 La-

mech was born ²⁶and after Lamech's birth Methuselah lived 782 years and got sons and daughters; ²⁷so in all Methuselah lived 969 years and he died.

²⁸When Lamech was 182 a son was born to him ²⁹whom he named Noah. He said, "This one will comfort us about our work, our manual toil, due to the ground being cursed by the LORD."³⁰ After Noah's birth Lamech lived 595 years and got sons and daughters; ³¹so in all Lamech was 777 years old when he died.

³²After Noah was 500, Shem, Ham and Japheth were born.

6 WHEN THE EARTH BEGAN TO BE populated and daughters were born to the people, ²it developed that the sons of God took notice of the daughters of men, admired their looks and married all those of them whom they chose.³

³Then the LORD said, My Spirit shall not forever remain in man since he has gone astray; he is flesh,^h I will allow him another 120 years. ⁴There were giants on the earth in those days, and later, too, when the sons of God used to cohabit with the daughters of men, who bore them children, those mighty men of old who made a name. ⁵God saw that human wickedness was growing out of bounds on earth; that the intention of all human thinking produced nothing but evil all day.

⁶Then it was grief to the LORD ever having made man on the earth; He felt grieved at heart. ⁷The LORD said, I will wipe the human race I have created from the face of the earth, man and beast, reptile and birds of the air; for it is grief to Me that I have made them. ⁸But Noah found favor in the presence of the LORD.

⁹This is the Noah genealogy: Noah was an upright man, blameless among his fellow-men; Noah walked with

b) "Appointed" or "substituted."

c) Persons had worshiped, but with Enosh the gathering for public worship seems to have started.

d) As distinguished from the animals. f) No longer visible to human eyes [Heb. 11:5].

g) Some have it that this refers to fallen angels, but there is no Scripture evidence that they could become men with body and soul; nor, if they could, would wicked men be called "sons of God." We believe that the sons of Seth's family married daughters of Cain's family; that the home thus became ungodly and children grew up without relating life to God.

h) Flesh, as Adam spoke of it, was untainted. Now the word suggests weakness; in time it will mean human nature without God's Spirit.

God. ¹⁰Three sons were born to Noah — Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹¹But the earth had grown corrupted in God's sight; the earth was filled with lust for power. ¹²God looked at the earth and saw how degenerated it was; for all those living on the earth had perverted their way.

¹³God said to Noah: I see the end of all humanity,¹ for through them the earth is filled with lust for power. Take notice! I am about to destroy them and the earth with them. ¹⁴Make you an ark of resinous wood; build rooms in it and overspread it inside and out with pitch. ¹⁵Construct it after this fashion: The length of the ark 450 feet; its width 75 feet and its depth 45 feet. ¹⁶Put an 18-inch opening in the ark all around just below the upper deck and a gangway in the side of the ark. Make it with lower, middle and upper decks. ¹⁷Understand that I Myself am about to bring a water-deluge on the earth to exterminate from under heaven all flesh that has the breath of life in it; everything on earth shall perish. ¹⁸But with you I do establish My covenant; you will board the ark, and your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives along with you. ¹⁹You must also have a pair of every kind of all living creatures enter the ark, to keep them alive with you — a male and a female ²⁰of the various kinds of the birds, of the beasts and of the creatures creeping on the ground, two of each kind shall come to you to keep them alive. ²¹Collect and store enough suitable food too, for you and for them to eat. ²²And Noah did so; he carried out God's orders.

7 THE LORD SAID TO NOAH: COME into the ark, you and your whole family, because you alone in this entire generation have I found upright in My presence. ²Of each clean animal^j take seven pairs, male and female, and of the unclean, two, a male and a female; ³so of the birds of the air seven

pairs each to keep their kind alive over the whole earth. ⁴For after seven more days I will make it to rain upon the earth for forty days and nights and I will blot off the face of the earth every existing thing that I have made.

⁵Noah carried out all the LORD's orders; ⁶he was 600 years old when the deluge of waters overwhelmed the earth. ⁷Noah boarded the ark with his sons, his wife and his sons' wives, ahead of the flood-waters. ⁸Pairs of clean and of unclean animals, of birds and of all that creep on the ground, ⁹both male and female, came into the ark to Noah, as God had commanded, ¹⁰until at the end of the seven days the deluge came upon the earth.

¹¹In Noah's 600th year, the seventeenth of the second month, that very day all the fountains of the great deep broke through and all the sluices of heaven were opened up; ¹²the rains gushed down upon the earth for 40 days and 40 nights. ¹³This is the date on which Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth, his sons, also Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons along with them boarded the ark — ¹⁴they and every kind of wild beast, of domestic animals, of every creature that creeps on the earth, and of winged bird. ¹⁵Of all living, breathing creatures they came to Noah in the ark two by two, male and female, as God had ordered him. ¹⁶Then the LORD closed the entrance behind him.

¹⁷For 40 days the flooding continued on the earth. The waters mounted and lifted the ark so that it rose from the ground^k ¹⁸and still the waters kept mounting on the earth with overwhelming volume, while the ark floated on top of the waters. ¹⁹Higher and higher the waters rose over the earth, gaining the upper hand until all the high mountains under heaven were covered. ²⁰More than 20 feet above them the waters rose so that the mountains were covered, ²¹and every living creature that moved on earth — birds,

i) Literally, flesh, which at times in these early chapters includes the whole animal world.

j) Clean and unclean are carefully distinguished later in Mosaic law and ritual.

k) The floating structure is rightly called "ark" because it was no sailing ship; it had no destination at some harbor. It was probably built with square corners, simply to float.

cattle, wild beasts, swarming things and men, ²²everything that had breath and lived on dry land perished. ²³He destroyed from the face of the earth every existing thing from man to beast and creeping thing and birds of the air. Only Noah and those with him in the ark remained alive. ²⁴For 150 days the waters covered the earth.

8 BUT GOD KEPT NOAH IN MIND WITH all the animals and all the livestock with him in the ark; God caused a wind to blow over the earth until the waters subsided. ²Besides, the fountains of the deep and the sluices of heaven were closed and the gushing rains from heaven were checked. ³Steadily the waters moved back from the earth, going down at the end of the 150 days.

⁴So, on the seventeenth of the seventh month the ark grounded on the Ararat mountain range, ⁵and gradually the waters kept lowering until on the first of the tenth month the mountain-tops were seen.

⁶After another forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark ⁷and released a raven that flew back and forth until the waters had dried off the earth. ⁸He also released a dove to find out how well the waters had drained from the ground-surface; ⁹but as the dove found no roost to put her foot-sole¹ on, she came back to him into the ark; for there was water all over the earth; so he put out his hand, caught her and drew her back to him into the ark. ¹⁰After waiting seven days more, he again sent the dove from the ark ¹¹and about twilight the dove returned, and look, there was a freshly plucked olive-leaf in her beak. Then Noah knew that the waters were draining off the earth. ¹²Yet another seven days he waited, then let the dove go out; but she did not return to him any more.

¹³In the 601st year,^m the first of the

first month, the waters had dried off the earth. Noah removed the ark's covering, looked out, and behold, the surface of the ground was dry. ¹⁴On the twenty-seventh of the next month the earth was thoroughly dried ¹⁵and God told Noah: ¹⁶Leave the ark, you, your wife, your sons and your sons' wives along with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living creature you have there, birds, livestock, creeping creatures of the earth, bring them out with you, so they may breed freely on the earth. Let them be fruitful and multiply on the earth. ¹⁸So Noah went out with his sons, his wife and his sons' wives; ¹⁹every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, everything that moves on the earth, they all came out of the ark by their families.

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took from all clean animals and from all clean birdsⁿ and offered burnt offerings on the altar, ²¹and as the LORD discerned the pleasing fragrance, He said within Himself: I will never again curse the ground on man's account, because he is evil-minded from his youth, neither will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. ²²So long as the earth remains, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not fail.^o

9 GOD BLESSED NOAH AND HIS SONS and told them: Be fruitful, multiply and populate the earth. ²The fear of you and the dread of you shall come upon every animal of the earth, every bird of the air, all that crawls on the ground and all the fish of the sea; they are handed over into your power. ³Every living, moving thing shall be yours for food; I have given it all to you like the vegetables. ⁴However, you must not eat flesh with its life — that is, its blood — in it.^p ⁵I will require full satisfaction for your life-blood from every animal and from every person;

1) The raven, of the crow family, preferred to be alone; the dove, of a more social nature, preferred shelter and company.

m) The age of Noah, or of the Noah House, or both.

n) The Lord is not indifferent about the quality of the gifts we bring Him.

o) A fresh start for the human race, with divine grace abounding.

p) This prohibition was carried over into the Christian Church at the Jerusalem Council, Acts 15:20, 29.

from every man's brother will I require satisfaction for a person's life. ⁶Whoever sheds a person's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; because God made man in His likeness.^a ⁷As for you, be fruitful and multiply; swarm over the earth and multiply in it.

⁸God said to Noah and his sons with him: ⁹Take note! I Myself am establishing My covenant with you, with your descendants ¹⁰ and with every living creature, whether bird, livestock or wild beast—along with you, of all that left the ark, even every creature on earth. ¹¹I covenant^c with you that neither shall all flesh again be eliminated by the waters of a flood, nor shall there be another deluge to destroy the earth.

¹²God further said: This is the sign of the covenant I am making between Me and you and every living thing along with you through all successive generations. ¹³I will set My bow in the clouds; it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴When I collect My clouds above the earth, then the bow shall appear in the clouds ¹⁵and I will remember My covenant that exists between Me and you and every living creature of every kind of flesh.^s Never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh; ¹⁶the bow shall be in the clouds; I shall look upon it to remember the eternal covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh on the earth. ¹⁷This, said God to Noah, is the sign of the covenant I have set up between Me and every living creature on earth.

¹⁸The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth, Ham being the father of Canaan; ¹⁹of these three sons of Noah the whole earth was populated. ²⁰Noah began his farming with planting a vineyard, but ²¹when he drank of its wine, he became intoxicated and lay

uncovered inside his tent. ²²Then Ham, Canaan's father, saw his father uncovered and told his two brothers outside; ²³but Shem and Japheth got a robe, laid it on their shoulders and, walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness, keeping their faces turned the other way, so they did not witness their father's shame. ²⁴When Noah awoke from his wine, knowing how his youngest son had treated him, ²⁵he exclaimed, "Cursed be Canaan!^t May he be a servant of servants to his brothers." ²⁶He then added, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem" and may Canaan be his servant. ²⁷May God make Japheth so great that he shall dwell in Shem's tents; and may Canaan be their servant."

²⁸After the deluge Noah lived 350 years; ²⁹so Noah lived in all 950 years. And he died.

10 THESE ARE THE DESCENDANTS OF Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth and the sons born to them after the flood. ²The sons of Japheth — Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan,^v Tubal, Meshech and Tiras.

³The sons of Gomer — Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah.

⁴The sons of Javan — Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Rodanim; ⁵by these the coastlands of the gentiles were populated in their separate territories, each with its respective language, its tribes and nations.

⁶The sons of Ham — Cush, Mizraim,^w Put and Canaan. ⁷The sons of Cush — Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah — Sheba and Dedan.

⁸To Cush Nimrod was born, the first on earth to become a despot. ⁹He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore the proverb, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord." ¹⁰He began his kingdom with Babel;

q) This command has remained the basis for capital punishment, with our likeness to God as the reason back of it. Reverence for blood was strengthened by its use for atoning sacrifices [Lev. 17: 11].

r) This is the first mention of God making a covenant

s) To the worshiper of God the rainbow still says: "God is faithful; trust Him."

t) Canaan seems to have first noticed his grandfather and to have told his father Ham with glee; then in the same disrespectful spirit, Ham told his brothers; who reacted with proper decorum.

u) Beginning with Abraham and moving on to Jesus Christ, salvation was brought to earth through Shemites.

v) Javan moved westward into Europe [Isa. 66:19], including Ionians or Greeks. Kittim is Cyprus and Rodanim is Rhodes.

w) Mizraim denotes Egypt, and Cush, Ethiopia.

then Erech, Accad and Calneh in the Shinar country.² ¹¹From there he extended his reign to Assyria, building Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah ¹²and Resen between Nineveh and Calah, the great city.⁷

¹³To Mizraim were born the Ludim,² the Anamin, the Lehabim, the Naphtuhim, ¹⁴the Pathrusim, the Casluhim — from whom the Philistines came — and the Caphtorim.

¹⁶To Canaan were born, first Sidon, then Heth; ^{16a}also the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Girgashite, ¹⁷the Hivite, the Arkite, the Sinite, ¹⁸the Arvadite, the Zemarite and the Hamathite. Later the Canaanite clans spread abroad, ¹⁹so that the Canaanite territory reached from Zidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim as far as Lasha. ²⁰These are Ham's descendants by clans, languages, lands and nations.

²¹Shem, too, ancestor of all the Hebrews and brother of Japheth, the oldest had offspring. ²²Shem's sons are Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram; ²³Aram's sons — Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴Arpachshad was father to Shelah and Shelah to Eber.^a

²⁵Eber had two sons, one was named Peleg, because in his day the earth was divided; and his brother was named Joktan. ²⁶To Joktan were born Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, ²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab.^b All these were the sons of Joktan; ³⁰they lived from Mesha toward Sephar and on eastward to the mountains.

³¹These are Shem's descendants by clans, dialects, lands and nations. ³²These are the family divisions of Noah's sons by peoples from whom

the nations dispersed over the earth after the flood.

11 IT CAME ABOUT WHEN THE whole earth used one language and the same words ²that in moving in the East they came upon a plain in the Shinar territory and there they settled. ³They said to one another, "Come on! Let us mold bricks and thoroughly bake them"; so they had brick for stone and asphalt for mortar. ⁴Then they said, "Come on! Let us build a city for ourselves with a tower whose top reaches into the heavens. Let us make ourselves famous; else we shall be scattered all over the earth."

⁵Then the LORD came down to take a look at the city and the tower which the sons of men were building.^c ⁶The LORD said: Look! One people and all with one language! The way they are starting to behave, nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and so confuse their speech that they cannot make out each other's words. ⁸Thus the LORD dispersed them from there over the whole face of the earth. They quit building the city, ⁹which accordingly was called Babel.^d because there the LORD confused the whole world's language and from there the LORD scattered them over the whole face of the earth.

¹⁰These are Shem's descendants: when Shem was 100, Arpachshad was born to him, two years after the flood and, after Arpachshad's birth ¹¹Shem lived 500 years, getting sons and daughters. ¹²Arpachshad at 35 got Shelah ¹³and lived 403 years after Shelah's birth,^e getting sons and daughters. ¹⁴At 30 Shelah got Eber ¹⁵and he lived 403 years after Eber's birth, getting

x) In the Babylonian Plain.

y) Four towns together seem to be thought of as a great city, with the first superior until together they became Greater Nineveh.

z) The names ending with -im, signify peoples named after personal ancestors. The same is true of the next series of names, ending with -ite.

a) Arpachshad and Eber are specially mentioned because through them Abraham will be traced. It is also thought that Eber gave the name to the Hebrews.

b) Joktan, obviously, was a polygamist. His sons Ophir and Havilah moved southward, where "the gold of Ophir" was dug; while Havilah was mentioned in relation to the streams that came out from Eden.

c) While God is everywhere, as the sacred writer well knew, He paid at that time particular attention to this earthly attempt. d) Balale—confused.

e) Luke 3:36 mentions Cainan as Shelah's father and Arphaxad's son, from Gen. 11:13 in the Greek translation (the Septuagint) which adds "and Cainan lived 130 years and begat Shelah"—a number of years omitted in Ussher's chronology. Cainan (or his House) lived 460 years altogether.

sons and daughters. ¹⁶Eber, at 34 got Peleg ¹⁷and lived 430 years after Peleg's birth, getting sons and daughters. ¹⁸Peleg at 30 got Reu. ¹⁹After Reu's birth Peleg lived 209 years, getting sons and daughters. ²⁰At 32 Reu got Serug ²¹and after Serug's birth Reu lived 207 years, getting sons and daughters. ²²Serug at 30 got Nahor ²³and lived 200 years after Nahor's birth, getting sons and daughters. ²⁴When Nahor was 29, Terah was born to him. ²⁵Nahor lived 119 years after Terah's birth, getting sons and daughters.

²⁶Terah lived 70 years and got Abram, Nahor and Haran. ²⁷This is the Terah genealogy: Abram, Nahor and Haran were born to Terah and Lot was born to Haran; ²⁸ but Haran died in his father Terah's presence in his native land at Chaldean Ur.

²⁹Both Abram and Nahor married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran to whom Milcah and Iscah were born. ³⁰But Sarai was sterile; she remained childless. ³¹Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they migrated together from Chaldean Ur, to move into the land of Canaan; but when they got as far as Haran^f they settled there. ³²At Haran, Terah died at the age of 205.

2091 B.C.g

12 THE LORD SAID TO ABRAM: AS for you, leave your land, your relatives and your father's household for a land which I will show you, ²and I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make your name famous and you shall be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you and upon him who insults you I will put

My curse. Also in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.^h ⁴So Abram took his departure as the LORD had told him and Lotⁱ went with him. Abram was 75 when he left Haran ⁵and he took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot as well as the possessions they had secured and the personnel they had obtained in Haran and moved out to migrate to the land of Canaan, and to the land of Canaan they came.

⁶Abram kept moving through the land as far as the Shechem locality, to the terebinth^j tree of Moreh — the Canaanite then living in the land. ⁷But the LORD appeared to Abram and said: To your offspring I will give this land. There he built an altar to the LORD who had appeared to him. ⁸He then moved on to the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent with Bethel west and Ai east of him. There he also built an altar to the LORD and called on the LORD's name.^k ⁹Then Abram traveled on, continuing toward the southland.^l

¹⁰When a famine visited the country, Abram went down to Egypt to stay there a while, because the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹As he was approaching Egypt, he said to Sarai, his wife, "See here! I know you are a good-looking woman. ¹²When the Egyptians catch sight of you, they will say, 'This is his wife'; then they will kill me, but retain you alive. ¹³I want you to say you are my sister,^m so that I may be favored on your account and, because of you, my life will be spared."

¹⁴As soon as Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians noticed how rarely beautiful a woman she was. ¹⁵Pharaoh's nobles noticed her too and highly commended her to Pharaoh;ⁿ so the woman was taken to Pharaoh's palace. ¹⁶On her account he treated Abram with

f) Probably named for the son and brother who had died.

g) Vs. 5 informs us of Abraham's age in 2091 B.C., which puts Abraham's birth in 2166, born when Terah was 130. Ch. 11:26 refers to the start of Terah's fatherhood, only one of the three sons being born in 2226, when Terah was 70.

h) In God's friend Abraham, in the godly nation and supremely in Christ.

i) Abram became Lot's guardian at Haran and Terah's death.

j) Not an oak, but yielding a fine quality of turpentine.

k) Name stood for personality; he communed with God.

l) The southern region of Canaan became known as the Negeb, which means the southland, still called the Negeb, or Negev.

m) It was a half-truth, for Sarai was the daughter of Terah by another wife. [Ch. 20:12].

n) "Pharaoh" was a title rather than a name, so that "the pharaoh" would be correct. Hence its recurrence throughout our sacred Writings.

generosity, giving to him flocks, herds, donkeys, male and female slaves, she-donkeys and camels. ¹⁷But the LORD struck Pharaoh and his household with serious diseases because of Sarai, Abram's wife. ¹⁸So Pharaoh summoned Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not let me know she is your wife?" ¹⁹Why did you say, 'She is my sister' so that I took her for a wife? Look, here is your wife; take her and get out!" ²⁰Pharaoh ordered an escort for him, to conduct him away with his wife and everything he had.

13 **ABRAM WITH HIS WIFE AND** all he possessed and Lot along with him, went up from Egypt to the southland, ²extremely rich in livestock, in silver and in gold. ³From the Negeb he traveled by stages as far as Bethel, ⁴to the place where previously his tent had been, between Bethel and Ai, to the spot where at first he had built the altar, and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

⁵But Lot, who traveled with Abram, had flocks, too, and herds and tents of his own, ⁶and their possessions so increased that the country could not support the two of them while they stayed together, ⁷so that conflict developed between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and those of Lot's. The Canaanite and the Perizzite were then living in the land.

⁸Abram said to Lot, "Please, let there be no disputing between me and you or between my herdsmen and yours, for we are kinsmen. ⁹Is not the whole country open to you? I wish you might separate yourself from me, if to the left then I will turn to the right, or if to the right then I will turn to the left."

¹⁰Lot took a good look and saw how well watered the whole Jordan district

was—before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—as far as Zoar, like the LORD's garden^p, like the land of Egypt. ¹¹So Lot chose the whole Jordan basin for himself. As Lot moved eastward they separated from each other, ¹²Abram living in the Canaan country^q and Lot in the basin cities. He moved his tent as far as Sodom; ¹³but the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked; flagrant sinners against the LORD.

¹⁴After Lot had detached himself from Abram, the LORD said to Abram: Now raise your eyes and look from where you stand northward, southward, eastward and westward, ¹⁵for all the land you are viewing I will give you and your offspring forever. ¹⁶I will make your descendants as countless as the dust of the earth, so that, if anyone is able to count the dust particles by number, so may your offspring be numbered. ¹⁷Rise! Traverse the land in its length and in its breadth, for to you will I give it. ¹⁸Abram then moved his tent and came to live at the Mamre terebinths near Hebron and there he built an altar to the LORD.

2091 B.C.?

14 **IN THE DAYS OF AMRAPHEL,** king of Shinar; Arioch, king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of nations,^r ²these kings made war against Bera, king of Sodom; Birsha, king of Gomorrah; Shinarab, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboim and the king of Belah, that is of Zoar. ³All these forces met in the Siddim valley which is now the Salt Sea.

⁴For twelve years they had been subject to Chedorlaomer; in the thirteenth year they revolted ⁵and in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer approached with the allied kings. They conquered the Rephaim^s at Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim at Ham, the Emim in the

o) So it is well for us at times to return to places where once God met with us.

p) Almost certainly referring to the Garden of Eden. q) Abram, older and mightier, stepped back for his nephew Lot.

r) Here sacred and secular history meet and dating becomes more feasible. Shinar corresponds to Babylonia [Dan. 1:2; Isa. 11:11; Zech. 5:11] though Amraphel is not to be identified with Hammurabi, king of Babel, who reigned about 1728-1686. Eriaku, king of Larsa, may have been Arioch. Chedorlaomer-Kudurlagamar—means "Servant of Lagamar," an Elamite god. Tidal, king of nations, has been identified as Tudhul, king of Gutium, located north-east of Babylonia.

s) The Rephaim were of gigantic stature [Deut. 2:11,20; Josh. 17:17; II Sam. 21:16]. The Zuzim or Zamzuzini were their kin [Deut. 2:20]; so the Emim were tall as the Anakim [Deut. 2:9,11]. The Horites [Gen. 36:20] were destroyed by the Edomites [Deut. 2:12,22]. They carved rooms out of sheer rocks, stories above one another.

Kiriathaim plain, ⁶ and the Horites in their Seir mountain range as far as El-Paran, near the desert. ⁷Turning there, they came to En-Mishpat — that is Kadesh — and sacked the whole Amalekite region^t and the Amorites who lived at Hazazon-Tamar.

⁸Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboim and the king of Bela — that is Zoar — marched out in battle-formation against them in the Siddim valley — ⁹against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; Tidal, king of nations; Amraphel, king of Shinar; and Arioch, king of Ellasar — four kings against five. ¹⁰Now the Siddim valley was full of tar pits, so, when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah took to flight, they fell there, while the rest fled to the mountains. ¹¹The victors took all the wealth and all the provisions of Sodom and Gomorrah and moved on; ¹²they also captured Lot, Abram's nephew, who lived in Sodom, his goods too, and decamped.

¹³But one who had escaped, came to Abram the Hebrew and told him; for he was living by the terebinths of Mamre, the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol and of Aner, who were allies of Abram.^u ¹⁴When Abram learned that his kinsman had been captured, he mustered his trained men, born in his household, 318 of them, and marched in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵Dividing his force against them by night, he and his men defeated the enemy and chased them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. ¹⁶He recaptured all the loot and brought back his kinsman Lot and his possessions with the women and the people. ¹⁷Upon his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and his royal allies, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Shaveh valley — the King's vale. ¹⁸Melchizedek, too, king of Salem and priest to God Most High, brought out food and wine. ¹⁹He also blessed him, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High,

Possessor of heaven and earth," ²⁰and blessed be God Most High who has delivered your oppressors into your hand." Then he^v gave him a tithe of everything.

²¹The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Allow me the persons and you keep the goods for yourself," ²²but Abram answered the king of Sodom, "I lift up my hand to the LORD God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, ²³that I will not receive one thread or sandal-strap from anything of yours so that you may never say, 'I made Abram rich'; ²⁴nothing except what the young men who marched with me have consumed, and the portion to which my allies, Aner, Eshcol and Mamre are entitled; let them take their share."^w

15 FOLLOWING THESE EVENTS THE word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: Have no fear, Abram; I am your Shield; your reward is marvelously rich. ²Abram said, "O, LORD God, what canst Thou give me, since I am ending life childless and my heir is this Eliezer of Damascus." ³Abram further said, "See, Thou hast given me no offspring and, consider, one belonging to my household will be heir to me." ⁴Then the LORD's message to him was: This one shall not be your heir; your heir will be born from your own body. ⁵Then He conducted him outdoors and said: Now look toward the heavens and count the stars, if you can number them. So, He told him, shall your offspring be. ⁶He believed in the LORD, who accounted it for him as righteousness. ⁷Then He said to him: I am the LORD who brought you from Chaldean Ur to give you this land to possess.

⁸"LORD God," he said, "in what way can I be assured it will be mine?"^x ⁹He said; Get Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtle dove and a young pigeon. ¹⁰All these he got himself and cut them into halves, then laid the halves opposite each other; but the

t) Later possessed by Amalekites, who were descendants of Esau.

u) Abram had achieved enough prominence to form alliance with native chiefs and was glad to secure such friendship to protect his increasing livestock.

v) Abram gave Melchizedek the tithe, because as priest he represented God.

w) Abram did not demand from his allies the loyalty to God that motivated him.

x) Complete faith did not come easily to Abram.

birds he did not divide. ¹¹And when birds of prey swooped down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²About sunset a deep sleep overcame Abram and a horror of dense darkness got hold of him. ¹³Then He said to Abram: You will know with certainty that your descendants shall be aliens in a land not theirs for 400 years, working for those who shall oppress them. ¹⁴In turn I will punish the nation they shall be serving and afterward they will come away with ample wealth. ¹⁵As for yourself, you will join your fathers in peace; you will be buried in ripe old age. ¹⁶But they will come back here in the fourth generation^y; for the wickedness of the Amorites is not yet brim full.

¹⁷When the sun had set and dense darkness had come, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch passing between those pieces. ¹⁸At that time the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: To your descendants I will give this country from the river of Egypt^z to the Great River, the river Euphrates — ¹⁹the Kenite, the Kenizite, the Kadmonite, ²⁰the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Raphaim, ²¹the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite and the Jebusite.

2081 B.C.

16 SARAI, ABRAM'S WIFE, BORE him no children, but she had an Egyptian maid named Hagar. ²So Sarai said to Abram, "See here! The LORD has prevented me from bearing. Do go in to my maid; perhaps I may build up (a family) through her." Abram listened to Sarai's voice ³and Sarai, Abram's wife, took her maid Hagar, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram for a wife. That was after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan for ten years.

⁴He went in to Hagar and she conceived; but as soon as she realized that

she had conceived, she looked down on her mistress. ⁶Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the injury I suffer come home to you. I entrusted my maid to your bosom and as soon as she found herself with child she looked down on me. Let the LORD do justice between me and you." ⁶Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid is in your power; handle her as you please." Then Sarai treated her harshly until she ran away from her. ⁷The Angel of the LORD found her near the spring of water in the desert, by the fountain on the way to Shur^a and He said: Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?

She said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." ⁹Then the Angel of the LORD told her: Go back to your mistress and humble yourself under her authority. ¹⁰The Angel of the LORD added: I will greatly increase your descendants beyond all counting, they will be so numerous. ¹¹The Angel of the LORD, further said: Take note, you are with child and you will give birth to a son, whom you will name Ishmael,^b because the LORD has noticed your harsh treatment. ¹²He will become a wild-ass of a man, his hand against every one and every one's hand against him and he shall live over against all his kindred.^c

¹³She called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "Thou seeing God," for she said, "Have I not looked after the One who looked on me?" ¹⁴She named the well, therefore, "Well of the living One who sees me."^d It is located between Kadesh and Bered. ¹⁵Hagar bore Abram a son and Abram named his son whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ¹⁶Abram was 86 when Hagar bore him Ishmael.^e

Early 2067 B.C.

17 WHEN ABRAM WAS 99 THE LORD appeared to Abram and

y) Cycle of age or generation reckoned by the 100 years which was the productive life span of healthy persons.

z) Probably "The River of Egypt," halfway between Philistia and Egypt, a stream that served as southern boundary of Palestine; but the Hebrew word "nabar," used for the Euphrates, too, renders possible the Nile, a few miles east of which the desert began. Then the north-eastern boundaries of Egypt would be the western boundaries of Israel southward.

a) Wall, fortification, along the east border of Egypt. b) God hears.

c) He speaks as the Lord Himself. We believe Him to be the Son of God — the Word.

d) Heb. Beer-Lohai-Roi. e) All Arabians accepting Moslem instructions, claim descent from Ishmael.

told him: I am God Almighty; live in my presence and be upright. ²I will make My covenant between Me and you and I will in a most unusual way multiply you. ³Abram fell on his face while God continued speaking to him: ⁴As for Me, My covenant is with you and you will be ancestor to many nations. ⁵Your name shall no longer be Abram but your name shall become Abraham, because I have designated you a father of many nations; ⁶I will render you extremely fruitful. ⁷Out of you I will make nations and from you kings shall spring. ⁸I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants in their successive generations for an everlasting covenant, to be your God and your offspring's after you. ⁹To you and to your descendants after you I will give the country to which you have migrated — the whole Canaanite country — for an everlasting possession; I will be their God.

⁹Therefore, God said to Abraham: You must keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you in their respective generations ¹⁰and this is My covenant between Me and you and your children after you, which you must observe: Every male of you shall be circumcised; ¹¹you must circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; it shall be for a covenant sign between Me and you. ¹²Eight days after his birth every boy born to you throughout your generations shall be circumcised, whether he be of your family circle or bought with money from any outsiders and not of your own offspring; ¹³without exception, home-born or bought with money, he must be circumcised. ¹⁴So shall My covenant be marked in your flesh, a never-ending covenant. ¹⁵The uncircumcised male, the flesh of whose foreskin is not circumcised, that person shall be eliminated from his people; he has broken My covenant.

¹⁶God said to Abraham: As for Sarai, your wife, do not call her Sarai, for her name shall be Sarah; ¹⁷I will bless

her, yes, and give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she shall become a mother of nations and from her kings of peoples shall spring.

¹⁷Abraham fell on his face and laughed, saying to himself, "Shall a child be born to a centenarian, or can Sarah bear at ninety?" ¹⁸So Abraham said to God, "O, that Ishmael might live before Thee!" ¹⁹But God said: No, but Sarah, your wife, is about to bear you a son and you will name him Isaac. ²⁰With him, too, I will establish My covenant as an everlasting covenant for his children after him. ²¹I have also heard you regarding Ishmael and will indeed bless him, and render him fruitful. I will multiply him immensely; he will be ancestor to twelve princes and I will set him up for a great nation. ²²But My Covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear you this season next year.

²³When God had ended speaking with him, He ascended from Abraham ²⁴and Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the males born in his household; also those bought with his money, every male from his communal group, and on that very day circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, as God had told him. ²⁵Abraham was circumcised at 99 in the flesh of his foreskin ²⁶and his son Ishmael at thirteen. ²⁷Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised that same day, ²⁸and so were all the males of his household with him, those home-born and those purchased for money from the stranger.

Late 2067 B.C.

18 THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM BY the Mamre terebinths as he was sitting in the tent-door when the day was hot. ¹He looked up and saw three men standing opposite him. On seeing them, he ran from the tent-door to meet them, and bowing to the ground, ²he said, "My master, if you would do me a favor, then, please do not pass your servant by. ³I beg of you, let us have a little water brought, to

f) Abram-exalted father; Abraham — father of a multitude.

g) Not without hygienic value, too, especially during adolecent years.

h) Laughter, for both Abraham and Sarah laughed in view of the apparently impossible prospect; and at his birth they laughed [21:6]. i) Any time from 12 to 3:00 p.m.

wash your feet. Recline under the tree ⁵while I get a bite of bread so you may refresh yourselves; then you may go on; for this you surely came by your servant."

They said, "Do as you have said." ⁶So Abraham hurried to the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, bring three pecks of fine meal; knead it and bake cakes." ⁷Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf tender and good and gave it to the servant who dressed it in short order. ⁸He then took curds, milk and the prepared veal, placed it before them and stood by them under the tree, while they ate.

⁹They asked him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" He said, "There in the tent." ¹⁰Then He said,^j Without fail I shall come back to you at the reviving season and, see, Sarah, your wife will have a son.

Now Sarah was listening in at the tent door behind Him, ¹¹and since Abraham and Sarah were aged, well advanced in years, and the custom of women had ceased with Sarah, ¹²she laughed to herself, saying, "Connubial enjoyment for me, worn out as I am; and my master aged, too?" ¹³The LORD asked Abraham: Why did Sarah laugh just then, saying, "How could I possibly bear a child, old as I am?" ¹⁴Is anything beyond the LORD's reach? At the appointed time^k I will return to you, at the reviving season and Sarah will have a son. ¹⁵Feeling afraid, Sarah made denial, "I did not laugh." He said: No, but you did laugh.

¹⁶The men got up from there, looking toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to direct their way. ¹⁷Then the LORD said, Am I hiding from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸whereas Abraham will certainly become a great and powerful nation, and all the nations on earth shall be blessed through him? ¹⁹For I have known him, so that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the

way of the LORD, doing what is right and fair, so that the LORD may bestow upon Abraham what He has told him.

²⁰Then the LORD said: The Sodom and Gomorrah outcry is loud and their sin is very grievous. ²¹I will now go down and see whether their behavior is like the outcry that has reached Me; and if not, I will know.^l

²²Then the men turned and went on to Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³Abraham came closer and said, "Wilt Thou wipe out the good too, with the bad?" ²⁴There are perhaps fifty good persons in the city; wilt Thou indeed wipe out and not pardon the community because of the fifty good people among them? ²⁵Far be it from Thee to do such a thing, to slay the good with the bad, to treat righteous and wicked alike. Far be it from Thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"

²⁶The LORD said: If I find within the city of Sodom fifty righteous, then I will grant pardon to the whole place for their sake.

²⁷Abraham replied, "I am aware that I have undertaken to speak to the LORD although I am but dust and ashes; ²⁸perchance there will be five lacking of the fifty righteous, wilt Thou for five destroy the entire city?" If I find there forty-five, He said, I will not destroy it.^m

²⁹Once more he spoke to Him, "Perchance forty will be found there." And He said, For the sake of the forty I will take no action.

³⁰He said, "Let not the LORD be angry, so that I may speak; perhaps there will be thirty found there." He said, I will not act, if I find thirty there.

³¹He said, "Thou seest that I am undertaking to speak to the LORD; perchance twenty shall be found there." And He said, I will not destroy it for the twenty's sake.

³²He said, "Let not the LORD be

j) Again this is the Lord Himself, ultimately to come as the Messiah.

k) Appointment made, Ch. 17:21. God may have thought so within Himself, as some surmise, but more likely He expressed Himself to Abraham. Abraham's walk with Him was evidence of hospitality, observed in Eastern lands more than here.

l) God sent his messengers to Sodom; He knew the measure of their wickedness.

m) Our Lord's teaching on prayer [Lk. 11:5-13; 18:1-8], is in line with Abraham's persistence and God's patient response.

angry, so that I may speak once more. Perchance ten shall be found there." And He said, I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten.ⁿ

³³When He was through talking to Abraham the LORD went away, and Abraham returned to his place.

19 THE TWO ANGELS ARRIVED IN Sodom at evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom.^o When Lot noticed them, he got up to meet them; he bowed his face to the ground² and said, "Look here, my masters, please turn aside to your servant's home and stay overnight. Wash your feet, then rise early to be on your way." But they said, "No, we will spend the night outdoors."³ But he urged them strongly; so they turned aside to him and entered his home. He prepared a dinner for them; he baked unleavened cakes, and they ate.⁴ But before they lay down, the men of the city, the Sodomites, young and old, all the people from every direction, surrounded the house, shouting to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you this night? Bring them out to us, so we may rape them!"

⁶Lot went out to them to the doorway, closed the door behind him, and said, "I beg of you, my brothers, do not behave wickedly.⁸ Look here, I have two virgin daughters; let me bring them out to you, and you do with them as you like; but do nothing to these men, because they have come for shelter under my roof."⁹ They said, "Out of the way," and went on, "This fellow came here as an immigrant and he keeps acting as a judge. Now we shall treat you worse than them." Then they crowded Lot dangerously and nearly broke down the door; ¹⁰but the men^q thrust out their hands, pulled Lot inside to them and shut the door. ¹¹Then they struck with blindness the men at the door, from small to big, so

that they wore themselves out trying to find the entrance.

¹²The men asked Lot, "Do you have still others here—sons-in-law, your sons, your daughters? Get everyone you have in the city away from here, ¹³for we are about to destroy this place; because the outcry of it has grown loud before the LORD and the LORD has sent us to wipe it out."¹⁴ So Lot went out to speak to his sons-in-law, who were taking his daughters. He said, "Up and away from this place, for the LORD is at the point of wiping out the city." But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be as one who jested.^r

¹⁵With break of day the angels hurried Lot along, "Get ready; take away your wife here and your two daughters, lest you be swept away in the city's punishment."¹⁶ But he loitered until—because the LORD would spare them—the men seized him, his wife, and his daughters by the hand, brought them out and put him outside the city. ¹⁷Once they had gotten them outside, one of them said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you; do not stop anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountain, lest you be swept away."

¹⁸Lot's response to them was, "O no, please, my master. ¹⁹See here, your servant has found favor with you and you have shown wonderful kindness in what you have done for me to save my life; but I am not able to escape to the mountain, lest disaster overtake me and I die. ²⁰Look! This town is near enough to flee to and it is small. Please, let me escape to it — is it not small? — to save my life!"

²¹He replied to him, "See, I am granting you this request, too, not to destroy this town you have mentioned.^s ²²Hurry to escape there, for I can do nothing until you have reached it." So they named that town Zoar.^t ²³Just after sunrise Lot entered Zoar. ²⁴Then the LORD rained sulphur and fire from

n) Lot's own family should have supplied at least eight of these.

o) Lot's sitting at the gate denotes considerable importance. His hearty welcome to strangers seems to have been exceptional in that lost city.

p) A degree of protection to guests that surpasses our sense of propriety.

q) The angels who in appearance were not readily distinguishable from men.

r) One wonders what his witness for God had been when these relatives took his warning as a jest. However, II Peter 2:8 mentions "his righteous soul."

s) As God's messenger — which is the meaning of the name "angel" — he could speak in the name of God. t) Zoar means small.

heaven, from the LORD on Sodom and Gomorrah; ²⁵He overturned these cities and the entire basin with the whole population of the towns and whatever grew on the ground. ²⁶But from behind him his wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.^u

²⁷Early in the morning Abraham went up to the spot where he had stood in the LORD's presence. ²⁸As he looked down upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon that whole valley, he saw the smoke of the country rising like the smoke from a furnace. ²⁹But it was so, when God wiped out the basin cities, that God remembered Abraham and led Lot out of the catastrophe, when He was over-turning the cities where Lot lived.

³⁰Together with his two daughters Lot went up from Zoar and lived in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; so he lived with his two daughters in a cave. ³¹The older said to the younger, "Our father is aging and there is not a man in the land to marry us in the usual way. ³²Come on, let us get our father to drink wine and let us lie with him, so as to perpetuate our family through our father."^v ³³So that night they had their father drink wine and the first-born went in and lay with her father without his being aware of her lying down or her getting up. ³⁴Next day the first-born said to the younger, "You see, I lay with my father last night; let us have him drink wine tonight as well, then you go in and lie with him so we may preserve offspring from our father." ³⁵So they had their father drink wine that evening, too, and the younger got ready and lay with him without his being aware of her lying down or her getting up. ³⁶Thus the two daughters of Lot conceived by their father. ³⁷The first-born bore a son whom she named Moab^w; he became the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸The younger also bore a

son, whom she named Ben Ammi^x; he became the ancestor of today's Ammonites.

20 ABRAHAM MOVED FROM THERE to the South country and lived between Kadesh and Shur; then he lived for a time in Gerar.^y ²About Sarah, his wife, Abraham said, "She is my sister." Then Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent for Sarah and took her. ³But in a dream by night God came to Abimelech and said to him: Take notice! You are about to die because of the woman you have taken; for she has a husband. ⁴However, Abimelech had not touched her, and said, "O Lord, wilt Thou slay a plainly blameless people? ⁵Did he not tell me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' I have done this from an honest heart and with clean hands."

⁶In the dream God said to him, I knew very well that you did this from an honest heart and I, even I, restrained you from sinning against Me^a; for this reason I did not let you touch her. ⁷Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet^b; he will pray for you and you will survive. But if you do not return her, understand that you and all yours will surely die.

⁸Early in the morning Abimelech got up, summoned all his attendants and repeated all these words for them to hear, and they were thoroughly frightened. ⁹Abimelech summoned Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? In what have I offended you, that you have involved me and my kingdom in a great sin? You have treated me in an unbecoming way." ¹⁰Then Abimelech added, "What did you have in view to do such a thing?"

¹¹Abraham replied, "I said to myself, there is no reverence for God in this place, so they will kill me on account of my wife. ¹²Besides, she actually is

u) The salt of the Dead Sea would accumulate around the body and permeate it.

v) Lot's daughters had done well to preserve their virginity in their wicked environment; but the moral degradation of their community had told on their character. w) Moab - "Father's progeny."

x) Ben Ammi - "Son of my kin." y) 6 miles south of Gaza, on the Philistine boundary.

a) Man's relation is primarily to God first, as later Joseph felt and it helped him not to sin; and as David realized after he was rebuked for a sin.

b) As a man who customarily lived and spoke God's thought, Abraham was a prophet.

my sister; she is my father's daughter, but not my mother's and she became my wife. ¹³So when God made me wander away from my father's home, I said to her, 'Show me this kindness,— wherever we go, say of me, he is my brother.'"¹⁴Abimelech then made Abraham a present of flocks and herds, with male and female servants and he returned Sarah, his wife, to him. ¹⁵"Look! my land is at your disposal," Abimelech said, "settle wherever you please." ¹⁶And to Sarah he said, "Take note! I have given your brother 1,000 silver dollars by way of compensation to you for all that you and yours experienced, and, before all, your name is totally cleared."

¹⁷Abraham prayed to God^c and God healed Abimelech; also his wife and his maids, so they gave birth to children, ¹⁸for the LORD had completely closed the wombs in Abimelech's household on account of Sarah, Abraham's wife. 2066 B.C.

21 THE LORD CAME TO SARAH AS He had said; He dealt with her as He had promised.^d ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the season which God had mentioned to him. ³Abraham named the newly born son whom Sarah bore him, Isaac ⁴and, in agreement with God's command, Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was 8 days old, ⁵Abraham himself being 100 at his son Isaac's birth. ⁶Sarah remarked, "God has prepared laughter for me; every one who hears of it will laugh with me." ⁷Then she added, "Who would have told Abraham, 'Sarah will nurse children'? For I have borne him a son in his old age."

⁸The child grew big enough to be weaned^e and on Isaac's weaning day Abraham prepared a great feast. ⁹But Sarah noticed the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, whom she had borne Abraham, teasing.^f ¹⁰So she told Abraham, "Expel this servant girl with her son;

for the son of this servant girl shall not inherit with my son, with Isaac." ¹¹To Abraham the proposal seemed very wrong on account of his son, ¹²but God said to Abraham; Do not consider it objectionable because of the lad and because of your maid. Listen to everything Sarah tells you, for your name shall be perpetuated through Isaac; ¹³and of the son of the maid, too, I will make a nation, because he is your offspring.

¹⁴Early next morning Abraham got up, took bread and a skin of water,^g which he gave to Hagar and put on her shoulder, also the lad^h and dismissed her. She left and roamed in the Beersheba desert ¹⁵until the water in the skin-bottle was gone. Then she put the youth beneath one of the shrubs ¹⁶and went to seat herself at a bow-shot's distance opposite him, for she said, "I must not see the boy die." As she sat there, she wept audibly; ¹⁷but God heard the lad's call, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven: "Hagar, what is troubling you? Have no fear, for God has heard the lad's voice there where he is." ¹⁸Rise up, raise the boy and hold him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation."

¹⁹Then God opened her eyes and she noticed a spring; so she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad to drink. ²⁰God was with the youth; he grew up and lived in the desert, becoming an expert bowman. ²¹He made the Paran desert his home and his mother got him a wife from the land of Egypt.

²²About that time Abimelech and Phicol, his general, said to Abraham, "God is with you in everything you do. ²³Now swear to me here before God that you will not play me false, nor my children, nor my posterity, but that, as I have shown you friendship, so you will treat me and the land in which you are an immigrant." ²⁴Abraham answered, "I so swear." ²⁵But

c) As Job was commissioned to pray for his three friends. The prayer of a devout worshiper "avails much" [James 5:16], and believers need to exercise that grace in behalf also of non-believers.

d) Enabling her to be a mother. e) Usually on the fifth birthday.

f) The Septuagint has, "laughing at her son Isaac."

g) A goat's complete body-skin, well sewed together so that no leak occurred.

h) Ishmael was around 18; his mother did not carry him, as some would have it.

i) Ishmael may have learned from his father to whom he might turn for help when all else has failed.

Abraham complained to Abimelech because of a water-well, which Abimelech's servants had seized; ²⁶to which Abimelech replied, "I do not know who did this; you never told me and I never heard of it till today."^j

²⁷Then Abraham presented sheep and cattle to Abimelech, and the two made a covenant. ²⁸When Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs from the flock, ²⁹Abimelech asked him, "What about those seven ewe lambs you have set apart?" ³⁰He answered, "Accept these seven ewe lambs from me to be my witness that I have dug this well."^k ³¹The place was therefore named Beer-sheba; for there both made an oath. ³²They thus made a covenant at Beer-sheba.^k

Then Abimelech and his general Phicol got ready and returned to the Philistine country. ³³Abraham planted a tamarisk at Beer-sheba^l and there he called on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. ³⁴For many a day Abraham lived as a stranger in the land of the Philistines.

22 FOLLOWING THIS, GOD TESTED^m Abraham. He said to him, Abraham! He answered, "Here I am."

²Take now your son, He said, your only one, Isaac, whom you love; be-take yourself to the region of Moriah and there offer him up as a burnt-sacrifice on one of the summits which I will designate to you. ³Early next morning Abraham got up, saddled his donkey, selected two young men to go with him, as well as his son Isaac, split the wood for a burnt-offering, then started out for the location of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and in the distance saw the place. ⁵Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here by yourselves with the donkey; while I and the lad

go yonder; so we may worship and return to you."ⁿ

⁶Abraham took the wood for the burnt-offering and laid it on Isaac,^o his son, while he carried in his hand the torch and a knife; so the two walked together. ⁷"My father," Isaac said to his father Abraham, who said, "Here I am, my son."^p Then he inquired, "Here are the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?" ⁸Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide Himself the lamb for the burnt-offering"; so the two walked on together.

⁹When they reached the spot of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there; then he arranged the wood and bound his son Isaac,^q whom he laid on the altar upon the wood. ¹⁰Abraham then reached out his hand and took hold of the knife to slay his son; ¹¹but the Angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, Abraham! Abraham! He said, "Here I am." ¹²Do not lay hands on the lad, He said, do nothing to him; for now I know that you revere God. You have not held back from Me your son, your only one.

¹³Abraham raised his eyes and there behind him he saw a ram, entangled by its horns in a thicket; so Abraham went, took the ram and offered it for a sacrifice instead of his son. ¹⁴Abraham called that place Jehovah-Jireh,^r so that to this day it is said, "In the mountain of the LORD it shall be provided."

¹⁵The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time; ¹⁶He said, "By Myself I have sworn, the LORD says, because you have done this and have not held back your son, your only one," ¹⁷I will bless you beyond words; I will greatly multiply your descendants so as to compare with the

j) Abimelech denied responsibility, which he should exercise; hence Abraham's demand for an oath.

k) Beer - well; sheba - oath; Well of the oath.

l) Evidence that Abraham expected to stay there for a good while; he must have considered it part of "the land of promise."

m) God does not tempt [James 1:13]; temptation is always from "the evil one." But God tests often. n) He knew they would both return. o) The son was physically stronger than the father.

p) Whenever the words, "Here I am" occur, the literal words are, "Look at me"; so that usually "Here I am," will do.

q) To which Isaac was perfectly agreed, even as the Son of God so loved the world - and the Father - that He gave Himself. r) Meaning, The Lord will provide.

s) God did not allow Abraham to forget that his affair with Hagar was altogether out of order; that only Isaac was the son of His promise.

stars of heaven and the sand on the seashore for numbers. Your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies¹⁸ and through your offspring all peoples of the earth shall be blessed; because you have obeyed My voice.”

¹⁹Then Abraham went back to his young men and together they started for Beersheba where Abraham made his home.

²⁰Later this news came to Abraham: Take note, Milcah, she too has borne children to your brother Nahor—²¹Uz, his first-born; ²²his brother Buz; Kemuel, the father of Aram; ²³Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel. ²⁴To Bethuel Rebekah was born. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. ²⁵Also Reumah, his concubine, bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash and Maacah.

2029 B.C.

23 SARAH'S LENGTH OF LIFE WAS 127 years; ²she died at Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Abraham³ came to lament and weep for her. ⁴Then arising from the presence of his dead, Abraham said to the sons of Heth, ⁵“As I am a stranger and immigrant among you, may I have my own burial ground among you, so that I may bury my dead from my presence?” ⁶The Hittites answered Abraham, ⁷“Listen to us, Sir! You are a godlike prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our sepulchres; none of us will refuse you his sepulchre for burying your dead.” ⁸Then Abraham stood up, bowed earthward to the Hittites, the people of the land, ⁹and told them, “If you are willing to have me bury my dead from my presence, then listen to me: Request for me of Ephron, Zohar's son, ¹⁰to let me have the Machpelah cave he has at the end of his field. At its full price he should let me have it in your presence for my own cemetery lot.”

¹¹Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; so Ephron the Hittite an-

swered Abraham in the hearing of all the Hittites,^x who were entering the city-gate, ¹²“No, Sir. Listen to me! I give you the field and the cave it contains; I give it to you with the sons of my people witnessing; you bury your dead.”

¹³Abraham bowed down before the people of the land ¹⁴and said to Ephron, so that all the natives heard it, “If you consent, then please listen to me. I will pay you for the field; accept the money from me, and I will bury my dead.”

¹⁵Ephron answered Abraham, ¹⁶“Listen to me, Sir! The land is worth 260 dollars, what does that amount to between me and you? Go ahead, and bury your dead.”

¹⁷Abraham understood Ephron; so he weighed out to Ephron the silver he had stipulated in the hearing of the Hittites, 260 dollars, currency with the merchants. ¹⁸This secured Ephron's field at Machpelah that faced Mamre; the field with the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field to its surrounding boundaries ¹⁹were legally conveyed to Abraham to be his property, witnessed by all the Hittites who were entering the gate of his city. ²⁰This done, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the Machpelah field, fronting Mamre, that is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. ²¹The field and the cave it contained were legally conveyed by the sons of Heth into Abraham's possession for a cemetery.^y

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24 WHEN ABRAHAM WAS OLD AND up in years, blessed of God in every way, ²he said to the oldest servant in his household, who was in charge of all his property, “Kindly place your hand under my thigh, ³and I will have you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not get my son a wife from the daugh-

t) Job is later mentioned as living in the land of Uz.

u) Aram has given his name to all Arameans, to many more than his own descendants.

v) Abraham had moved back to Mamre. Sarah had her own tent; which Abraham entered for the mourning.

w) The Hittites were a great nation north and east of Palestine. A colony of them had migrated to southern Canaan. x) We would say, “The citizens,” in this case of Hebron.

y) Here we have a true picture of an important business transaction in the Near East, without use of writing; the price was high, but Abraham would not barter.

ters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living. ⁴Instead, you must go to my country and to my relatives to obtain a wife for my son Isaac."²

⁵The servant said to him, "In case the woman is not willing to follow me to this country, then should I take your son back to the land from which you came?" ⁶Abraham told him, "Beware of taking my son back there. ⁷The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, who spoke to me and made oath to me, 'To your offspring I will give this land,' He will send His angel ahead of you, so that you may obtain a wife from there for my son. ⁸However, should the woman be unwilling to come with you, then you are released from this oath to me; only, do not take my son back there."

⁹The servant then placed his hand under his master Abraham's thigh and swore to him to that effect. ¹⁰He took ten of his master's camels, and took the road with all sorts of his master's treasures in hand; he went to Mesopotamia, to Nahor's town. ¹¹There, outside the town, he made the camels kneel near the well of water. It was toward evening when the women came out to draw water.

¹²He said, "LORD God of my master Abraham, prosper me, I pray, this day and show grace to my master Abraham. ¹³See, I am standing here by the well of water, while the daughters of the townsmen are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴May it be so, that the girl to whom I say, 'Please, lower your pitcher so that I may drink,' and who shall answer, 'Drink, and I will water your camels, too,' that she may be the girl Thou hast designated for Thy servant Isaac. By this I shall know that Thou hast treated my master graciously."^a

¹⁵Things began to happen before he had done speaking: Rebekah, born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, was coming out with a pitcher on her shoulder.

¹⁶The girl was exceptionally good-looking, a virgin — no man had known her. Going down to the well, she filled her pitcher and came up. ¹⁷The servant ran to meet her and said, "Would you kindly let me have a drink of water from your pitcher?"

¹⁸She said, "Drink, sir!" and quickly lowered the pitcher on her hand to give him a drink. ¹⁹When she was through quenching his thirst, she said, "I will draw for your camels, too, until they have enough." ²⁰Promptly she emptied the pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw and drew for all the camels.^b

²¹Silently the man stood gazing at her, to observe whether or not the LORD had made his trip successful, ²²and when the camels had finished drinking the man produced a quarter-ounce ring of gold and two five-ounce golden bracelets for her wrists ²³and asked her, "Whose daughter are you? Please, tell me, is there room at your father's house for us to lodge?" ²⁴She told him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." ²⁵Then she added, "We have plenty of straw and fodder and space to spend the night." ²⁶The man then bowed and worshiped the LORD. ²⁷He said, "Praised be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not failed my master with His mercy and His truth. I, being on the way, the LORD guided me to the house of my master's kinsfolk."^c

²⁸The girl ran to tell everything at her mother's home. ²⁹Rebekah had a brother named Laban and Laban ran out to the well to the man. ³⁰So it was, when he saw the ring, also the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and heard his sister Rebekah repeat what the man had said to her, he ran outdoors to the well and exclaimed, as he saw the man standing there, ³¹"Come in, you blessed of the LORD. Why stand outdoors when I have gotten the house ready and a place for the camels?" ³²So the man

z) Abraham would gladly have married Isaac to the daughter of a home as godly as his own; but there was none; so he kept near to it. a) He was looking for physical ability and a benevolent disposition. b) One likes to think the camels were assisted, too; but Rebekah showed her mettle. c) Cooperation between God and man; the man on the move and God guiding.

came in and unloaded the camels. Then he^d provided straw and fodder; also water to wash his feet and the feet of the men with him. ³³Food was placed before him to eat. But he said, "I shall not eat until I have told my errand."

"Tell it!" he said. ³⁴So he spoke, "I am Abraham's servant, ³⁵and the LORD has richly blessed my master; he has become great. He has given him flocks, and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, camels and donkeys. ³⁶After Sarah, my master's wife, had grown old, she bore my master a son, to whom he is leaving all he has." ³⁷My master also made me swear; he said, 'Secure no wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I am living; ³⁸but go to my father's house, to my relatives, and get a wife for my son.'

³⁹"I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me,' ⁴⁰but he told me, 'The LORD, in whose presence I walk, will send His angel with you to render your trip successful, so that you will obtain a wife for my son from my relatives and from my father's house. ⁴¹You will then be freed from your oath to me. If, when you come to my kinsmen, they fail to give you (one), then you are freed from your oath!'

⁴²"Today as I came to the well, I said, 'LORD God of my master Abraham, if Thou art about to prosper the way I am going, ⁴³see, I am standing by the water-well; let it be that the girl who comes to draw water, to whom I say, 'Please, let me drink a little water from your pitcher,' ⁴⁴and who says to me, 'You drink, and I will draw for your camels, too,' let her be the woman whom the LORD has designated for my master's son. ⁴⁵And before I was through saying this in myself, there came Rebekah with her pitcher on her shoulder. She went down to the well and drew. I said to her, 'Please, let me have a drink.' ⁴⁶Quickly she lowered

her pitcher and said, 'Have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!' So I drank, and she watered the camels, too.

⁴⁷"Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore him.' I then put the ring on her face and the bracelets on her wrists, ⁴⁸and I bowed myself in worship to the LORD and praised the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had guided me in the right road to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. ⁴⁹Now then, if you are going to treat my master kindly and fairly, let me know; or if not, let me know, so I may turn to the right or to the left."

⁵⁰Both Laban and Bethuel^f replied, "This thing is from the LORD; we cannot speak for or against it. ⁵¹Look, Rebekah is present; take her and go; let her marry your master's son, in agreement with the LORD's message."

⁵²When Abraham's servant heard their response, he bowed to the earth before the LORD; ⁵³then the servant brought out and gave Rebekah articles of silver and of gold, and clothes. Her brother and her mother he gave jewelry, too. ⁵⁴Then he and the men with him ate and drank, and they stayed overnight.

As they got up in the morning, he said, "Let me go back to my master"; ⁵⁵but her brother and her mother said, "Let the girl stay with us a few days, maybe ten, after which she may go." ⁵⁶But he told them, "Do not detain me, since the LORD has made my journey successful; let me be off to get back to my master." ⁵⁷They said, "Let us call the girl and ask her personally." ⁵⁸So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Are you willing to go with this man?" Her answer was, "I will go!" ⁵⁹Then they saw their sister Rebekah off with her nurse and with Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰They pronounced a blessing on Rebekah, "You, our sister, may you become the mother of mil-

d) Not the servant, but Laban, furnished the necessities.

e) Abraham's representative was a good salesman.

f) Laban assumed the rights of the first-born rather early, as aggressive sons are likely to do. And, oriental fashion, Rebekah had not been consulted. This seems Rebekah's father's first and only chance to get in a word edgewise; Laban, her brother, did all the conversing.

lions, and may your offspring possess the gates of those who hate them."

⁶¹Then Rebekah started with her maids and, riding on camels, they followed the man; thus the servant obtained Rebekah and took his course.

⁶²Now, Isaac had come from a trip to the well of Lahairoi, for he was living in the South. ⁶³He had gone out in the field for his twilight meditations and looking up, he saw camels coming. ⁶⁴Rebekah looked up, too. When she saw Isaac, she slid down from the camel ⁶⁵and asked the servant, "Who is that man over there, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant replied, "That is my master." She therefore took her veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶The servant told Isaac everything he had done, ⁶⁷and Isaac conducted her inside his mother Sarah's tent. He married Rebekah;⁶⁸ she became his wife, and he came to love her. So Isaac found consolation after his mother's death.

25 ABRAHAM MARRIED ANOTHER wife named Keturah,² who bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian,^b Ishbak, and Shuah. ³Jokshan got Sheba and Dedan. The children of Dedan were the Asshurites, the Letushites, and the Leummites. ⁴And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's children.

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⁵Abraham left all he had to Isaac; ⁶but, while still living, Abraham gave presents to the children of his concubines and sent them away eastward to the Kedem¹ country, out of Isaac's way. ⁷Abraham's life span was 175 years; ⁸then at a ripe old age, after a long and full life, Abraham expired. He was gathered to his people, ⁹and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the Machpelah cave, fronting Mamre, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, ¹⁰which Abra-

ham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried beside Sarah, his wife. ¹¹After Abraham's death, God's blessing was on his son Isaac, who lived at the well of Lahairoi.^j

¹²These are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham; ¹³these are the names of Ishmael's sons by their names, in the order of their birth: Ishmael's first-born, Nebayoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶These are Ishmael's sons by their names, their villages, and their encampments, twelve chiefs with their clans.

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¹⁷This is the length of Ishmael's life, 137 years; then he breathed his last; he died and was gathered to his people; ¹⁸who lived from Havilah as far as Shur, east of Egypt on the way toward Assyria. He settled before all his kin.^k

¹⁹These are the descendants of Isaac the son of Abraham: Isaac was born to Abraham. ²⁰At 40 Isaac married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramean of Padan Aram and sister to Laban the Aramean. ²¹Isaac prayed the LORD on behalf of his wife, for she remained childless, and the LORD responded to his entreaty; his wife Rebekah conceived. ²²Then within her body the children jostled each other, and she said, "If this is so, why am I this way?" So she went to the LORD to find out ²³and the LORD told her: "Two nations exist in your womb, and two peoples shall separate from your body, one stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger."^l

²⁴When her days for delivery were completed, there were indeed twins in her womb. ²⁵The first came out reddish all over, like a hairy coat; so they called him Esau.^m ²⁶Then his brother was born, his hand holding on to Esau's

g) Both were hopeful and neither was disappointed. Both seem to have been disciplined in the give-and-take ways of living and thus made a better match than results from purely physical attraction. Habitually relating his interests to God, Isaac's feet turned him for his meditation in the direction from which his bride was coming. h) The Midianites are to make life hard for the Israelites.

i) Where the Lord had shown Hagar and Ishmael a spring when they were thirsty.

j) Mostly the region of the Israelites' journeyings in the desert, therefore south of Jacob's, Esau's, and Lot's descendants. k) The location is foretold, Ch. 16:12. l) That is, Jacob was to enjoy the rights of the first-born. m) Esau - hairy; Edom - Red; Jacob - heel-grabber, therefore, Supplanter.

heel; so they named him Jacob. Isaac was 60 when she bore them. ²⁷As the boys matured, Esau became an expert hunter, a man of the open spaces, while Jacob was of a quiet disposition, living in tents. ²⁸Isaac favored Esau, for he enjoyed the taste of his game; and Rebekah favored Jacob."

²⁹Jacob was boiling a stew when Esau came in from the field, exhausted, ³⁰and he said to Jacob, "Let me drink some of that red, that red there, for I am famished"—hence his name Edom. ³¹Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright!" ³²Esau said, "Look here! I am starving; then what good will my birthright do me!" ³³"Swear to me this moment," Jacob said, and he swore to him; he sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴Then Jacob dished Esau bread and lentil stew. He ate and drank, then got up and went his way. Thus lightly did Esau esteem his birthright.

26 A FAMINE VISITED THE LAND IN addition to the earlier famine in Abraham's day, so Isaac moved to Gerar, to Abimelech^o the Philistine king. ²Then the LORD appeared to him and said, Do not go down to Egypt; remain in the land which I indicate to you. ³Live as an immigrant in this land and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all this territory. I will make good the oath I swore to your father Abraham; ⁴I will make your offspring as countless as the stars of heaven, and I will give your descendants all these lands. Through your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ⁵because Abraham minded My voice and kept My charge, My orders, My rules and My laws. ⁶So Isaac stayed at Gerar. ⁷When the men of the community inquired about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," (thinking) the men of this place may kill me to get Rebekah, who is beautiful.

⁸So it was after he had been there a long time that Abimelech, the king, looked out of the window, and there he saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹Abimelech then summoned Isaac and said, "See here, she is really your wife. How could you say, 'She is my sister?'" Isaac told him, "Because I reasoned that else she might cost me my life." ¹⁰Abimelech retorted, "What is this that you have done to us! One of my men might readily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." ¹¹Then Abimelech charged all the people, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall certainly be executed."

¹²Isaac sowed his crop in that land and that year he harvested a hundred-fold; the LORD blessed him. ¹³He became a rich man and continued prospering until he grew so very wealthy, ¹⁴owning flocks and herds and a great body of servants, that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵They stopped all the wells which his father's servants had dug in his father Abraham's time, filling them up with dirt. ¹⁶Abimelech told Isaac, "Move away from us, for you are much more powerful than we."^p

¹⁷So Isaac moved away from there; made camp in the Gerar valley and lived there. ¹⁸The water-wells that had been dug in his father Abraham's time, but which the Philistines had choked after Abraham's death, he reopened; he also gave them the same names his father had given them. ¹⁹But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and struck a spring of running water, ²⁰the Gerar shepherds disputed with Isaac's shepherds, saying, "The water is ours." So he named the well Esek^a because they disputed with him. ²¹They dug another well, over which there also was a dispute; so he named it Sitnah.^q ²²He moved away from there and dug another well, over which there was no dispute. He named it Rehoboth, saying, "Surely, now the LORD has made

n) Until modern times favoritism in the home has been a serious trouble, aggravated by the naming of children after kin on either side of the family.

o) The name Abimelech, like the name Pharaoh in Egypt, seems to have been a title that applied to successive rulers.

p) Isaac with all his servants and their families was still fewer in numbers, but in movable property he outstripped all the Philistine sheiks. And his flocks and herds fed on what grew in the Philistine country so long as the Hebrew clan remained among them.

q) Esek - Contention; Sitnah - Enmity, or accusation, satanic.

room for us, in order that we may be fruitful in the land."

²³From there he went up to Beer-sheba, ²⁴where that night the LORD appeared to him and said: I am the God of your father Abraham. Have no fear, for I am with you, and I will bless you and multiply your descendants for the sake of My servant Abraham. ²⁵There he built an altar and called upon the name of the LORD; there he made camp, and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

²⁶Abimelech called on him from Gerar, with his friend Ahuzzath and his general Phicol. ²⁷Isaac asked him, "Why do you call on me when you hate me and sent me away from you?"

²⁸They said, "We have clearly seen how the LORD is with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between us and you, and let us make a covenant with you, ²⁹that you will not harm us, since we have not touched you.' We have done you nothing but good, and we sent you away in peace; you are now blessed of the LORD!"

³⁰He then prepared a banquet for them; they ate and drank ³¹and, rising early in the morning, they swore each to the other. Then Isaac bade them farewell, and they took their leave from him in peace.

³²That same day Isaac's servants came to tell him about a well they had dug; they reported to him, "We have found water." ³³He named it Shebah; therefore to this day the town is called Beer-sheba.^r

³⁴At forty Esau married Judith, the daughter of Be-eri, the Hittite; also Basemath, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite, ³⁵which brought great distress to Isaac and Rebekah.

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27 WHEN ISAAC WAS AGING AND HIS eyes had grown so dim that he could not see, he called Esau, his elder

son, saying to him, "My son," to which he replied, "Here I am!" ²He said, "Look here, I am growing old; I do not know when I may die; ³ so now, please take your hunting outfit, your arrow-case and your bow; go out in the open country and hunt game for me. Prepare me a tasty dish, the kind I am fond of, and bring it to me to eat, so I may ⁴give you my blessing before I die."^a

⁵Rebekah was eavesdropping while Isaac spoke to his son Esau; so, while Esau had gone to the field, hunting game to bring in, ⁶she told her son Jacob, "Take note! I heard your father telling your brother Esau, ⁷'Bring me game and prepare me a tasty dish, so I may eat and bless you in the LORD's presence, before I die.' ⁸Now, son, listen to what I order you. ⁹Go to the flock now and fetch me two well-fed kids of the goats. I will prepare them as a tasty dish for your father such as he likes ¹⁰and you will take it in to your father, so he can eat and give you the blessing before he dies."

¹¹Jacob answered Rebekah, his mother, "Remember, my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth. ¹²My father may stroke me and I will seem to him a mocker; then I shall bring a curse on myself instead of a blessing."

¹³His mother said, "I will take your curse on me, my son; you simply do as I say. You go and fetch them for me."

¹⁴So he went and got them; he brought them to his mother and his mother made the tasty dish as his father liked.

¹⁵Rebekah then got the choicest clothes of Esau, her elder son, which she had with her at home, and dressed Jacob, her younger son; ¹⁶she also fitted the skins of the goat-kids on his wrists and on the smooth of his neck, ¹⁷and handed the delicious meat and the bread she had baked to her son Jacob.

¹⁸He went to his father and said, "My

r) Be-er - well; Sheba - seven, as with our Nez Perce Indians a thrice repeated statement equals an oath, probably so here a seven times repeated statement equals an oath. Shibah, feminine form of Shebah, which means seven, or an oath.

s) The birthright which Esau had sold to Jacob, was the right of the first-born - a double share in the father's legacy and the assumption of the father's rank, as head of the family or clan and as member of the community. The blessing was more spiritual; it was the father's invocation of divine favor upon the son, in this case Isaac's prayer that Jacob might receive God's promise to Abraham and to himself, to be blest and to bring blessings to the world, a spiritual function for which Esau never was fitted and for which Jacob was not yet ready. And God had designated Jacob for that blessing. [Ch. 25:23].

father!" He said, "Here! Who are you, my son?" ¹⁹Jacob told his father, "I am Esau, your first-born; I have done as you told me. Please, sit up and eat of my game, so that you yourself may heartily bless me." ²⁰Isaac remarked to his son; "How is this, that you found it so quickly, my son?" He said, "Because the LORD, your God brought it direct to me."

²¹Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close to me, so I may stroke you, my son, whether you really are my son Esau or not." ²²When Jacob moved closer to his father Isaac, he stroked him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are Esau's hands." ²³He did not identify him because his wrists were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he blessed him. ²⁴He said, "Are you truly my son Esau?" He answered, "I am." ²⁵He said, "Then bring it near me that I may eat of my son's game, so I may personally bless you." So he placed it near him and he ate; he brought him wine, too, and he drank.

²⁶His father Isaac then said to him, "Now come close and kiss me, my son." ²⁷He moved near and kissed him and when he smelled his clothes, he blessed him. He said, "Truly, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. ²⁸God grant you from heaven's dew and from earth's fatness abundance of grain and wine. ²⁹May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be master over your kinsmen and may your mother's sons prostrate themselves to you. A curse on those who curse you and a blessing on those who bless you."

³⁰Isaac had hardly finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had just left his father Isaac, when his brother Esau came in from his hunting. ³¹He, too, had prepared a tasty dish, which he brought in to his father, to whom he said, "Let my father sit up and eat from his son's game, so that you may personally bless me." ³²Isaac asked him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am Esau,

your son, your first-born." ³³Then Isaac was so shocked he trembled; he said, "Who was it then who hunted game and brought it in to me? And I ate of all of it before you came in; I also blessed him. Yes, and he shall be blessed."

³⁴Upon hearing his father's words, Esau wailed with a most loud and bitter cry, pleading with his father, "Bless me, too, my father." ³⁵But he replied, "Your brother came in with pretense and stole your blessing."

³⁶He remarked, "Was he not well named Jacob, for twice now he has over-reached me; he robbed me of my birthright and now he has stolen my blessing; but"—he pleaded—"have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

³⁷Isaac responded, "You see, I have made him your master and I have given him all his kinsfolk for servants; I have provided him with grain and wine. Now what can I do for you, my son?"

³⁸Esau pleaded with his father, "Is that your only blessing, my father? Bless me, O my father; me, too!" At this, Esau raised his voice and wept loudly. ³⁹Then his father responded to him: "See, you will live on the fatness of the earth and from the dews of heaven above. ⁴⁰You will sustain yourself by your sword and you will serve your brother; but when you strenuously exert your power, you will break his yoke from your neck."

⁴¹Because of the blessing which his father had bestowed on him, Esau nurtured a grudge against Jacob and said under his breath, "Mourning time for father is not far off; then I will kill my brother Jacob." ⁴²When these sentiments of Esau, her elder son, reached Rebekah, she sent and called for Jacob, her younger son and told him, "See, your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you; ⁴³so now, my son, listen to my voice. Get ready and flee to my brother Laban at Haran ⁴⁴and stay with him for a few days until your brother's fury has blown over and his anger at you subsides;

t) Neither Jacob nor Rebekah gained anything by their cruel and ungodly deceit; instead both suffered much on account of it. On earth they apparently never met again, after Jacob had to flee.
u) This was not a blessing, but a statement of an unfavorable situation and a suggestion for making the best of it.

⁴⁵till he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send for you and get you back from there. Why should I be deprived of you both at the same time?"

⁴⁶To Isaac, Rebekah complained, "The presence of those Hittite women wears me down so, if Jacob marries one of the Hittite girls like these daughters of the land, my life will not be worth living."

28 ISAAC THEN CALLED JACOB AND blessed him; he also charged him, "You are to marry no Canaanite girl. ²Get ready; go to Padan Aram^v to the family of Bethuel, your mother's father, and get you a wife there from your uncle Laban's daughters. ³God Almighty bless you, make you prolific and multiply you so that you may become an association of peoples. ⁴May He grant you and your descendants after you the blessing He bestowed on Abraham, so as to possess the land in which you are now a stranger, which God gave to Abraham." ⁵With this Isaac sent Jacob away and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Esau and Jacob.

⁶When Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Padan Aram to get a wife from there, that in his blessing he had charged him, "Take no wife from the daughters of Canaan," ⁷and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Padan Aram, ⁸when Esau realized that the Canaanite women did not please his father Isaac, ⁹Esau went to Ishmael and married, in addition to the wives he had, Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, and sister to Nebaioth.

¹⁰Jacob started out from Beer-sheba and as he traveled toward Haran ¹¹he reached a certain place where he spent the night because the sun had set.^w

He took one of the stones there, adjusted it for his pillow and lay down in that place. ¹²He dreamed and, behold, a ladder standing on the ground and its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it.^x ¹³And behold, the LORD stood above it, who said: I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are lying I will give you and your descendants; ¹⁴your offspring shall be as the dust of the earth; you will enlarge westward and eastward, northward and southward and in you and in your offspring all the families of the earth shall be blessed. ¹⁵See now, I am with you and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this country; for I shall not forsake you until I have done everything I have mentioned to you.^y

¹⁶When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, "Amen, the LORD is in this place and I did not know it." ¹⁷He felt awe and said, "How awesome a place! This is no other than God's house; this is the gate of heaven." ¹⁸Jacob rose early in the morning and took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up for a memorial pillar; he poured oil on its top ¹⁹and named that place Beth-El,^z though previously the town was called Luz.

²⁰Jacob then made this vow, "If God accompanies me and watches over me on this journey, giving me food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹and I return in peace to my father's home, then the LORD shall be my God ²²and this stone which I have erected for a memorial pillar shall become a house of God. Moreover I will without fail give Thee a tithe of all Thou shalt give me."

29 JACOB THEN TRAVELED ON AND reached the land of the Easterners. ²He looked and saw a well in the open country and also noticed three

v) Road (or Plain?) of Aram, that is, of Syria, located in Mesopotamia, which means, between rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. Haran is the town in that Plain, which still exists as Harran, a small village 280 miles N.E. of Damascus.

w) It is third or fourth night (see Ch. 22:4, when Abraham had started from the same place).

x) A ladder between earth and heaven means that these two spheres are vitally connected; there is travel in between, and the angels were making use of the ladder; so may we.

y) That is, He would never, never forsake him.

z) Beth means house, El means God, worshiped as the Almighty.

flocks of sheep lying near it; for from that well they regularly watered their flocks. There was a large stone over the well's mouth. ³All the flocks would be gathered there, then the men would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place over the well's mouth.

⁴Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" They said, "We are from Haran." ⁵He asked, "Do you know Laban of Nahor's family?" They said, "We know him." ⁶He asked them, "Is he well?" They replied, "He is well, and, look, Rachel, his daughter is coming with the sheep." ⁷He remarked, "But the day is still in its prime; it is not yet time to bring in the livestock^a—water the sheep and take them grazing." ⁸They replied, "We can't until all the flocks are collected and they roll the stone off the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."^b

⁹While he was still conversing with them, Rachel arrived with her father's sheep; for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, with the sheep of his uncle Laban, Jacob stepped up, rolled the stone off the well's mouth and watered his uncle Laban's sheep. ¹¹Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept audibly. ¹²When Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's nephew, son of Rebekah, she ran and told her father, ¹³and Laban, on hearing the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, ran to meet him, embraced and fervently kissed him and brought him home. Then he told Laban all the particulars, ¹⁴to which Laban responded, "You certainly are my own bone and flesh."^c

He had stayed with him for a full month ¹⁵when Laban said to Jacob, "Just because you are near kin to me, ought you to work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be."

¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters,

the elder named Leah and the younger named Rachel. ¹⁷Leah's eyes had no sparkle, while Rachel was lovely of form and face. ¹⁸Jacob was in love with Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter"; ¹⁹to which Laban replied, "I would rather give her to you than to another man. You stay with me."

²⁰So Jacob did serve seven years to have Rachel; which seemed to him like a few days because of the love he felt for her. ²¹Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife; for my time is up; let me go in to her." ²²Laban then invited all the people there and served a banquet. ²³But in the evening he took his daughter Leah to him and he went in to her. ²⁴Laban also gave his daughter Leah his maid Zilpah for a maidservant.

²⁵And so it was in the morning, see, it was Leah. He said to Laban, "Is this the way to treat me? Have I not worked with you for Rachel? Why then have you cheated me?" ²⁶Laban replied, "It just is not done in these parts, to marry the younger before the older. ²⁷Complete this one's week and for another seven years of service we will give you the other one, too."^d ²⁸Jacob did so: he completed her week and Laban gave him his daughter Rachel, too, for wife. ²⁹He also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel for her maid. ³⁰Jacob went in to Rachel, too,^e and he loved Rachel more than Leah; so he worked for him seven more years.

³¹Seeing that Leah was slighted, the LORD gave her fertility, while Rachel was sterile. ³²Leah conceived and bore a son whom she named Reuben,^f for she said, "Because the LORD has noticed my trouble, for now my husband will love me." ³³Again she conceived and bore a son; she said, "Because the LORD has heard that I was slighted, He has given me this one also," so she

a) More grazing time was needed. While Esau had been hunting, Jacob had mastered the technique of animal husbandry.

b) The shepherds had joined their strength, it seems, to do what Jacob did alone.

c) "My own flesh and blood," we would say.

d) Perfect retribution. As Jacob had impersonated Esau at a most critical moment, so Laban made Leah impersonate Rachel at an even more critical time.

e) It seems that Rachel was given him at the start rather than at the close of that second contract.

f) Reuben — "See, a son!"; Simeon — "Hearing"; Levi — "Attachment"; Judah — "Object of Praise."

named him Simeon. ³⁴She conceived again and bore a son; she said, "This time my husband will grow attached to me, for I have borne him three sons"; therefore he was named Levi. ³⁵Once more she conceived and bore a son; she said, "This time I will praise the LORD," so she named him Judah. Then she ceased bearing.

30 WHEN RACHEL REALIZED THAT she had borne Jacob no children, she grew envious of her sister and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I am going to die!" ²Then Jacob's anger rose hotly against Rachel; he rejoined, "Am I taking God's place, who has deprived you of fertility?" ³She then suggested, "Consider my maid Bilhah; go in to her and let her bear for me! Through her I will rear a family."^g ⁴So she gave him her maid Bilhah for a wife and Jacob went in to her. ⁵Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶Rachel said, "God has done me justice; He has heard my voice and has given me a son"; so she named him Dan.^h ⁷Again Bilhah, Rachel's maid conceived and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister and I have won out"; so she named him Naphtali.^h

⁹When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob for a wife ¹⁰and when Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore Jacob a son, ¹¹Leah said, "I am fortunate," and named him Gad.¹ ¹²Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore Jacob a second son, ¹³so Leah said, "To my happiness; for the women will certainly call me happy," and named him Asher.¹

¹⁴During the wheat harvest Reuben went out into the field and found May-apples which he brought home to his mother Leah. When Rachel asked Leah, "Please, give me some of your son's May-apples," ¹⁵She replied to her,

"Is your taking my husband a trifle, and would you take away my son's May-apples as well?" Rachel said, "Then for your son's May-apples you can have him tonight."

¹⁶That evening as Jacob came in from the field, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You are to come home with me, for I have definitely hired you with my son's May-apples"; so he lay with her that night. ¹⁷The LORD heard Leah; she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son; ¹⁸she said, "God has allowed me my reward because I gave my husband my maid" and she named him Issachar.¹ ¹⁹Then Leah conceived once more and bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰Leah said, "God has presented me with a rich dowry; this time my husband will live with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulon.¹ ²¹Later she gave birth to a daughter whom she named Dinah. 1915 B.C.

²²God also remembered Rachel; God heard her and rendered her fertile. ²³She conceived and gave birth to a son; she said, "God has removed my reproach," ²⁴and named him Joseph,¹ saying, "May the LORD add to me another son."

²⁵When Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Grant me leave to move on to my own community and my country. ²⁶Let me have my wives and my children for whom I have served you, so I can go; for you know what service I have rendered you."

²⁷Laban answered him, "I beg of you to stay if you care enough for me; for I have divined^k that the LORD has blessed me on your account"; ²⁸then added, "Name to me your wages and I will pay them."

²⁹He replied, "You know how I have worked for you and how your livestock has fared with me; ³⁰for the little you had before I came has broadened to a great many. The LORD has blessed you at my footsteps. Now when am I to

g) Jacob must have learned of the Abraham-Hagar trouble; but a following generation usually prefers to learn lessons the harder way. h) Dan, "He judged"; Naphtali - "Obtained by wrestling."

i) Gad - Good fortune; Asher - happy; Issachar - there is hire; Zebulon - dwelling.

j) A childless wife felt she was failing her husband, especially in not perpetuating his family, and so other women who had children felt about her. The name she gave Joseph meant, "May he add." But the next son cost Rachel her life.

k) This may mean divination, that is, consulting omens; else, that he had so reasoned out for himself.

provide for my own family?"

³¹When Laban asked, "What shall I pay you?" Jacob replied, "Pay me nothing. I will go back and pasture and tend your stock, if you will agree with me on this: ³²Today I will inspect all your livestock and separate from them all the speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and all the spotted and speckled of the goats; these will compose my wages. ³³My fairness will testify for me in the days ahead. When you examine my wages before you and find among the goats any that are not speckled or spotted and among the sheep any that are not black, you may consider them stolen." ³⁴Laban said, "Very well, I am agreeable to your proposition." ³⁵So he set apart then and there the striped and spotted he-goats and all the speckled and spotted she-goats, every one that had a touch of white; also every black lamb, and put them in his sons' charge.¹ ³⁶He then put a three-days' distance between himself and Jacob; while Jacob continued tending the rest of Laban's flocks.

³⁷But Jacob secured rods of the green poplar, almond and plane trees, into which he peeled white stripes, that laid bare the white on the rods. ³⁸These peeled rods he placed by the troughs, the water-troughs in front of the flocks, to which the flocks came to drink. ³⁹They bred, facing the rods as they came to drink, and the flocks lambled striped, speckled and spotted young.^m ⁴⁰The lambs Jacob then set apart and had the herds face the striped and all the black in Laban's flocks, keeping his own droves by themselves and not adding them to Laban's herd. ⁴¹Jacob used to place the rods at the troughs in sight of the sturdier flocks whenever they bred so that they might breed by the rods; ⁴²but for the weaker herds he did not place them, so that the weaker fell to Laban and the stronger to Jacob; ⁴³who grew richer and richer with great herds,

male and female servants, camels and donkeys.

1909 B.C.

31 HE HEARD TALK FROM LABAN'S sons, who were saying, "Jacob has appropriated everything father had; he owes all this wealth to what belonged to our father."ⁿ ²Jacob also noticed that Laban's attitude toward him was not as it used to be. ³Also the LORD told Jacob: Go back to the land of your fathers and to your kinsfolk and I will be with you.

⁴So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, where his flocks were, ⁵and said to them, "I have been noticing that your father's feelings toward me are not what they used to be; but my father's God has been with me. ⁶You yourselves know how I have served your father to the best of my ability, ⁷while your father has cheated me; ten times he has changed my wages; but God has not permitted him to harm me. ⁸When he said this: 'The speckled will be your wages,' then all the animals bore speckled young, and when he said, 'The striped will be your wages,' then all the livestock bore striped young. ⁹In this way God has taken away your father's stock and has given it to me. ¹⁰When the flocks were breeding, I looked in my dream and saw that the he-goats that leaped upon the flock were the striped, the speckled, and the mottled.

¹¹"In a dream the Angel of the LORD said to me: Jacob! and I said, 'Here am I.' ¹²He said: Look and observe how all the he-goats that leap upon the flock are striped, speckled and mottled; for I have seen everything Laban is doing to you. ¹³I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a memorial pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now, get ready, move out of this country and go back to your native land."

¹⁴Rachel and Leah answered him: "What share or legacy is there left us in our father's house? ¹⁵Does he not

1) This seems to refer to Laban's sons.

m) The Bethel experience had not converted Jacob; he had remained selfish and tricky. His scheme to increase the number of animals due him was not stealing but it was taking unfair advantage.

n) Which was true, for Jacob had nothing but his staff, when he arrived in Padan Aram; but it was a half truth, for Laban had greatly prospered because of Jacob's superior skill as a herdsman, and divine favor, so that Laban owed fully as much to Jacob as Jacob owed to him.

consider us outsiders? For he sold us and has enjoyed the profits of our dowry as well.^o ¹⁶For all the wealth God has taken away from father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, you do whatever God has told you."

¹⁷Jacob then got ready. He mounted his children and his wives on camels ¹⁸and brought away all his cattle, all the movable property he had acquired and the herds of his possession, which he had accumulated in Padan Aram, to travel to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan. ¹⁹Laban had gone to shear his sheep; Rachel stole her father's household gods, ²⁰and Jacob got the best of Laban, the Aramean, by not telling him of his flight. ²¹So he fled with all his belongings.

Starting out, he crossed the river^p and turned toward the Gilead mountain range. ²²On the third day of Jacob's flight Laban was told of it, ²³so, taking along his kinsmen, he went in pursuit of him for seven days until he overtook him in the Gilead range. ²⁴But in a dream by night God came to Laban, the Aramean, and said to him: Be careful about speaking to Jacob either good or bad.

²⁵When Laban overtook Jacob, Jacob had pitched camp at the mountain^q and Laban, too, camped at the Gilead mountain with his kinsmen. ²⁶Laban said to Jacob, "What do you mean to take advantage of me and to carry off my daughters as if they were captured by the sword? ²⁷Why did you flee secretly and steal away from me without telling me? I would have seen you off with mirth and song, with tambourine and harp.^r ²⁸Why did you not give me a chance to kiss my sons and my daughters goodbye? ²⁹It was a silly thing to do and I could hurt you; but your father's God told me last night, 'Be careful not to speak to Jacob, good or bad.' ³⁰Now, if you hurried off because you so greatly longed for your father's home, then why did you steal my gods?"

³¹Jacob answered Laban, "I fled because I feared you might forcibly take your daughters from me. ³²With whom you find your gods, let him not live. Under supervision of our kinsmen make a search for what I have that is yours and take it"; for Jacob did not know that Rachel had purloined them.

³³Laban then entered Jacob's tent and Leah's, the tents of the two maids, too, but did not find them. Coming out of Leah's tent he entered Rachel's tent.

³⁴Now Rachel had gotten hold of the household gods and had put them inside her camel's saddle, on which she was sitting. Laban searched through the whole tent without finding them, ³⁵and she said to her father, "I hope my master does not object to my being unable to get up in front of you, for I am meeting with the indisposition of women." So, for all his searching he did not find the images.

³⁶Angrily Jacob reprimanded Laban; Jacob said to Laban, "What is my misdemeanor? What is my crime that you have pursued me so hotly? ³⁷Though you have been feeling all my household goods, which of all your utensils have you discovered? Place it here in front of my kinsmen and yours, so they may judge between us two. ³⁸During my twenty years with you, your ewes and your she-goats have not miscarried and the rams of your flock I have not eaten. ³⁹What the wild beasts mangled I did not bring to you, but I personally replaced it, and you exacted from me whatever was carried off by day or by night. ⁴⁰As for me personally, heat wore me down by day and cold by night, besides loss of sleep. ⁴¹So I spent twenty years in your home, fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your stock. Ten times^s you changed my wages. ⁴²Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Reverence of Isaac^t had been on my side, you would now doubtless have dismissed me empty-handed; but

o) In as much as Jacob's service was the dowry he paid, by which Laban had done so well.

p) Euphrates, sometimes called the great River.

q) Shortly named Mizpah because of the agreement between Laban and Jacob.

r) Jacob knew well enough that Laban would not have allowed him to leave, if he had any way to prevent it; so did Laban know it. s) "Again and again," or "Time and again," we would say.

t) Literal translation meaning "He whom Isaac reveres."

God saw my misery and my manual labor, and He gave judgment last night."

⁴³Laban replied to Jacob, "Mine are the daughters and the children; mine are the flocks, mine is everything you see. And what can I now do to these my daughters or to the children they have borne? ⁴⁴Come now, let us make a covenant, I and you, and let it be for a witness between me and you."

⁴⁵So Jacob took a stone and set it up for a memorial pillar; ⁴⁶he also told his kinsmen, "Gather stones"; so they brought stones together and formed a cairn. There atop the cairn they ate together. ⁴⁷Laban named it Jegar-sahadutha and Jacob named it Galeed.^u ⁴⁸Laban said, "This cairn today is witness between me and you"; hence the name Galeed; ⁴⁹also Mizpah, for he said, "May the LORD watch between me and you when we are out of each other's sight. ⁵⁰If you ill treat my daughters; if you take wives in addition to my daughters, although no other is present, see, God is witness between me and you!" ⁵¹Laban further told Jacob, "Look at this pillar and at this cairn, which I have set up between me and you. ⁵²Let this cairn be a witness and this pillar, too, that I will not pass it to harm you and that you will not pass it to harm me. ⁵³The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, the God of their father judge between us."

⁵⁴Jacob swore by the reverence of his father Isaac and offered sacrifice on the mountain-side. He invited his kinsmen to break bread; then spent the night on the mountain. ⁵⁵Early in the morning Laban got up, kissed his sons^v and his daughters goodbye, gave them his blessing; then left and went back home.

32 AS JACOB RESUMED HIS TRAVEL, God's angels met him² and when Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp," and named that place, Mahanaim.^w ³Jacob sent messengers ahead of

him to his brother Esau in the Seir range of the Edom country, ⁴charging them, "You must say to my master Esau, 'Your servant Jacob says, I have been living as a stranger with Laban and stayed there until now. ⁵I have come to possess oxen, donkeys, herds and male and female servants, and I have sent to tell my master about it, hoping to gain your favor.'"^x ⁶The messenger returned to Jacob with the report, "We arrived at your brother Esau's and he is now on the way to meet you, accompanied by 400 men."

⁷Then Jacob, greatly alarmed and distressed, divided the people that were with him, and his flocks, his herds and his camels into two camps, ⁸reasoning that if Esau should come upon one camp and destroy it, the remaining camp would escape. ⁹Jacob also prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, Jehovah, who told me, 'Return to your land and to your kindred and I will treat you kindly,' ¹⁰I do not deserve the least of all the kindness and faithfulness Thou hast rendered Thy servant; for with my staff I crossed this Jordan and now I have become two camps. ¹¹Save me, I pray, from my brother's hand, from the power of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and slay me, with mother and children. ¹²Thou hast said, I will unfailingly deal kindly with you and I will make your descendants like the sea sand that cannot be counted for its numbers."

¹³That night he lodged there and arranged from what he had on hand a present for his brother Esau.—¹⁴200 she-goats and 20 he-goats; 200 ewes and 20 rams; ¹⁵30 milch camels with their calves; 40 cows and 10 bulls; 20 she-donkeys with 10 foals. ¹⁶These he entrusted to his servants, drove after drove separately, and told his men, "Drive ahead of me and leave space between the several droves."

¹⁷To the first driver he gave orders, "When my brother Esau meets you and he asks you, 'To whom do you be-

u) Laban gave the Aramean and Jacob the Hebrew name for Witness-cairn. Mizpah means Watch-post. v) The Hebrew term — sons — often includes all children; in this case Laban's grandchildren. w) Mahanaim means "Two Camps"; Jacob had protecting angels right and left. Read something similar — II Kings 6:8-23.

x) Jacob wanted Esau to see that he now no longer stood in need of the blessing he had so cruelly exacted from his elder brother.

long? Where are you going? Whose is this drove?' ¹⁸then you reply, 'These are your servant Jacob's; it is a present sent to my master Esau and he also is behind us.'" ¹⁹He so ordered the second, the third and all the successive drove herders; he said, "You give the same message to Esau, ²⁰and be sure to add, 'Your servant also is behind us.'" For he reasoned, "I will appease him with the gift that precedes me; then when I meet him personally, he may accept my presence." ²¹So, his presents went over ahead of him, while he lodged in the camp.

²²During the night he got up, took his two wives and his two maids,² also his eleven sons and forded the Jabbok;^a ²³he took them and helped them across the brook with everything he possessed.

²⁴So Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until day-break, ²⁵who, when he saw he was not throwing him, struck his hip socket so that Jacob's thigh was dislocated in his wrestling with him. ²⁶The man said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But he replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

²⁷He asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." ²⁸He said, "Your name will be Jacob no longer, but Israel,^b because you have striven with God and with men and you have won." ²⁹Jacob then asked him, "Please tell me, what is your name?" He said, "Why do you inquire after my name?" And He blessed him there. ³⁰Jacob named that place Peniel, for "I saw God face to face and yet my life was preserved."

³¹The rising sun shone on him as he passed through Peniel and he was limping at the hip. ³²For this reason the Israelites to this day never eat the hip-muscle that covers the hip-socket, because He struck Jacob's thigh at the hip-muscle.

33 AS JACOB LOOKED UP, HE SAW Esau coming, accompanied by 400 men. So he apportioned the children to Leah, to Rachel and to the two maids respectively. ²The maids and their children he put in front; Leah and her children behind them, and Rachel with Joseph in the rear. ³He then advanced to the front and bowed to the ground seven times until he came close to his brother. ⁴But Esau ran to meet him, threw his arms around him, fell on his neck and kissed him; then they both wept.

⁵As he looked up and saw the women and the children, he asked, "Who are these with you?" He replied, "The children whom God has graciously granted your servant." ⁶The maids then approached with their children and bowed deeply. ⁷Leah, too, came forward with her children and they bowed to the ground. After them Joseph and Rachel came up and bowed deeply.^c

⁸He asked, "What do you mean by all this drove I met?" He said, "To gain my master's favor." ⁹Esau rejoined, "I have plenty, my brother; let what you have remain yours." ¹⁰"No, please," urged Jacob, "if you will do me a favor, accept my present, because being in your presence is like being in God's presence; you have been pleased with me. ¹¹I beg of you, do accept my blessing^d that has been brought to you; for God has treated me lavishly and I have everything."

Thus he urged him until he accepted it ¹²and said, "Let us break camp and travel on together; I will accompany you." ¹³But he replied, "My master is aware that the children are frail, while the flocks and the herds with me are giving suck; should they overdrive them for a single day the whole flock would die. ¹⁴Please let my master go in advance of his servant and I will move on slowly, at my leisure, adjust-

y) He not only showed what he had gained, but that he was voluntarily handing Esau the riches to which Esau had by birth been entitled.

z) As the mothers of Jacob's four sons, Bilhah and Zilpah had special standing, but personally they remained maids [Gen. 37:2].

a) The Jabbok brook still divides the Gilead mountain range. It empties into the Jordan 43 miles south of Lake Galilee and 23 miles north of the Dead Sea. b) Israel means, "Striver with God."

c) Each bowing involved kneeling on both knees and touching the ground with the forehead.

d) Jacob definitely refers to "the blessing" he had unfairly taken from his brother and which he now returns.

ing ourselves to the pace that suits the endurance of the livestock in front of me and of the children, until I reach my master at Seir."^e

¹⁶Esau suggested, "I should like to assign some of my men to help you"; but he replied, "What is the need of it; it is enough that I enjoy your favor."

¹⁶So Esau started back that day on his way to Seir, ¹⁷while Jacob moved to Succoth, where he built a dwelling for himself and put up booths for his herds; hence the name Succoth for the place. 1908 B.C.

¹⁸Traveling from Padan Aram, Jacob arrived safely at Shechem-town in the land of Canaan and camped facing the town. ¹⁹He bought the lot,^f on which he had pitched his tent, for about 200 dollars from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father. ²⁰There he built an altar and called it El, the God of Israel.

34 DINAH, LEAH'S DAUGHTER, whom she had borne Jacob, went out to get acquainted with the girls of the community, ²and when Shechem, son of Hamor, the Hivite,^g the local chief, laid eyes on her, he seized her, lay with her and dishonored her. ³He was passionately in love with Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and talked to the girl in endearing terms. ⁴Then Shechem said to Hamor, his father, "Get me this girl for a wife."

⁵While his sons were in the field with his herd, Jacob learned that he had ravished his daughter, Dinah, so he kept quiet until their return; ⁶but Hamor, Shechem's father, called on Jacob to talk with him. ⁷On hearing of it, Jacob's sons came in from the field, disgusted and angry beyond words, that such a shameful deed had been committed in Israel, as to lie with Jacob's daughter, a thing that should never be done. ⁸But Hamor conversed with them; he said, "My son Shechem's affections are centered on your daughter. I beg of you, give her to him in

marriage. ⁹Intermarry with us; give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰Settle among us and the land is at your disposal; make your home in it and acquire property in it."^h

¹¹Shechem then said to her father and her brothers, "Let me have your consent and I will pay any sum you name me; ¹²put your price and dowry as high as you want to, I will meet your demands, only give me the girl for a wife."

¹³Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had dishonored their sister Dinah.

¹⁴They said to them, "We are in no position to do this, to give our sister to an uncircumcised person; for that would be a disgrace to us. ¹⁵However, on one condition we will consent to give you our sister: If you become like us, every male of you being circumcised, ¹⁶then we will give our daughters to you and we will marry your daughters; we will settle among you and become one people with you. ¹⁷But if you will not agree with us to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and move away."

¹⁸Their suggestion appealed to Hamor and to Hamor's son Shechem ¹⁹and without delay the young man went into action, for he was in love with Jacob's daughter; he also held highest rank in his father's household. ²⁰So Hamor and his son Shechem resorted to their town gate and talked it over with their fellow citizens. They said, ²¹"These men are in harmony with us, so let them stay and do business in the land; for the country, you observe, has room enough for them. Let us marry their daughters and let us give them our daughters. ²²There is, however, one condition on which their mixing with us as one people depends, that every male among us be circumcised as they are. ²³Will not their stock, their property, yes, all their animals be ours? Only let us accept their condition and they

e) Jacob might some day see him again, as when he and Esau buried their father; but Jacob had no intention to enjoy Esau's hospitality at Seir.

f) Which he gave Joseph, who was ultimately buried there [Josh. 24:32].

g) There were colonies of Hivites scattered through Canaan; the men of Gibeon, who with deceit made treaty with Joshua, Ch. 9 — were Hivites. In David's time there were Hivites around Mt. Hermon, and Solomon required service from them for his building operations.

h) Had such arrangements been made, there would have been no chosen people and no prophetic and priestly preparation for Christ's coming.

will live with us." ²⁴All the responsible men agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem and every male in town was circumcised.

²⁵So it was that on the third day, when they were sore, two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword, ¹ boldly invaded the town, put to the sword every male, ²⁶ including Hamor and his son Shechem, took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and left. ²⁷Jacob's sons went over the slain and plundered the town, because they had ravished their sister. ²⁸They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys and all their movable property in town and field; ²⁹they carried away captive their little ones and their wives and looted what was indoors.

³⁰Jacob told Simeon and Levi, "You have shocked me, to make me odious to the natives of this country, to the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and since we are few, if they unite against me, they will slay me—I and my family will be destroyed." ³¹They said, "Should they treat our sister like a prostitute?"

35 GOD SAID TO JACOB: GET READY! Move up to Bethel; settle there and build there an altar to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau. ²Jacob then told his household and all under his authority, "Get rid of all the strange gods you have with you; purify yourselves and change your clothes; ³then let us get ready and move up to Bethel. There I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and kept me company on my journey." ⁴Then they handed Jacob all the strange gods they had, and their earrings, ¹ which Jacob buried beneath the Shechem terebinth. ⁵They broke camp and a God-sent dread rested on the surrounding towns so that they did not pursue Jacob's sons.

⁶When Jacob and all the people with him arrived at Luz — that is Bethel —

in the land of Canaan, ⁷he built there an altar and named the place^k El-Bethel, because there God had revealed Himself to him during his flight from his brother. ⁸Then Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and was buried below Bethel under the oak, which he named Allon-bachuth.¹

⁹Once more, since his return from Padan Aram, God appeared to Jacob to bless him. ¹⁰God said to him: Your name was Jacob; your name will be Jacob no longer, but Israel shall be your name; so He called him Israel. ¹¹God said to him: I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply. A nation, yes, a group of nations shall spring from you. ¹²The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you and to your offspring that follows you. ¹³Then from the very spot where He had spoken to him, God ascended; ¹⁴and Jacob erected a pillar where He had talked with him, a memorial pillar of stone, poured upon it a libation and anointed it with oil. ¹⁵Jacob called the place where God had talked with him, Bethel.

¹⁶They moved on from Bethel and still some distance from Ephrath,^m Rachel felt the birth pangs. ¹⁷She was in hard labor when the midwife said to her, "Have no fear, for this too is a son for you." ¹⁸With her last breath — for she expired — she named him Ben-oni,ⁿ but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹Rachel died and was buried on the Ephrath or Bethlehem road. ²⁰On her grave Jacob erected a pillar which to this day remains the memorial pillar of Rachel's grave.

²¹Israel moved on and pitched his tent beyond the Edar tower,^o ²²and while they lived in that land Reuben went in to Bilhah, his father's concubine, and lay with her — and Jacob was informed.

The sons of Jacob numbered twelve: ²³The sons of Leah — Reuben, Jacob's first-born; Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issa-

i) As Abraham could muster 318 men to go fighting, so Simeon and Levi could use their sheep- and cattle-men, probably not less than forty, to invade Shechem, which was physically helpless.

j) Earrings were worn by both sexes and by children [Ex. 32:2], but some used them idolatrously as amulets [Isa. 3:20]; hence their removal on this occasion. k) God of Bethel. l) Oak of Weeping. m) Ephrathah or Ephratah, the earlier name for Bethlehem [Gen. 48:7, Ruth 4:11]. In Micah 5:2, Bethlehem-ephratah. n) Ben-oni—Son of my sorrow; Benjamin—Right-hand son, or Son of happiness. o) Flock-tower, so near Bethlehem, suggests flocks and shepherds there this early in Bible history; possibly Jacob named it.

char and Zebulun; ²⁴the sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin; ²⁵the sons of Rachel's maid Bilhah, Dan and Naphtali; ²⁶the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid, Gad and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob, born to him in Padan Aram.^p

²⁷Jacob arrived at his father Isaac's at Mamre, suburban to Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron; where Abraham and Isaac had pilgrimaged. ²⁸Isaac's life span was 180 years; ²⁹then Isaac expired, and upon his death he was gathered to his people, aged and satisfied with life; so his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

36 **THESE ARE THE DESCENDANTS** of Esau, that is, Edom; ²Esau married Canaanite women, Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the son of Zibeon the Hivite; ³also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, and sister to Nebaioth. ⁴Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau and Basemath bore Reuel. ⁵Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam and Korah — these were Esau's sons born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶Then Esau took his wives, his sons and his daughters, all the members of his household, also his herds, his beasts of burden and all his movable property, which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and moved into a country away from his brother Jacob, ⁷because their possessions were too great for them to live together; the land in which they were immigrants could not support them, due to their livestock.^q ⁸So Esau settled in the Seir mountain range, Esau being Edom.

⁹These are the descendants of Esau, the ancestor of the Edomites in the Seir mountain range; ¹⁰these are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz, son of Adah, Esau's wife, and Reuel, son of Basemath, Esau's wife. ¹¹The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Ga-

tam and Kenaz. ¹²Timna, a concubine of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, bore Amalek^r to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Esau's wife Adah.

¹³These are Reuel's sons: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah, descendants of Basemath, Esau's wife.

¹⁴These are the sons of Oholibamah, daughter of Anah, son of Zibeon, Esau's wife; she bore to Esau, Jeush, Jalam and Korah.

¹⁵These are the chiefs among Esau's sons: The sons of Eliphaz, Esau's first-born, chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁶Korah, Gatam and Amalek. They were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom, descendants of Adah.

¹⁷These are the sons of Esau's son Reuel — chiefs Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah; they are the chiefs sprung from Reuel in the land of Edom, descendants of Esau's wife, Basemath.

¹⁸These are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife — chiefs Jeush, Jalam and Korah, the chiefs that sprang from Oholibamah, Esau's wife and Anah's daughter. ¹⁹They are the sons of Esau, that is Edom, and these are their chiefs.

²⁰These are the sons of Seir, the aboriginal Horites of that country: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹Dishon, Ezer and Dishan, the chiefs of the rock-dwellers, descendants of Seir in the land of Edom.^s

²²Lotan's sons were Hori and Heman, and Timna was Lotan's sister.

²³Shobal's sons were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho and Onam. ²⁴Zibeon's sons, Aiah and Anah, the Anah who discovered the hot springs in the desert as he was tending his father Zibeon's donkeys. ²⁵Anah's children were Dishon and Oholibamah, Anah's daughter. ²⁶Dishon's sons were Hemandan, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran.

²⁷Ezer's sons — Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.

²⁸Dishan's sons — Uz^t and Aran.

p) Although Benjamin was not born at Padan Aram, he was born on the journey from there to Isaac's home and is so counted in.

q) Acknowledging Jacob's first right to sufficient room in Canaan, Esau moved out before Jacob's return, obviously expecting that return.

r) Amalek's descendants will oppose the Israelites at every turn for centuries, down to Haman, a descendant of King Agag (Esther 3:10).

s) These rock-dwellers or Horites were not on the best of terms with the Edomites, who eventually destroyed them (Deut. 12:22).

t) The name Uz appears in the great Drama of Job — "in the land of Uz."

²⁹These were the chiefs of the rock-dwellers — chiefs Lotan, Shobal, Zibcon, Anah, ³⁰Dishon, Ezer and Dishan, chiefs among the rock-dwellers by their clans in the land of Seir.

³¹These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king ruled the Israelites": ³²Bela, son of Beor, reigned in Edom with Dinhabah as his capital. ³³When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah, took his place. ³⁴Jobab died and Husham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. ³⁵Husham died and Hadad, son of Bedad, who defeated the Midianites in the land of Moab, succeeded him, with Avith for his capital city. ³⁶Hadad died and Samlah of Masreka reigned in his place. ³⁷Samlah died and Shaul, of Rehoboth by the river, reigned after him. ³⁸Shaul died and Baal Hanan, son of Achbor, succeeded him. ³⁹Baal Hanan, son of Achbor, died and Hadar reigned in his stead, with the city of Pau for his capital and Mehetabel, daughter of Matred, Me-Zahab's daughter, for his wife.^v

⁴⁰These are the names of the chiefs of Esau by family, place and name: Chiefs Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁴¹Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁴²Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁴³Magdiel and Iram. These are Edom's chiefs as they were located in the land they ruled, Esau being the father of the Edomites.

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37 JACOB LIVED IN THE LAND IN which his father had lived as an immigrant, the land of Canaan. ²This is Jacob's family record: Joseph at seventeen was tending the flock with his brothers, a youth with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph told their father of their misbehavior.^w ³Now Israel loved Joseph more than all the rest of his sons because he was to him

a son of his old age^x; so he made him a long coat reaching to his feet. ⁴And when his brothers saw that their father prized him more dearly than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak cordially to him.

⁵Joseph also had a dream, which he told his brothers and for which they hated him worse than ever. ⁶He told them, "I want you to listen to what I have dreamed. ⁷You see, we were binding sheaves in the field and, think of it, my sheaf rose up and stood erect while your sheaves surrounded it and bowed deeply to my sheaf!" ⁸His brothers said, "You are going to rule over us! You, indeed, are you going to dominate us?" So they hated him still worse because of his dreams and because of his words.

⁹He had still another dream which he recounted to his brothers. "See here," he said, "I have had another dream. Take notice: The sun, the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."^y ¹⁰When he related this to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him; he said to him, "What sort of dream is this you had? Are we, your mother and I and your brothers actually going to come, prostrating ourselves to the earth for you?" ¹¹His brothers then felt resentful toward him; but his father pondered the words.

¹²When his brothers had gone to Shechem to tend their father's flock, ¹³Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come on, I will send you to them." He said to him, "At your service." ¹⁴He further told him, "I wish you would go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flock; then report back to me."^z So he dispatched him from the vale of Hebron and he arrived at Shechem.

¹⁵A certain man came across him as he was meandering in the open country

u) A distinction is made between kings and chiefs, the former having more authority and more territory.

v) As Saul made his native town, Gibeah, the capital of Israel, so the Edomite kings made their native towns Edom's capital while they reigned.

w) Bilhah, the mother of Dan and Naphtali, and Zilpah, the mother of Gad and Asher, were more pagan than Leah and Rachel and so their sons less disciplined.

x) That Joseph was Rachel's son had also much to do with Jacob's discrimination; Jacob planned Joseph to be his successor and that coat was evidence of it, a princely coat.

y) There was vision in Joseph, such as his brothers lacked; these dreams came true.

z) Jacob worried about pasturing near Shechem after the fearful massacre by Simeon and Levi.

and asked him, "What are you looking for?" ¹⁶He answered, "I am looking for my brothers. Please, tell me where they are pasturing." ¹⁷The man said, "They have moved away from here,^a for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan'." So Joseph traced his brothers and found them at Dothan.

¹⁸When they saw him in the distance, before he reached them, they conspired against him to kill him. ¹⁹They said to each other, "Look! This master of dreams is coming. ²⁰Now, then, come on, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits and we will say, 'A wild beast has devoured him.'^b Then we shall see what becomes of his dreams."

²¹Reuben heard of it and delivered him from their hands; he said, "Let us not take his life." ²²Reuben continued, "Do not shed blood. Throw him into this desert-pit and do him no violence," so he might rescue him and return him to his father.^c

²³So it was as soon as Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his coat, the princely robe he had on, ²⁴then took hold of him and threw him into a pit, an empty pit with no water in it. ²⁵Then they sat down to break bread. Looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels carrying gum, balsam and resin to transport it to Egypt. ²⁶Judah suggested to his brothers, "What is the good of killing our brother and concealing his blood! ²⁷Come on, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not do him violence; for he is our brother, our own flesh," to which his brothers agreed. ²⁸Then Midianite^d traders came along, and they pulled Joseph up, brought him out of the pit and they sold Joseph for 20 dollars to the Ishmaelites. And they conducted Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹Reuben came back to the pit and,

horrors, saw no Joseph in the pit! He tore his clothes, ³⁰went back to his brothers and exclaimed, "The lad is not there, and I, where can I turn!" ³¹But they took Joseph's coat, butchered a he-goat and dipped the coat in the blood; ³²then sent the princely full length robe to their father with the remark: "We have found this! Examine the coat whether it is your son's or not."

³³He recognized it and said, "My son's coat! A wild beast has devoured him; Joseph has doubtless been torn to pieces." ³⁴Jacob tore his clothes, wore a sackcloth girdle, and mourned many a day for his son. ³⁵His sons and daughters all did their best to console him; but he refused to be comforted. He said, "I want to go down to the grave mourning for my son." So did his father weep for him.^e

³⁶The Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, a courtier of Pharaoh, the captain of the royal guard.

38 ABOUT THAT TIME JUDAH WITH-drew from his brothers and affiliated with an Adullamite called Hirah.^f ²There Judah made acquaintance with a daughter of Shua, a Canaanite.^g He married her and went in to her. ³She conceived and gave birth to a son whom he named Er. ⁴Again she conceived and bore a son whom she named Onan. ⁵She gave birth to still another son and named him Shelah; they were living at Chezib^h when she bore Shelah.

⁶For Er, his firstborn, Judah chose a woman called Tamar;ⁱ ⁷but Er, Judah's firstborn, was so wicked in the Lord's presence that the Lord ended his life. ⁸Judah then told Onan, "Go in to your brother's widow; fulfil to her the duty of a brother-in-law and raise a family for your brother." ⁹But, knowing the offspring would not be his, Onan,

a) Jacob's sons seem to have shared their father's uneasiness; they broke camp sooner than Jacob had anticipated.

b) They planned murder, which could hardly be perpetrated without also lying, "O, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive!"

c) Reuben, as the oldest son, was most responsible for what might happen to younger brothers.

d) Midianites seem to have been slave-dealers among the Ishmaelite caravan.

e) Had Jacob surmised what God had in mind, he would have changed from grief to trust.

f) Joint ancestors of Jesus (Matt. 1:3).

g) All Jacob's sons, except Joseph, seem to have married daughters of pagan peoples in Canaan.

h) Or Achzib - deceitful - in southern Judah [Josh. 15:44].

whenever he went in to his brother's widow, spilled the sperm on the ground, to prevent his brother from having children.¹ ¹⁰His behavior was wicked in the LORD's sight, so he ended his life, too. ¹¹Then Judah told Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your parental home until my son Shelah is mature," for he thought, else he might die, too, like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her parental home.

¹²In course of time Judah's wife, the daughter of Shua, died and, after the mourning season, Judah went to his sheepshearers at Timnath with his friend Hirah, the Adullamite. ¹³When Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law, you should know, is going up to Timnath for his sheep-shearing," ¹⁴she took off her widow's weeds, veiled and disguised herself and seated herself at the Enaim gateway on the road to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah had grown up and she had not been married to him. ¹⁵When Judah saw her, he thought, since her face was veiled, that she was a harlot. ¹⁶He stepped aside to her by the road and said, "Let me please come in to you!" for he did not know she was his daughter-in-law. ¹ She asked, "What will you give me to come in to me?" ¹⁷He replied, "Let me send you a kid from the flock." She asked, "Will you leave me a pledge until you send it?" ¹⁸He said, "What pledge should I give you?" "Your signet ring with your cord, and the staff you are using," she said. These he gave her and he went in to her. She conceived by him. ¹⁹She got up and left, took off her veil, and put on her widow's weeds.

²⁰By his friend, the Adullamite, Judah sent the kid of the goats, to get back the pledge from the woman; but he did not find her. ²¹When he inquired of the local men, "Where is the harlot who sat by the Enaim roadside?", they said, "No harlot has been here." ²²So he went back to Judah and

told him, "I cannot find her; besides, the local men say there was no harlot here." ²³Judah replied, "Let her keep them for herself; we do not want to be ridiculed. I sent the kid and you failed to find her."

²⁴About three months later the word reached Judah, "Tamar, your daughter-in-law, has played the harlot and is with child through harlotry." Judah said, "Bring her out and have her cremated." ²⁵When she was brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child. Be kind enough to look well, whose are the signet ring, the cord and the staff." ²⁶Judah recognized them and exclaimed, "She is in the right against me; because I failed to marry her to my son Shelah." And he did not again cohabit with her.^k

²⁷At the time of delivery there were twins in her womb, ²⁸and during her labor one put out his hand. The midwife took hold of it and tied a string around it, saying, "This one came first." ²⁹But when he drew back his hand, his brother was born, so she said, "What a breach you made for yourself," so he was named Perez.¹ ³⁰Later his brother was born on whose hand was the crimson string, so he was called Zerah.

39 WHEN JOSEPH HAD BEEN brought down to Egypt, an Egyptian, Potiphar, a courtier of Pharaoh, captain of the life guard bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had brought him there. ²The LORD was with Joseph^m and he became a successful person. As he lived in the house of his Egyptian master, ³his master noticed that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he undertook; ⁴so Joseph pleased him and became his orderly. Then he appointed him his household steward and gave him charge over all his affairs. ⁵And so it was that from the time when he appointed him super-

i) His sin, still called Onanism, was aggravated by his ill-will toward his deceased brother.

j) Judah, as a widower, committed fornication, not adultery.

k) This chapter gives a faithful picture of morals and standards of those days and it was inserted because Perez became an ancestor of David, which for us betokens his relationship to the Messiah.

l) Perez means, a breach; Zerah, dawn.

m) As our Lord Jesus promised us — and He keeps His promise. It is ours to acknowledge and to respond to His companionship.

intendant of house and property, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's household for Joseph's sake; the LORD's blessing rested on all his belongings in house and field. ⁶So he committed everything to Joseph's care; he did not bother about anything; he simply ate his meals.

Now Joseph was well formed and of handsome appearance. ⁷The time came when his master's wife ogled Joseph and said, "Embrace me!" ⁸But he refused; he said to his master's wife, "Look here! My master does not bother about anything in the house; he has put me in charge of everything. ⁹No one in this house is superior to me; he has kept nothing from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How could I commit so great a crime and sin against God!"^a

¹⁰Day after day she kept talking to Joseph; but he did not give in to her to lie with her or to keep her company. ¹¹Then one day, when he entered the house to attend to his work and there was not a house servant indoors, ¹²she caught hold of his coat, saying, "Lie with me!" But he left the coat in her hand as he fled and ran outdoors. ¹³When she found herself with his coat in her hand, while he had fled outdoors, ¹⁴she shouted to the men of her house, "Look! he has brought in to us a Hebrew man to mock us. He came into my room to violate me, and I screamed; ¹⁵so when he heard me raise my voice and scream, he left his coat with me, fled and ran outdoors."

¹⁶She kept his coat with her until his master came home, ¹⁷whom she then told the same story, "That Hebrew slave you brought in to us, came to my room to molest me; ¹⁸but when I raised my voice and screamed, he left his coat with me and ran outdoors." ¹⁹When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is the way your slave treated me," he grew hot with anger. ²⁰Joseph's master arrested him and put him in the prison, where the state prisoners were confined; there

he was interned.^o

²¹But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him kindness; He also inclined the prison warden favorably toward him. ²²The prison warden entrusted to Joseph all the convicts in the prison, holding him responsible for all that was going on. ²³The warden did not check on anything under Joseph's management,^p because the LORD was with him and the LORD gave him success in everything he undertook.

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40 SOME TIME LATER THE BUTLER and the baker of Egypt's king offended their master, the king of Egypt; ²so Pharaoh was angry at his two officials, the chief butler and the chief baker. ³He put them in custody at the house of the Captain of the Guard, the place where Joseph was confined. ⁴The Captain of the Guard put them in Joseph's care, who was at their service; and they remained in custody for quite a period. ⁵One night both the butler and the baker of Egypt's king, who were confined to prison, had each his own dream with its personal significance. ⁶When Joseph came to them next morning and took a look at them, he saw that they were despondent; ⁷so he asked Pharaoh's courtiers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why do you look so woebegone today?" ⁸They told him, "We had a dream and there is no one to interpret it." Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me." ⁹So the chief of the butlers told Joseph his dream:

"In my dream I saw a vine in front of me ¹⁰and on the vine three branches. And no sooner did it bud than it blossomed, too, and its clusters ripened into grapes. ¹¹Pharaoh's cup was in my hand and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, then gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

¹²Joseph told him, "This is its interpretation: The three branches are three days. ¹³Within three days Pha-

a) Awareness of God's presence never left Joseph and it strengthened him in a great temptation.

o) Had Potiphar believed his wife's story, he would have had Joseph executed; but to protect his family name he felt constrained to administer imprisonment.

p) Both at Potiphar's and in the prison Joseph did more than he was told to do; invariably he walked the second mile. God blessed his labors.

raoh will raise your head and restore you to your position; you will hand Pharaoh his cup as was your previous custom when you were his butler. ¹⁴But when all is well with you, please keep me personally in mind, and show your gratitude by mentioning me to Pharaoh; get me out of this house; ¹⁵for I was actually kidnaped from the Hebrew country, and here, too, I have done nothing to deserve being put in the dungeon."

¹⁶When the chief of the bakers noticed that the interpretation was encouraging, he told Joseph, "I had a dream, too; in mine I saw three baskets of white bread on my head ¹⁷and in the upper basket all sorts of bakers' delicacies for Pharaoh; but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."

¹⁸Joseph gave answer, "This is its interpretation: The three baskets are three days. ¹⁹Within three days Pharaoh will raise your head from you and hang you on a tree; then the birds will eat the flesh from upon you."

²⁰And it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he served a banquet to all his courtiers, and among his servants he raised the head of the chief of the butlers and of the chief of the bakers; ²¹the chief butler he restored to his butlership, so he handed Pharaoh the cup; ²²but the chief baker he hanged,^a just as Joseph had interpreted. ²³However, the chief of the butlers did not keep Joseph in mind; he forgot him.^c

1885 B.C.

41 TWO WHOLE YEARS HAD PASSED when Pharaoh dreamed. He saw himself standing by the river^a ²and observing seven splendid-looking, well-fed cows that came up out of the river and were grazing in the marsh grass. ³Then he saw seven other cows coming up from the river after them — ugly and lean. They were standing with the other cows on the river bank ⁴and the ugly, lean cows ate the seven splendid-

looking, well-fed cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵When he fell asleep again he dreamed a second time. He saw seven heads of large and full grain growing on a single stalk. ⁶He then saw seven lean heads of grain, blasted by the east wind, sprouting out after them, ⁷and the seven lean ears swallowed the seven large, full heads of grain.

Pharaoh woke up; it was all a dream. ⁸But in the morning he felt disturbed in spirit; he sent for all the scribes and the wise men of Egypt and Pharaoh told them his dream; but none was able to interpret it for Pharaoh. ⁹Then Pharaoh's chief butler spoke up, "Today I am reminded of my offences; ¹⁰how Pharaoh was angry at his servants and committed me into custody in the house of the Captain of the Guard, me and the chief baker. ¹¹I and he had a dream on the same night, each with a different significance. ¹²A Hebrew youth, who was a slave of the Captain of the Guard, was there with us, to whom we told our dreams and he interpreted them to us, to each his different dream, ¹³and as he interpreted them so it happened, me Pharaoh restored to my position and him he hanged."

¹⁴Pharaoh then summoned Joseph and quickly they brought him out of the dungeon.^c He shaved, changed his clothes and came to Pharaoh, ¹⁵"I have had a dream," Pharaoh said to Joseph, "and no one is interpreting it; but I have heard it said of you that you interpret a dream when you hear it told." ¹⁶Joseph answered, "Not by myself. God will give Pharaoh a favorable response." ¹⁷Pharaoh then told Joseph, "In my dream I was standing on the river bank ¹⁸and saw seven well-fed, splendid-looking cows come up out of the river and they grazed among the reed grass. ¹⁹Then I saw in my dream seven other cows come up, very ugly and lean; I have never seen such bad looking ones in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰But the lean, ugly cows ate

g) Evidence must have accumulated against the baker, to show that in an attempt to poison the Pharaoh, not the butler but the baker had been guilty.

r) Gratitude is extremely uncommon. s) In Egypt always the Nile.

t) Joseph's great chance after 13 years. Dreams were his specialty. He must have had many through the years, becoming a master in them.

the first seven fat cows, ²¹and they did not look any better for having them in their stomachs; they looked as ugly as before. Then I woke up. ²²Again I saw in my dream seven heads of grain on a single stalk, full and good. ²³I also saw sprouting out after them seven heads of grain, withered and shriveled up by the east wind, ²⁴and the thin ears swallowing the seven good ears. This I related to the interpreters, but nobody explained it to me."

²⁵Joseph answered Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dream is a unit; God has made known to Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁶The seven fat cows represent seven years and the seven full ears represent seven years; it is one complete dream. ²⁷The seven lean and ugly cows, that came up after them, mean seven years, and the seven thin ears, shriveled by the east wind mean seven years of famine. ²⁸This is my message to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do." ²⁹Take note! There are seven years of great abundance ahead throughout the land of Egypt, ³⁰but following them there will come seven years of famine, and all the plenty in the land of Egypt will be forgotten; the famine shall exhaust the land. ³¹The country's abundance will not be in mind, because of the subsequent famine; for it will be woefully severe. ³²That the dream was repeated for Pharaoh means: The matter is divinely settled and God will presently bring it about.

³³"Now then, let Pharaoh look for an intelligent and prudent man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. ³⁴Let Pharaoh take further action; have him appoint supervisors over the land to take in one fifth of Egypt's produce during the seven abundant years. ³⁵Have them collect all that food during these coming good years and store away the grain under Pharaoh's direction, to retain food in the cities. ³⁶This food shall be stored for the people in

view of the seven years of famine that will come upon the land of Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine."

³⁷The plan appealed to Pharaoh and to all his servants. ³⁸Pharaoh said to his servants: "Can we find this man's equal, who has in him the spirit of God?" ³⁹And to Joseph Pharaoh said, "Since God has taught you all this, there is none as discerning and wise as you are; ⁴⁰you shall be in charge of my palace, and as you give orders my people shall conduct themselves. Only in matters of the throne will I be your superior." ⁴¹He further said to Joseph: "Observe! I have put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."

⁴²Then Pharaoh pulled his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger; ^x he dressed him in fine, linen garments, put the gold chain around his neck ⁴³and had him ride in his second chariot. Ahead of him they proclaimed, "Bow the knee!" Pharaoh appointed him over all Egypt ⁴⁴and said to Joseph, "I remain the Pharaoh, but without acknowledging you not one person in all Egypt shall stir hand or foot." ⁴⁵Pharaoh also gave Joseph the name Zaphenath Paneah ^y and wedded him to Asenath, daughter of Poti-Phera, priest of On.

Joseph traveled all over Egypt. ⁴⁶At 30 he stood in Pharaoh's presence, then went out from Pharaoh, visiting every part of Egypt. ⁴⁷During the seven years of abundance, when the land produced by handfuls, ⁴⁸he stored food in the cities. ⁴⁹Joseph collected grain in immense quantities as the sand on the seashore; he quit recording it, because it was beyond reckoning.

⁵⁰Previous to the famine years two sons were born to Joseph, which Asenath, daughter of Poti-Phera, priest of On, bore him. ⁵¹The first-born Joseph named Manasseh—for, "God has made me forget my hardships and all my father's house." ⁵²The second he

u) Like Daniel (2:28) before Nebuchadnezzar, Joseph is careful to ascribe interpretive power to God.
v) Once more Joseph walks the second mile — he gives advice unasked for, but is aware that as God's messenger he is obligated to speak.

w) Thus publishing to all his position next to the king.

x) Joseph was thereby empowered to take measures in Pharaoh's name. y) Sustainer of Life.

named Ephraim, for "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."²

⁵³When the seven years of plenty were ended in the land of Egypt, ⁵⁴the seven years of scarcity began, as Joseph had foretold. In all adjoining countries there was famine; but everywhere in Egypt there was food. ⁵⁵But when the whole land of Egypt suffered hunger, the people appealed to Pharaoh for food and Pharaoh announced to all the Egyptians, "Apply to Joseph and do what he tells you." ⁵⁶While the famine was spreading all over the earth, Joseph opened all the granaries and sold to the Egyptians; for the famine grew severe in Egypt. ⁵⁷And all nations came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain because everywhere the famine was severe.^a

1876 B.C.

42 WHEN JACOB UNDERSTOOD THAT there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why stare at one another? ²I have heard" — he went on — "that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so we may survive and not starve." ³So Joseph's ten brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain; ⁴but Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother^b, along with his brothers, for he felt afraid some harm might come to him.

⁵Among those who came to buy grain the sons of Israel arrived, for there was famine in the land of Canaan. ⁶Joseph was in control of the land, in charge of sales to all the people of the earth. So Joseph's brothers came and bowed to him with their foreheads touching the ground. ⁷Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke gruffly to them. He said, "Where do you come from?" They answered, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."

⁸While Joseph knew his brothers, they did not recognize him^c, ⁹and

Joseph remembered the dream he had dreamed about them. He said to them, "You are spies; you have come to detect where the land lies exposed." ¹⁰They replied, "No, my master, your servants have come to buy grain for food. ¹¹We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."

¹²He said to them, "No, you came to find undefended places in the land." ¹³Then they said, "Your servants are 12 brothers, the sons of one man in Canaan; the youngest is now with our father and one is no more."^d ¹⁴Joseph told them, "Just as I have said to you, you are spies. ¹⁵Here is your test: As sure as Pharaoh lives, you shall not get away from here unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶Send one of you to fetch your brother, and you will be interned, so as to test your statement whether you are honest; else by the life of Pharaoh, you certainly are spies."

¹⁷Joseph put them together in custody for three days ¹⁸and told them on the third day, "Do this and survive! I revere God. ¹⁹If you are true, then let one brother remain bound in your prison-house and the rest convey grain for your starving families. ²⁰Bring me your youngest brother so as to verify your words, and you will survive." And so they did. ²¹They said to one another, "Unquestionably we were guilty about our brother when we witnessed the agony of his soul, as he pleaded to us and we would not listen; therefore this agony is now upon us^e."

²²Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the lad'? But you paid no attention. Take note, payment for his blood has come due." ²³They had no idea Joseph understood them, for he spoke to them through an interpreter. ²⁴He withdrew a moment and wept; then came back to resume the conversation with them. He indi-

z) Manasseh — Forgetting; Ephraim — Fruitful.

a) At least nine years after Joseph had come to power, 22 years since his brothers had sold him.

b) Benjamin was the only other son of Jacob and Rachel.

c) Although he was smooth-shaven, the years had wrought much change in his appearance, due in part to his environment and his clothes. He spoke through an interpreter and in their minds no relation seemed thinkable between this potentate and their disposed-of brother.

d) Joseph must have maneuvered with many questions to get that statement out of them. It did not come glibly.

e) This was a result of Joseph's "third degree" tactics. He aimed to know their present feelings.

cated Simeon^f out of the group and had him bound as they looked on.

²⁵Joseph gave orders to fill their sacks with grain; also to return each man's money in his sack and to add provision for the trip; and so they did for them. ²⁶Then they packed the grain on their donkeys and were off. ²⁷But as one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey at the lodging place, there was his money in the mouth of his sack! ²⁸So he told his brothers, "My money has been returned. Look, it is inside my sack!" Their hearts sank. Horrified, they exclaimed to one another, "What is this that God^g has done to us?"

²⁹On reaching their father Jacob in Canaan, they related to him all their experiences. They said, ³⁰"The man in charge of the country spoke to us gruffly; he took us for spies of the land. ³¹We told him, 'We are honest people; we have never been spies.' ³²There are twelve brothers of us on our father's side; one is no more and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan.' ³³Then the man, the master of the country, said to us, 'In this way I shall ascertain that you are honest people. Leave one brother with me; take grain needed for your starving families and be off; ³⁴bring your youngest brother to me. Then I will know that you are not spies but are trustworthy men. I will then give you back your brother and you can trade in this country.'"

³⁵When they emptied their sacks, behold, every one's money bundled inside his sack! The sight of the money bundles sent fear into them and their father. ³⁶Their father Jacob said to them, "You bereave me (of children); Joseph is gone; Simeon is gone, and now you would take Benjamin! All this comes down on me."

³⁷Reuben told his father, "You may take the lives of my two sons if I fail

to bring him home. Place him in my charge and I will return him to you."^h ³⁸But he replied, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead and he alone is left. In case harm befalls him on the trip which you are to make you will bring down my hoary head with sorrow to death's realm."ⁱ

43 THE FAMINE, HOWEVER, WAS A sore trial in the land; ²and when they had finished eating the grain they had brought from Egypt, their father told them, "Go again and buy us a little food." ³Judah answered him, "But the man warned us sternly, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food; ⁵but if you are not sending him, then we shall not go down, either, for the man told us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

⁶Israel demurred, "Why did you treat me so shabbily to tell the man you had another brother?" They said, "The man put the straight question to us about us and our family, 'Is your father still living? Do you have another brother?' So we answered him accordingly. How could we know he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

⁸Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the lad with me and we will get up and go, so we may survive and not starve, we as well as you, and our little ones. ⁹I will stand guaranty for him; demand him back from me. If I do not bring him back and place him before you, then I shall bear the blame forever. ¹⁰But if we had not dallied, we could have been back the second time!"

¹¹Their father Israel conceded, "If it must be, do this: Take along in your sacks choice products of the land for a present to the man, a bit of balsam, a little honey, some aromatic powder,

f) With Reuben absent when Joseph was sold down to Egypt, Simeon was the responsible leader, being next to the oldest; hence his being retained.

g) One great lesson life had taught them, specially since Jacob's conversion, life is always related to God.

h) Two more deaths in the family would hardly serve to appease Jacob.

i) Hebrew name for "realm of the dead" is Sheol.

j) With Simeon and Levi disqualified because of their slaughter of the Shechemites, Judah became leader next to Reuben.

gum, nuts and almonds.^k ¹²Have double payments with you, including the silver that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; take it back. Perhaps it was a mistake. ¹³Take your brother along, too, and get up; go back to the man. ¹⁴And may God Almighty grant you such favor with the man that he may let both your other brother and Benjamin come back. As for me — if I am bereaved of children, I am bereaved."

¹⁵The men took along Benjamin, the present and also double payment, got started, went down to Egypt, and stood in Joseph's presence. ¹⁶When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he told his house steward, "Bring the men home; see to the butchering and make preparations, for at noon the men are to dine with me." ¹⁷The man did as Joseph had said and brought the men into Joseph's house; ¹⁸but being taken into Joseph's house made them afraid, suspecting, "We are being brought in because of the money that was returned to our sacks on the first trip; he will accuse us, overpower us, make us his slaves and appropriate our donkeys." ¹⁹So they contacted Joseph's house steward and addressed him at the house entrance, ²⁰"Please, Sir, we came here before to buy food ²¹and when we reached the lodging place and opened our sacks, there was each one's money full-weight back in our sacks; so we have brought it back with us. ²²Besides, we have brought payment with us for more food. Who put that money in our sacks, we have no idea."

²³"Welcome to you!" he said, "Have no fear! Your God, your father's God, has put for you the secret deposit in your sacks. I received your money." He then brought Simeon out to them, ²⁴conducted them into Joseph's house, supplied them with water to wash their feet, and also foddered their donkeys. ²⁵On their part they got their gift ready for Joseph's arrival at noon, for they had learned they were to dine there.

²⁶As soon as Joseph came home, they offered him the gift they had with them in the house, bowing to the ground before him. ²⁷He inquired after their welfare and asked, "Is your father in health, the old man you mentioned? Is he still alive?" ²⁸They said, "Your servant, our father, is alive and in good health" all the while bowing their heads and bending their bodies.

²⁹As he looked up, he saw his brother Benjamin, the son of his own mother, and inquired, "Is this your youngest brother of whom you told me?" and said, "God be gracious to you, my son!" ³⁰Then Joseph hurried away, for he was deeply moved over his brother; so he stepped into a room and wept. ³¹Then he washed his face, came out and mastered his emotions. He said, "Serve dinner!"

³²Dinner was served separately for him, for them, and for the Egyptians who ate there, because the Egyptians must not eat with the Hebrews; it would be an offense for the Egyptians. ³³They were seated in view of him in the order of their ages from the first-born to the youngest; which made them look at one another, wondering. ³⁴From his own table he sent them their courses, but those of Benjamin were five times as large^l as any of theirs. They drank and got hilarious with him.

44 BUT HE GAVE ORDERS TO HIS house steward: "Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they can carry and put each one's payment in the mouth of his sack. ²Also place my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the youngest one's sack with his grain payment." And he did as Joseph had told him. ³With break of day the men were let go with their donkeys ⁴and they had left the city, but no great distance, when Joseph said, "Up and after the men! Overtake them and ask them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? (Why have you stolen my silver cup?)'"^m ⁵Does not my master do his drinking out of it and use it for divina-

^k) Impoverished as Canaan had become, there still were choice things which Egypt did not produce, the giving of which involved great sacrifice by the donor.

^l) Would they show jealousy? Had their attitude changed for the better? Joseph found out.

^m) The Septuagint translation contains this brief sentence which seems quite in place.

tion? That was a wicked thing to do!"

⁶He overtook them and repeated these words to them. ⁷They replied to him, "Why does my master speak this way? It is utterly foreign to your servants to commit such a crime. ⁸Remember the money we found in our sacks and brought back from Canaan; how then should we steal silver or gold out of your master's house? ⁹The one of your servants with whom it is found should die and besides we will be my master's slaves."

¹⁰He answered, "Very well, be it as you say; he with whom it is found shall be my slave; but the rest go free."

¹¹Then hurriedly each of them lowered his sack to the ground and opened it.

¹²Beginning with the oldest and finishing with the youngest he did the searching, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³They tore their clothes, packed each his donkey and went back to the city.

¹⁴Judah with his brothers came to Joseph's house — for he was still there — and they fell before him to the ground. ¹⁵Joseph said to them, "How could you do such a thing? Did you not know that a man like me would unquestionably discoverⁿ?"

¹⁶To which Judah replied, "We do not know what to say to my master, or how to word our cause so as to clear ourselves. God has exposed your servants' guilt. See, we are my master's slaves, we as well as he with whom the cup is found."

¹⁷But he rejoined, "Not at all! I will do no such thing. The person with whom the cup was found shall be my slave, but you, you go up peacefully to your father."

¹⁸Judah then stepped up to him and said, "With your permission, my master, your servant would tell you something intimate, and let not your anger blaze against your servants, for you are Pharaoh's counterpart. ¹⁹My master asked his servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' ²⁰So we told my master, 'We have an aged father and

a young brother, a child of his old age; his brother is dead, so he alone remains of his mother, and his father loves him!' ²¹Then you told your servants, 'Bring him down to me, so I may set my eyes on him!' ²²But we said to my master, 'The lad cannot leave his father; should he leave him, his father would die.' ²³Upon which you told your servants, 'If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you shall not see my face again.'

²⁴"On our return to your servant my father, we gave him my master's message, ²⁵and when our father said, 'Go back to buy us a little food,' ²⁶we answered, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us we will go down; for we cannot meet the man unless our youngest brother goes with us.'

²⁷"Your servant our father said to us, 'You know that my wife^o bore me two sons. ²⁸One left me and I said, Yes, he is surely torn to pieces and I have not seen him since. ²⁹If you take this one, too, and something happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs to Sheol with sorrow!' ³⁰Now then, since his life is bound up in the lad's life—³¹when I come to my father and the lad is not with us, he will die, and your servants will be bringing the hoary head of your servant my father with sorrow to the grave. ³²But your servant went guaranty for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I fail to bring him back to you, then I will bear the blame before my father forever.' ³³I beg of you, therefore, to retain your servant in the lad's place, a slave to my master, and let the lad go up with his brothers; ³⁴for how could I go up to my father and not have the lad with me, there to witness the grief my father must suffer!"

45 JOSEPH WAS NOT ABLE ANY longer to control his emotions before all the bystanders; he shouted, "Have everyone withdraw!" So there

n) There was "crystal gazing" in Egypt and Joseph's gift of foretelling was probably ascribed to similar practices. We know that his trust was in God and not in the silver cup.

o) Jacob thought of Rachel alone as his real wife — a hard pill to swallow for Leah's sons, and it was not God's thought. Leah and not Rachel was buried with Jacob in the Machpelah cave; she also became ancestress of Jesus.

were no others present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ²So loudly did he weep that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household heard it. ³Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" His brothers were so confounded, they could not answer him.

⁴Joseph said to his brothers, "Please, come close to me"; so they came nearer. He said, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt; ⁵be not disheartened or vexed with yourselves for selling me here, because God sent me ahead of you to save your life. ⁶For two years now the famine is in the land and there are five more years without plowing or harvest, ⁷and God sent me before you to assure for you continuance on the earth; to grant you survival through a great salvation. ⁸So then, you did not send me here, but God^p, and He has appointed me a father to Pharaoh, a master of his whole palace and ruler over all Egypt.

⁹"Hurry and go up to my father and tell him, 'This is your son Joseph's message: God has put me in charge of all Egypt. Come down to me without delay. ¹⁰You will live in the land of Goshen where you will be near me, you, your children and your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds and everything you have. ¹¹There I will support you, so that you, your family and all you possess may not suffer privation — for there are five more years of famine.'^q

¹²"Take note! You see for yourselves and so does my brother Benjamin, that I am personally conversing with you; ¹³and tell my father about all my splendor in Egypt, and everything you have observed. Hurry and bring my father down here." ¹⁴He then fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; so did Benjamin weep on his neck. ¹⁵He also kissed all his brothers and embraced them as he wept. Afterwards his brothers conversed with him.

¹⁶When the news that Joseph's

brothers had come reached Pharaoh's palace, Pharaoh and his servants were pleased ¹⁷and Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers to do this: 'Pack your animals; go back to the land of Canaan, ¹⁸get your father and your families and come to me. I will give you the best that Egypt contains; you will live on the fat of the land,'^r ¹⁹And these are my orders for you to carry out: Take wagons from the land of Egypt for you, for your little ones, and for your wives; bring your father and come. ²⁰Do not trouble about furniture, for the best of all Egypt is yours.

²¹The sons of Israel did so. Joseph furnished them wagons as Pharaoh had ordered, and provisions for the trip. ²²He gave each of them new suits, but Benjamin he gave 200 dollars worth of silver and five new suits. ²³To his father he sent this: Ten donkeys loaded with Egypt's choice products; also ten she-donkeys carrying grain, food and provision on the way. ²⁴Thus he saw his brothers off and as they left, he told them: "Have no disagreement by the way."

²⁵They went up from Egypt and came to the land of Canaan, to their father Jacob, ²⁶whom they told, "Joseph is still alive and he is ruler over the whole land of Egypt." Jacob's heart remained unmoved, for he could not believe them; ²⁷so they repeated to him everything Joseph had told them, and when he saw the wagons Joseph had sent to transport him, their father Jacob's spirit revived ²⁸and Israel said, "Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

46 WITH EVERYTHING HE HAD, Israel journeyed as far as Beersheba, where he offered sacrifices to his father Isaac's God. ²In night visions God spoke to Israel, Jacob, Jacob; who said, "Here am I." ³I am God, He said, the God of your father. Be not afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you a great nation. ⁴I will

p) An outstanding illustration of divine sovereignty and government: God is in charge of the universe, including each single person, and His program carries through.

q) The direct message to father Jacob is finished. Joseph wants their personal testimony to their father — which cannot help being a confession.

r) When famine was felt by all Egyptians, it required a deep sense of appreciation to invite outsiders in, and to offer them its best.

go down with you to Egypt, and I will without fail bring you up again. And Joseph will close your eyes.

⁶Jacob then moved on from Beer-sheba and the sons of Israel conveyed their father Jacob, their little ones and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh had sent to convey him. ⁷They took their cattle and their movable belongings, which they had accumulated in Canaan and arrived in Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him — ⁷his sons, his grandsons, his daughters, his granddaughters — all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt⁸.

⁸These are the names of Israel's children who came into Egypt — Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's first-born, ⁹and Reuben's sons Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi.

¹⁰Simeon's sons: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin and Zohar; also Shaul, the son of a Canaanitess.

¹¹Levi's sons: Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

¹²Judah's sons: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah; but Er and Onan died in Canaan. Perez' sons were Hezron and Hamul.

¹³Issachar's sons: Tola, Puvah, Job and Shimron.

¹⁴Zebulun's sons: Sered, Elon and Jahleel. ¹⁵These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore Jacob in Padan Aram; also his daughter Dinah; the total number of persons, sons and daughters, 33.

¹⁶Gad's sons: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli.

¹⁷Asher's sons: Imnah, Isuah, Isui, Beriah, and their sister Serah. Beriah's sons: Heber and Malchiel; ¹⁸the sons of Zilpah whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah. These she bore Jacob, 16 persons.

¹⁹The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰To Joseph in Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath¹, daughter of Poti-Phera, priest of On, bore him.

²¹And Benjamin's sons: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muphim, Huphim and Ard; ²²sons of Rachel whom she bore Jacob — fourteen altogether.

²³Dan's son: Hushim.

²⁴Naphtali's sons: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem, ²⁵sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave his daughter Rachel; she bore these to Jacob, seven persons.

²⁶The total number of persons that entered Egypt with Jacob, his blood descendants, his sons' wives not included, was 66⁴. ²⁷Joseph's sons, born in Egypt were two; so all the members of Jacob's family as he came into Egypt were 70.

²⁸He sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph, so as to meet him in Goshen; and they arrived in the Goshen district. ²⁹Joseph then hitched up his chariot and rode to Goshen to meet his father Israel, and when they met, Joseph embraced his father and wept a long while, hugging him again and again. ³⁰Israel said to Joseph, "Now I am ready to die, for I have personally seen you and you are still alive."

³¹Joseph told his brothers and his father's family, "I will call on Pharaoh and let him know; I will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household have come to me from Canaan; ³²they are shepherds, their trade is to tend cattle. They have brought along their flocks and their herds and all they have.' ³³Now, when Pharaoh summons you and asks what your occupation is, ³⁴you answer, 'Your servants have been cattlemen ever since we were youngsters, both we and our fathers,' so that you may settle in the Goshen district; for every tender of sheep is detested by the Egyptians."⁵

47 JOSEPH THEN WENT TO PHARAOH and told him, "My father, my brothers, their flocks and their herds, with all they have, are come

s) Grandchildren included, both in Leah's and in Rachel's case.

t) Her training of Manasseh and Ephraim would hardly be in the Hebrew faith.

u) Leah had died in Canaan and had been buried in the family sepulchre of Machpela [Ch. 49:31]. Jacob and Joseph complete the 70.

v) Joseph ran a risk, which only high characters dare or care to take; for, not being a native himself and having been elevated to a position many nobles would covet, he took the responsibility for a type of foreigners that was heartily disliked and looked down upon, and that when many natives went hungry.

from the land of Canaan and are now in the Goshen district." ²He also introduced five of his brothers to Pharaoh ³and Pharaoh asked his brothers, "What is your occupation?" They answered Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers," ⁴then added, "We have come to live here temporarily because there is no pasturage for your servant's flocks in the land of Canaan, which is hard hit by the famine. So we beg of you to let your servants live in the land of Goshen."

⁵Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you; ⁶the land of Egypt is at your disposal. Have your father and your brothers settle in the best of the land; let them live in the Goshen district. If you know of capable men among them, put them in charge of my own livestock."

⁷Joseph then brought in his father and introduced him to Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh ⁸and Pharaoh asked Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" ⁹Jacob answered Pharaoh, "The years of my pilgrimage number 130; few and strenuous my life's days and years have been and not equal to the pilgrim years of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." ¹⁰Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and withdrew from Pharaoh's presence.

¹¹Joseph arranged for his father and his brothers to get settled, and donated to them property in the land of Egypt, its choicest section, the Ramses section, as Pharaoh had ordered. ¹²Joseph supported his father, his brothers and his father's entire household with food, rationed according to the number of the children.

¹³There was lack of food all over the country, for the famine was severe; both Egypt and Canaan became exhausted from the famine. ¹⁴So Joseph collected all the available money in Egypt and in Canaan^w for the grain they bought, and he deposited the

money in Pharaoh's palace. ¹⁵When the cash gave out in Egypt and in Canaan, the Egyptians all came to Joseph, saying, "Give us food! Why let us starve in front of you because we are out of money!"

¹⁶Joseph replied, "If your money is gone, hand over your livestock and I will give you food in exchange." ¹⁷So they brought Joseph their animals and he traded them food for their horses, the flocks, the herds and the donkeys; that year he nourished them in exchange for all their livestock.

¹⁸With that year ended, they came to him the next year and told him, "No use hiding from my master that our money is gone and all our livestock is owned by our master; there is nothing left to bring our master except our persons and our acreage. ¹⁹Why should we die before your eyes and our land lie waste! Buy us and our acres in exchange for food, then we and our land shall be in serfdom to Pharaoh.* Hand us seed, too, so we may survive, not starve, and the land not lie waste."

²⁰Joseph then bought all of Egypt's acreage for Pharaoh; for all the Egyptians sold their fields, due to the overwhelming severity of the famine; in this way the land became Pharaoh's. ²¹Also from one end of Egypt to the other he had the people move to town. ²²Only the land of the priests he did not purchase, for the priests enjoyed royal subsidies, and lived on the rations Pharaoh regularly allowed them; so they did not sell their land.

²³Joseph announced to the people, "Take note that now I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Look! Here is seed for you. ²⁴Put in your crop and at harvest time contribute one fifth to Pharaoh and keep four fifths for yourselves — for seeding the field, for personal sustenance, for your domestics and for your little ones."^y

²⁵They replied, "You have saved our lives; may we gain our master's favor,

w) Canaan is mentioned with Egypt partly because about this time Egypt held sovereignty over the peoples of Canaan.

x) An absolute sovereign, the Pharaoh claimed full ownership of the national treasury and with it eventually over the lives and persons of his subjects.

y) There was no sowing or planting till the last year of famine; for the seed would be wasted; but the ruling for a 20% taxation could be made then and there.

and we are willing to be Pharaoh's serfs." ²⁶Joseph then established it as a regulation that has been in force in the land of Egypt to this day that Pharaoh shall have the fifth — exempting only the priests' lands, which did not become Pharaoh's.

²⁷Israel² lived in the land of Egypt, in the Goshen district; there they acquired property, were prolific and multiplied rapidly. ²⁸For 17 years Jacob lived in Egypt, so Jacob reached the age of 147. ²⁹When Israel's end drew near, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "If you will do me a favor, please place your hand under my thigh and pledge me kindness and truth. Please, do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰for I want to rest with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place."

³¹He said, "I will carry out your suggestion." "Swear to me!" he said, and he swore to him. Israel then bowed in worship on the head end of his couch.

48 FOLLOWING THIS, SOMEONE told Joseph, "Your father is ill," so he took along his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ²When Jacob was informed of Joseph's visit to him, Israel, collecting all his strength, sat up in bed. ³Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz^a in the land of Canaan and blessed me.^b ⁴He said to me, I will make you fruitful and numerous; I will make you a multitude of peoples; I will give your descendants after you this land for an everlasting possession. ⁵And as for your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in Egypt before my coming here, they are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh shall be to me like Reuben and Simeon. ⁶But your children who are born after them shall be yours; they shall be mentioned like their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by my side in the land of Canaan

a little distance from Ephrath and I buried her by the Ephrath — that is Bethlehem — road."

⁸Israel then looked at Joseph's sons and asked, "Who are these?" ⁹Joseph answered his father, "They are my sons, whom God has granted me here." "Please lead them to me," he said, "and I will bless them."

¹⁰As Israel's eyesight was dim with age, he could not see well; so Joseph brought them close to him; then he kissed and embraced them. ¹¹And Israel remarked to Joseph, "I did not expect ever to see you again, and, think of it, God has granted me to see your offspring!" ¹²Joseph then removed them from his knees and bowed with his head to the ground. ¹³With his right hand, Joseph placed Ephraim by Israel's left hand and with his left hand he placed Manasseh by Israel's right hand and brought them close to him. ¹⁴But Israel extended his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, consciously directing his hands, although Manasseh was the first-born.^c ¹⁵He blessed Joseph, saying, "The God in whose presence my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who shepherded me through life to this moment, ¹⁶the Angel who continually redeemed^d me from every evil, bless these lads. May they perpetuate my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase to multitudes in the midst of the earth."

¹⁷When Joseph noticed that his father was placing his right hand on Ephraim's head, he disliked it; so he seized his father's hand to shift it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's. ¹⁸Joseph said to his father, "Not this way, my father; for this is the first-born. Place your right hand on his head." ¹⁹But his father declined and said, "I know, my son, I know; he too shall become a people and he too shall grow great; nevertheless, his younger brother shall be-

2) The Israelites rather than Jacob alone. a) Named Bethel after Jacob's experience there.

b) The least we Christian parents can do toward our children is to tell them how wonderful God has been to us, a testimony to which no child can take exception.

c) Somewhat of a repetition of the Esau-Jacob relationship so far as parental blessings are concerned.

d) Literally, The One redeeming me — the Goel — here first so mentioned.

come greater than he and his descendants shall become a completeness of nations." ²⁰That day he blessed them, saying, "In you the Israelites shall bless; they will say, 'May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh';" so he placed Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹Israel said to Joseph, "You see, I die; but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²²As an extra legacy among your kinsfolk I am leaving you the ridge I took from the Amorite with my sword and my bow."^e

49 JACOB CALLED FOR HIS SONS; HE said, "Come together so that I may tell you what you will experience in coming days. ²Form a circle and hear, you sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.

³"Reuben, you are my first-born, my strength and the first issue of my vitality; excellent in dignity, prominent in prowess. ⁴Boiling over like water, you will not retain pre-eminence; for you climbed up to your father's bed; you defiled my couch with your climbing.^f

⁵"Simeon and Levi are brothers; their weapons are implements of violence. ⁶My soul, do not share in their plot; my spirit, do not join their meeting; for in their anger they murdered men and in their insolence they hamstringed oxen.^g ⁷A curse on their anger, for it is fierce and on their rage, for it is cruel. I will disperse them among Jacob and scatter them in Israel.^h

⁸"Judah, you are the one your brothers will praise;ⁱ your grip will be on the necks of your foes. May your father's sons bow down to you. ⁹Judah, a lion's cub! From prey you have gone high,^j my son! Like a lion he stoops, he crouches; like an old lion; who would rouse him? ¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the leader's staff from between his feet until Shiloh

comes and Him the peoples shall obey.^k ¹¹Hitching his foal to the vine, the donkey's foal to the choice vine, he washes his clothes in wine, his garments in the juice of the grapes. ¹²His eyes are red with wine and his teeth white with milk.

¹³"Zebulun shall dwell by the sea-shore; he shall be a harbor for ships, with his flank toward Zidon.

¹⁴"Issachar is a big-boned donkey, lying down between the sheep folds. ¹⁵When he finds rest enjoyable and the land pleasant, he bends his shoulder to carry loads and submits to servitude.

¹⁶"Dan will judge his people as one of Israel's tribes. ¹⁷Let Dan be a serpent on the road, a horned snake in the path, that snips the horses' heels so that the rider falls backward. ¹⁸I am waiting, O LORD, for Thy salvation!

¹⁹"Gad, raiders will assail him, but he assails their rear.

²⁰"From Asher, his food will be rich and he shall deliver royal dainties.

²¹"Naphtali, a deer let loose; he produces beautiful sayings.

²²"Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring, whose branches run over the wall. ²³The archers sorely harassed him and shot at him; they have hated him; ²⁴but his bow remains steady; his arms and his hands are reinforced by the aid of the Mighty One of Jacob, from the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel; ²⁵through the God of your father, who will help you; through the Almighty who will bless you with blessings from heaven above; blessings from the deep that lies below;^l blessings of breasts and wombs. ²⁶Your father's blessings surpass the blessings of my forebears, reaching what is choicest on the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, on the crown of him who was distinguished^m from his brothers.

²⁷"Benjamin, a tearing wolf; in the

e) A lot apparently bought from the Shechemites [Ch. 33:19]. Joseph was finally buried there [Josh. 24:32].

f) Reuben's sin with Bilhah [Ch. 35:22]. g) Their massacre of the Shechemites [Ch. 34:25-29].

h) Jacob at his deathbed speaks for God; he is become a prophet.

i) In agreement with his name, Judah - Object of Praise.

j) Picturing the lion either with his prey or after devouring it, scaling the mountain trail to a safe resting-place.

k) Pointing, we believe, to Messiah.

l) Judah and Joseph stand out clearly, and for Joseph the patriarch can hardly find enough words.

m) Or separated from his brothers.

morning he devours prey, in the evening he divides loot."ⁿ

²⁸These together composed the twelve tribes of Israel and this their father said about them when he blessed them, blessing each with a particular blessing. ²⁹He then charged them: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰in the Machpelah cave, facing Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a family cemetery. ³¹There they buried Abraham with his wife Sarah; there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah. ³²The field including the cave was bought from the Hittites."

³³When Jacob had finished his charge to his sons, he drew his feet together upon the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

50 **WEeping over him and KISSing** him, Joseph fell on his father's face. ²Then Joseph ordered his medical attendants to embalm his father; so the physicians embalmed Israel. ³They devoted 40 days to him, for such is the length of the embalming period. And the Egyptians bemoaned him 70 days.

⁴When the mourning days were over, Joseph said to the Pharaoh family, "If you feel friendly toward me,^o please tell Pharaoh ⁵that my father exacted an oath from me, saying, 'You see that I am dying. Bury me in the sepulcher which I hewed out for me^p in the land of Canaan.' So, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back." ⁶Pharaoh responded, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

⁷Then Joseph went up to bury his father, and along with him went all Pharaoh's servants, the chief men of his household and the senators of Egypt; ⁸also Joseph's entire household,

his brothers and his father's household. Only their little ones, their flocks and their herds they left in the Goshen district. ⁹Chariots and horsemen escorted them, too, making a formidable army.

¹⁰When they reached Atad's^a threshing-floor, east of Jordan, they observed an impressive and stately mourning; for seven days Joseph made lamentation for his father. ¹¹When the natives there, the Canaanites, noticed the mourning at the Atad threshing-floor, they said, "This is a deep-felt mourning for the Egyptians"; so they named it Abel Mizraim.^r It lies east of the Jordan.

¹²His sons did with him as he had ordered them; ¹³they conveyed him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the Machpelah field that faces Mamre,^a the field that Abraham had bought from Ephron the Hittite for a family cemetery.

¹⁴After they had buried his father, Joseph with his brothers and all who had gone up to bury his father, returned to Egypt. ¹⁵But when Joseph's brothers realized^t that their father was dead, they said, "Suppose Joseph feels resentful toward us and requires full retribution for all the harm we did him!" ¹⁶So they sent word to Joseph, "Your father before he died charged us, ¹⁷'You say to Joseph, in kindness forgive now your brothers' crime and their sin; for they have maltreated you.' Now we beg of you, forgive the misdemeanor of the servants of your father's God."

When they spoke to him, Joseph wept. ¹⁸His brothers then fell down before him and said, "Look! We are your servants."

¹⁹Joseph said to them, "Have no fear; for am I in God's place? ²⁰True enough you planned evil against me, but God planned it for good, to bring about what today is fact, the keeping alive of much people."^u ²¹So, have no

n) This sounds as if Benjamin had not behaved admirably.

o) A suggestion here that, with the ordeal of famine past, the authority of Joseph and his intimacy with the Pharaoh had lessened.

p) Possibly, when Leah was buried, Jacob had the vault enlarged.

q) Bramble, or thorn [see Judges 9:14,15]. It may be a man's name; or of a place, or both.

r) Either Meadow or Mourning of Egypt; probably the latter. It is the same place as Atad.

s) Or, East of Mamre. t) Saw a changed situation.

u) An ever-recurring divine principle: God allows sin; a man may do or disobey His will; but ultimately His purpose becomes realized, supremely manifest in Christ's death and resurrection.

fear; I will take care of you and of your little ones." Thus he put them at ease as he spoke to their hearts.

²²Joseph and his father's family remained in Egypt, where Joseph reached the age of 110; ²³long enough to see Ephraim's children, the third generation. The children of Machir, too, Manasseh's son, were born at Joseph's knees.^v ²⁴And Joseph said to his brothers, "I shall die and God will certainly

visit you, to bring you up from this country to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." ²⁵Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear saying, "God will certainly visit you and you will carry up my bones from here."^w

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²⁶Joseph died at the age of 110. They embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.^x

v) They were shown him at birth and, as they grew, sat on his knees and played around him.

w) Joseph remained a Hebrew at heart and a worshiper of the true God. He seems the best qualified Israelite before Moses to have gathered up the Genesis incidents and teachings, of which Moses could make use for the composition of Genesis. Joseph had time and ability for it, and as a boy had heard Isaac and Jacob review vital events told in Genesis.

x) The embalmed body was ultimately buried near Shechem, on Joseph's property [Josh. 24:32].

THE BOOK OF

EXODUS

1 AND^a THESE ARE THE NAMES OF the sons of Israel who came into Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; ³Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; ⁴Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher.^b ⁵The descendants of Jacob numbered 70 altogether, as Joseph was already living in Egypt.

⁶Joseph died, and so did all his brothers and that whole generation; ⁷but the children of Israel were prolific and increased abundantly; they multiplied and grew incredibly strong, so that the land became filled with them.

⁸Then a new king rose to power over Egypt, who had no knowledge of Joseph. ⁹He told his people, "See how the Israelitish people are more numerous and mightier than we are. ¹⁰Come on, let us deal shrewdly with them, so they may increase no further; otherwise in case of war they may side with our enemies, fight against us and get up out of our country."

¹¹So they put gang foremen over them to make life hard for them with heavy toil; for they were building the store cities Pithom and Ramses for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more they held them down the faster they grew, and they

spread themselves until the Egyptians became frightened about the Israelites.

¹³They harshly enslaved the sons of Israel; ¹⁴they embittered their lives by hard service, making them work as slaves in mortar and in brick and in all sorts of field work. Everything they forced them to do by harsh treatment.

¹⁵The king of Egypt also gave this order to Shiphras and Puah, the Hebrew midwives, ¹⁶"As you aid the Hebrew women in childbirth, watch them closely on the birthstool;^d if it is a son, kill him; if it is a daughter, let her live." ¹⁷But the midwives revered God and did not carry out the orders of the king of Egypt; they kept the male babies alive. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, letting the male babies live?" ¹⁹The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; they are quick of delivery they give birth before the midwife gets to them."

²⁰God treated the midwives well while the people kept on increasing and grew ever mightier. ²¹And because the midwives revered God, He prospered them with families. ²²Then Pharaoh charged all his people,^e "Throw

a) Exodus is a continuation of Genesis, therefore the conjunction "and." It usually takes the place of our punctuation marks and often it may be omitted.

b) The names are recorded according to age and mothers — Leah, Rachel, Bilhah and Zilpah. Of the descendants mentioned only two are women [see 1 Chr. ch. 1-8].

d) They could see or feel the babe before the mother could, and might effect death without her positively knowing it. The mother was placed on a special chair.

e) All the people should know, but those immediately concerned were the Hebrews.

every newborn Hebrew son into the river^f and keep alive every newborn daughter."

2 A MAN OF THE LEVITE TRIBE WENT and married a Levite maiden.^g ²The wife became pregnant and gave birth to a son; then, seeing that he was exceptionally well-formed, she concealed him for three months. ³But when she could hide him no longer she got him a reed basket, which she daubed with asphalt and pitch. She tucked the child in it and set it among the reeds near the river-bank, ⁴while his sister stationed herself at a distance to know what might happen to him.

⁵Then Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, while her ladies were strolling on the river-side. As she noticed the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to fetch it ⁶and, on opening it, she saw the child, a boy, crying. She pitied him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children!"

⁷His sister then said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and invite a nurse for you of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸Pharaoh's daughter told her, "Go!" So the girl went and called the child's mother ⁹to whom Pharaoh's daughter said, "Take along this child and nurse him for me and I will pay your wages." The woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰The lad grew up and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became a son to her. She called him Moses,^h "Because," she said, "I have drawn him from the water."

¹¹In time when Moses was fully matured he went out to his kinsmen and observed their hardships.ⁱ He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kin. ¹²He looked right and left, and when he saw nobody, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³Next day he went out and came

upon two quarreling Hebrews and said to the one who was unfair, "Why do you strike your neighbor?" ¹⁴But he retorted, "Who appointed you a prince and a judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you did the Egyptian?" Then Moses felt frightened; he said (to himself), "This incident is known."

¹⁵When Pharaoh learned of the affair, he took steps to kill Moses; but Moses fled from Pharaoh and paused in the land of Midian,^j where he sat down by a well.

¹⁶Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, who just then came to draw water, and they filled the troughs to water their father's flock; ¹⁷but the shepherds came and drove them away. Then Moses got up, helped them and watered their flock. ¹⁸When they came to their father Reuel,^k he said, "How is it you are back so early today?" ¹⁹They answered, "A man from Egypt rid us of the shepherds; he drew for us, too, and watered the flock." ²⁰He said, "And where is he? Why did you leave him there? Invite him in for supper." ²¹Moses was willing to stay with the man, who gave Moses his daughter Zipporah. ²²She bore him a son whom he named Gershom,^l for he said, "I have become an exile in a foreign land."

²³In the course of this long period the king of Egypt died and the children of Israel were groaning on account of their slavery. They kept crying out and their cry on account of their slavery ascended to God. ²⁴God heard their groaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵God looked upon the children of Israel and God concerned Himself about them.

3 AS MOSES WAS HERDING THE SHEEP of Jethro, his father-in-law, the Midian priest, he led the flock deeper

f) River means the Nile throughout the Book of Exodus.

g) Anirram was the man and Jochebed the woman, Exodus 6:20, both descendants of Levi.

h) Hebrew, "Drawn out"; Egyptian, "Saved from the water." i) At 40, Acts 7:23.

j) Midianites were descendants of Abraham by Keturah, whom he married after Sarah's death.

k) Better known as Jethro.

l) The name suggests not merely "stranger", but exile, banishment. A second son, Eliezer, "God is a Helper," is mentioned in Ch. 18:3,4.

into the desert^m and came near Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a fiery flame from the center of a thornbush. He gazed and saw the bush afire, but it did not burn up. ³So Moses said, "I will step aside right now and examine this wonderful sight, why the thornbush is not burned up."

⁴The LORDⁿ saw him turn aside to observe and God called to him from the bush: Moses, Moses! He answered, "Here I am." ⁵Then He said; Do not move nearer! Take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. ⁶He also said, I am your fathers' God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. And Moses covered his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷The LORD said: I have well observed the misery of My people in Egypt and I have heard their cry under their slave drivers; for I know their sorrows. ⁸Now I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians and to bring them up from there to a broad and good land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. ⁹Since the cry of the children of Israel has reached Me and I have observed the Egyptians oppressing them, ¹⁰you come now and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.

¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I to go to Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹²He said: But I will accompany you, and this will be your evidence that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.

¹³Moses then asked God, "When I come to the Israelites and say to them,

'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' then what shall I tell them?" ¹⁴God said to Moses, I am who I am. Thus you will speak to the Israelites, I AM^o has sent me to you.

¹⁵God said further to Moses, You tell the Israelites: Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob^p has sent me to you. This is My name forever and by this I am to be remembered through all generations. ¹⁶Go and convene the elders of Israel and tell them, the LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has appeared to me with this message: I have faithfully been present with you and observed the treatment you received in Egypt, ¹⁷and I promise to bring you up from the affliction of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, into a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁸They will listen to your message and you with the elders of Israel shall call on the king of Egypt and tell him, "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Now, please let us go a three-days' journey into the desert to sacrifice to the LORD our God."^q

¹⁹I am aware that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go except by a mighty hand, ²⁰so I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders I shall work there; after which he will send you away. ²¹And I will give this people such favor with the Egyptians that when you leave, you will not go empty-handed; ²²but each woman shall request from her neighbor and from the lodger in her home silver and gold articles, and garments with which you will dress your sons and daughters. You shall strip the Egyptians.^r

m) The essential meaning of "desert" is not sandiness, but loneliness, reflected in "deserted." Moses led his sheep where there was grass.

n) Angel of the Lord, proves to mean the Lord Himself, not merely here but all through the Bible. We think this meant the Son of God.

o) Suggesting, the same yesterday, today and forever. Yahweh, from which the name Jehovah, is closely related to it.

p) Among some of our American Indians a threefold repetition equals our oath; so in the Near East. God's covenant was threefold.

q) More was expected and planned, but a minimum was first requested.

r) It was but fair that the Hebrews should get some return for their many years of hard labor.

4 MOSES THEN REPLIED, "THEY WILL neither believe me nor listen to my appeal; for they will say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you'." ²The LORD said to him: What is that in your hand? He answered, "A staff." ³He said: Throw it on the ground. He threw it on the ground and it became a snake from which Moses fled. ⁴But the LORD said to Moses: Put out your hand and catch it by the tail — he put out his hand and caught it and in his hand it became a staff — ⁵so they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob did show Himself to you.^a

⁶The LORD also told him: Now place your hand to your bosom; which he did. But when he took it out, look, his hand was leprous, as white as snow! ⁷He said: Return your hand to your bosom. He did so and when he took it out of his bosom it was restored to be like all his flesh. ⁸The LORD said, In case they will not believe you nor mind the testimony of the first sign, they will believe the witness of the second sign. ⁹However, should they fail to accept these two evidences and will not listen to your voice, then take some of the river water and pour it onto the dry land; the water you take out of the river shall on the land become blood.

¹⁰Moses said to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I am no orator now and I never was; not even while Thou art speaking to Thy servant. I am slow of speech and of an awkward tongue." ¹¹The LORD said: Who has made man's mouth, or who makes a person dumb or deaf or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? ¹²You, therefore, go and I will be with your mouth; I will teach you what to say.^t

¹³But he said, "O Lord, please send anyone (else) Thou wilt."

¹⁴Then the LORD's indignation burned against Moses. He said: Is not Aaron, the Levite, your brother? I know him to be a fluent speaker and he is, besides, coming out to meet you. He will be heartily glad to see you. ¹⁵You speak to him and convey to him the message, and I will sustain you both in your speaking. ¹⁶He shall be your spokesman to the people; for him you shall take the part of God. ¹⁷Take hold of this staff, with which you shall work the signs.

¹⁸Moses then left, returned to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said to him, "Please, let me go back to my brothers in Egypt to see if they are still living." Jethro answered Moses, "Go in peace!"

¹⁹It was in Midian that God said to Moses: Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were after your life are dead.^u ²⁰So Moses took his wife and his sons, helped them onto a donkey and returned to the land of Egypt. Moses also took God's staff in his hand.

²¹The LORD said to Moses: As you go back to Egypt, see to it that you work before Pharaoh all the signs I have placed in your power. But I will encourage^v him in his stubbornness and he will not let the people go. ²²You then say to Pharaoh, "This is the LORD's message — 'Israel is My first-born son; ²³so I tell you to let My son go, to let him serve Me; but if you refuse to let him go, beware — I am about to kill your first-born son!'"

²⁴At an inn on the way the LORD met him^w and was at the point of taking his life; ²⁵but Zipporah took a flint knife, circumcised her son and threw the foreskin at his feet with the words, "You are indeed a blood bridegroom to me." ²⁶Then He let him alone when she said, because of the circumcision, "You are my bridegroom in blood."

²⁷The LORD said to Aaron: Go and

s) The simple staff of a godly man may yield more power than the golden scepter of a godless king. In the second miracle God's power to punish and to heal is evidenced.

t) As our Lord assured His disciples of the Holy Spirit's aid in their witnessing.

u) So came the message to Mary and Joseph in Egypt when Herod had died.

v) There is no Hebrew word for "mind", instead the heart is mentioned. The word translated "harden" in the KJV, is translated "strong" elsewhere, as in Deut. 31:6,7,23, "Be strong and of good courage." Pharaoh, like the Assyrian leaders of Isaiah's day, challenged God to a duel. He started with increased oppression and proved himself stubborn. God let him fall into his own pit. God let him exert that strong will to the limit, which meant, to Pharaoh's own limit. Of course, he lost in that duel.

w) Moses had failed to live up to the Covenant of circumcision; perhaps severe illness brought that sin home to him and his wife rectified the situation.

meet Moses in the desert. He went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.^x ²⁸Moses then told Aaron the whole message with which God had sent him and all the signs with which he had been charged. ²⁹So Moses went with Aaron and they convened all the elders of Israel, ³⁰to whom Aaron conveyed all the words the LORD had spoken to Moses, and he^y enacted all the signs before the people, ³¹so that the people believed. When they learned that the LORD had come to the Israelites' home and had looked upon their affliction, they bowed deeply and worshipped.

5 THIS DONE, MOSES AND AARON called on Pharaoh and said, "This is the message of the LORD God of Israel: Let My people go so they may hold for Me a feast in the desert." ²But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should pay attention to His orders to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and, what is more, I will not let Israel go." ³They rejoined, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us, please, go a three-days' journey into the desert and let us sacrifice to the LORD our God, so He may not strike us with pestilence or sword."

⁴The king of Egypt retorted, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, draw the people away from their work? Attend to your duties. ⁵Look here," Pharaoh continued, "The people of the land are now numerous, yet you are having them quit their work."

⁶That same day Pharaoh ordered the slave drivers in charge of the workers and their foremen,^z ⁷"Provide the people no longer with straw for making bricks; they must go and glean straw for themselves. ⁸And exact from them the fixed number of bricks which they have been daily making — not one less. They are shouting, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God!' because they are lazy. ⁹Weigh down heavily on them,

so they are occupied with work instead of trusting in lies." ¹⁰Then the slave drivers and the foremen went and announced to the people, "Here is Pharaoh's answer, 'I will not furnish you straw. ¹¹Glean it for yourselves wherever you can find it; but your output will not be reduced.'" ¹²So the people scattered all over the land of Egypt to glean stubble for straw, ¹³with the slave drivers hurrying them on, saying, "Finish your day's quota as when the straw was provided."

¹⁴The foremen of the Israelites, whom the slave drivers of Pharaoh had placed over them, were lashed and were told, "Why have you failed to finish your fixed job of brickmaking, the same as on previous days!" ¹⁵The Israelite foremen then went and appealed to Pharaoh, "Why do you treat your workers this way? ¹⁶No straw is being provided for your workmen, yet they say to us, 'Make bricks!' Look! Your workers are lashed and your people are unfair." ¹⁷His reply was, "You are lazy, just plain lazy; that's the reason you are saying, 'Let us go to sacrifice to the LORD!' ¹⁸You go to work at once! No straw will be provided for you, but you must produce the fixed amount of bricks."

¹⁹When the Israelite foremen were told, "You shall not reduce the daily number of bricks," they knew they were in grave trouble. ²⁰On coming away from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron, waiting for them ²¹and to them they said, "May the LORD look at you and judge you for spoiling our prospects with Pharaoh and with his servants, handing them a sword to kill us."

²²Moses in turn made his appeal to the LORD, "Why, LORD, hast Thou treated these people so badly? Why then hast Thou sent me? ²³For ever since I called on Pharaoh to speak in Thy Name he has treated this people harshly and Thou hast not at all delivered Thy people."

x) Aaron, three years Moses' senior, took the initiative.

y) Moses had been commissioned; not Aaron. And it developed that Moses also did most of the talking.

z) With straw provided they had slaved; without straw the endless task was killing.

a) The slave drivers were Egyptians; the foremen were Hebrews.

6 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: YOU will now see how I handle Pharaoh; for he must not merely be compelled to let them go; but he must drive them out of his land by force.^b ²God further said to Moses: I am the LORD. ³I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by My name Jehovah^c I did not reveal Myself to them. ⁴I also established My covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, where they lived temporarily; ⁵besides I have personally heard the groanings of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered My covenant. ⁶You therefore quote Me to the Israelites: I am the LORD and I will liberate you from Egypt's burdens; I will rid you of their enslaving and redeem^d you with an outstretched arm and with severe judgments. ⁷I will take you on as My own people and will be your God. You will know that I, the LORD your God, am the One who brings you out from under Egypt's burdens ⁸and I shall bring you into the land which I raised My hand^e to give Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I will give it you as a legacy; I am the LORD.

⁹Thus Moses quoted to the Israelites, but, being disheartened and downed by cruel slavery, they failed to listen to Moses. ¹⁰Then the LORD told Moses: ¹¹Go and reason with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, about letting the Israelites leave his country. ¹²But Moses argued before the LORD, "Thou seest how the Israelites have not minded me; how then should Pharaoh pay attention to me, uncultured of speech as I am."

¹³The LORD addressed both Moses and Aaron, giving them orders for the Israelites and for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁴These are the paternal clanheads: The sons of Reuben, Israel's first-born — Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi, Reuben's families. ¹⁶The sons of Sim-

eon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite; Simeon's families.

¹⁶These are the names of Levi's sons in the order of their birth: Gershon, Kohath and Merari; Levi reached the age of 137. ¹⁷The sons of Gershon by their families: Libni and Shimei; ¹⁸the sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel; Kohath reached the age of 133. ¹⁹The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. This is the Levite genealogy. ²⁰Amram married his aunt Jochebed,^f who bore him Aaron and Moses. And Amram lived 137 years.

²¹The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg and Zichri. ²²The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan and Sithri.

²³Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab^g and sister to Nahshon, who bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ²⁴The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah and Abiasaph. These are the Korah families. ²⁶Eleazar, Aaron's son, married a daughter of Putiel, who bore him Phinehas. These were the Levite clan heads arranged by families.

²⁶This brings us to Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said: Lead the Israelites out of the land of Egypt in military formation. ²⁷These are the ones who told Pharaoh, king of Egypt, about bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, this same Moses and Aaron. ²⁸On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, ²⁹the LORD said to Moses: I am the LORD. Quote to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, everything I am telling you. ³⁰But Moses argued before the LORD, "As I am an uncultured speaker, how is Pharaoh going to mind me?"

7 THE LORD ANSWERED MOSES: Observe! I appoint you a god to Pharaoh and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. ²You shall quote all that I command you and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh, so

b) God forcing him.

c) His name had been Elohim, or El, the Almighty; now it is Yahweh, the Faithful God. Since Yahweh sounds unfamiliar we shall occasionally use the word Jehovah, but usually "the Lord."

d) Goel, God as Redeemer. e) That is, God gave His oath.

f) The Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Vulgate agree that Jochebed was Amram's paternal cousin.

g) Amminadab was of the Judah tribe, an ancestor of David and of Jesus. Nahshon, Aaron's brother-in-law, was appointed chief of the tribe of Judah [Num. 1:7].

he may let the Israelites leave his country. ³I will stiffen Pharaoh's heart and multiply My signs and wonders in the land of Egypt; ⁴but Pharaoh will not listen to you. So I will lay My hand on Egypt and with severe judgments bring out My armies, My people, the Israelites, out of the land of Egypt. ⁵Then the Egyptians shall grow aware that I am the LORD, when I stretch out My hand to come on Egypt and to bring out the Israelites from among them. ⁶Moses and Aaron did as the LORD ordered them, to the last syllable. ⁷When they interviewed Pharaoh, Moses was eighty and Aaron eighty-three.

⁸The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ⁹If Pharaoh says to you, "Identify yourselves by a miracle," then tell Aaron to take his staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh and it will become a snake. ¹⁰So Moses and Aaron called on Pharaoh and did as the LORD had told them. Aaron threw down his staff in front of Pharaoh and his attendants and it became a snake. ¹¹Pharaoh in turn called in sages and magicians and they, the scribes of Egypt, did the same by their secret formulas; ¹²each threw down his staff and they became snakes. But Aaron's staff swallowed theirs. ¹³And Pharaoh's mind was stubborn; he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses: Pharaoh's mind is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵In the morning, when as usual he is going out to the water, stand by the river bank to meet him. Take in your hand the staff that became a snake ¹⁶and say to him, "The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you with the message: 'Let My people go, so they may serve Me in the desert.' But to date you have not listened; ¹⁷therefore the LORD says, 'By this you will know that I am the LORD. Look! With this staff that is in my hand I am about to strike the river

water and it will be turned into blood. ¹⁸The fish in the river will die and the river will have such an odor the Egyptians will be disgusted to drink water from it.'"

¹⁹The LORD then said to Moses, tell Aaron: Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, their ponds and all their reservoirs so they shall become blood in the whole country of Egypt, the contents of wooden and stone containers included.

²⁰Moses and Aaron did exactly as the LORD had given orders. He raised the staff and in the presence of Pharaoh and his attendants he struck the river water and all the river's water was turned into blood. ²¹The fish in the river died and the Nile stunk so that the Egyptians could not drink from it, and there was blood in the whole Egypt country. ²²But the scribes^h did the same thing through their secret formulas and Pharaoh's mind was obstinate; he did not heed them as the LORD had said. ²³Pharaoh turned and went home without taking this to heart. ²⁴But all the Egyptians had to dig near the river bank for water, because they could not drink the river water. ²⁵Full seven days the LORD's stroke upon the river continued.ⁱ

8 THE LORD THEN SAID TO MOSES: Call on Pharaoh and tell him, "The LORD says, 'Let My people go to serve Me. ²If you keep on refusing to let them go, beware! I will afflict your whole country with frogs. ³The river, too, will be alive with frogs. They will crawl up into your home, into your bedroom and onto your couch; into the homes of your attendants and onto your people, into your bake ovens and into your kneading pans. ⁴The frogs will be crawling all over you, over your people and over your attendants.'"

⁵The LORD then said to Moses,^j Tell Aaron, "Stretch forth your hand with

h) The most learned among the priestly caste of which Jannes and Jambres are named (II Tim. 3:8). They created the hieroglyphics, the picture writings from which the Phoenicians reduced their alphabet and which, with Hebrew, Greek and Latin modifications, we use today. They also applied their ingenuity to occult arts or black magic. In India sleight of hand, hypnotism, invention, perhaps demonic aid produce such seemingly impossible feats today.

i) The Lord was active through Moses and Aaron as they implicitly obeyed Him, which can be our experience. j) Time for repentance was allowed Pharaoh and his court.

your staff over the rivers, the canals and the reservoirs and bring up the frogs on the land of Egypt." ⁶So Aaron reached out his hand over the waters of Egypt and the frogs crawled up to cover all of Egypt. ⁷But the scribes did the same with their secret formulas; they brought up frogs on the Egyptian country.

⁸Pharaoh called out to Moses and Aaron, "You pray the LORD to remove the frogs from me and from my people and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."^k ⁹Moses responded, "The honor is yours to tell me when I shall plead for you and for your attendants and your people to have the frogs removed from you and from your homes and be left only in the river." ¹⁰He said, "Tomorrow."

He said, "As you say! So that you may know that there is none like the LORD our God, ¹¹the frogs shall leave you, your homes, your attendants and your people; they will be left in the river only." ¹²Moses and Aaron then left the Pharaoh and Moses invoked the LORD regarding the frogs, as he had promised Pharaoh, ¹³and the LORD wrought in agreement with Moses' word. Out of the houses, out of the yards and out of the fields the frogs perished; ¹⁴the people piled them in heaps till the land reeked. ¹⁵But when Pharaoh noticed that relief had come, he stiffened his heart; he did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses: Tell Aaron, "Reach out your staff, strike the dust of the ground and let it become gnats in the whole Egypt country." ¹⁷They did so. Aaron reached out his hand with his staff, struck the ground, and the gnats settled on man and beast. All the dust in the entire Egyptian country became gnats. ¹⁸The scribes practiced with their secret formula but they failed; yet the gnats swarmed on man and beast. ¹⁹So the scribes said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."^l But Pharaoh's mind was set. He did

not yield to them, as the LORD had said.

²⁰The LORD said to Moses: Get up early in the morning and face Pharaoh — he will be going to the water — and tell him, "This is the LORD's message, Let my people go, so they may serve Me; ²¹for in case you fail to let My people go, beware! I am about to send the gadfly on you, on your attendants, on your people and on your home. The homes of the Egyptians shall swarm with gadflies; the ground, too and those on it. ²²But that time I will set apart the land of Goshen where My people live; it will be free from gadflies, so that you may know that I, the LORD, am in the land. ²³I will make a distinction between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall materialize."

²⁴The LORD did so. In swarms the gadflies invaded Pharaoh's palace, the homes of his retinue and the whole Egypt country, so that the land was being ruined by the gadflies. ²⁵Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "You go and sacrifice to your God within our boundaries." ²⁶But Moses rejoined, "It would not be right to do that; for we would offer the LORD our God something offensive to the Egyptians. You see, if we offer something the Egyptians abominate right before their eyes, might they not stone us? ²⁷We want to go three days' travel into the desert to sacrifice to the LORD our God the way He directs us."

²⁸Pharaoh said, "I will let you go. You may sacrifice to your god in the desert; only, do not travel far.^m And pray fervently for me."ⁿ ²⁹Moses answered, "I am about to leave your presence and to pray the LORD. Tomorrow the gadflies will leave Pharaoh, his attendants and his people. However, let not Pharaoh persist in his deception by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD!" ³⁰Moses then left Pharaoh and fervently prayed the LORD ³¹and the LORD wrought ac-

k) It looks as if either the king or some of his courtiers had detected something shady about the scribes' pseudo-miracles.

l) An involuntary confession of their own failure to gain cooperation from their gods.

m) As the world tells the Christian, "Don't move too far away from us; don't differ too much from us!" It could not satisfy Moses.

n) As Simon, the magician, asked Peter to pray for him [Acts 8:24].

cording to Moses' request. The gaddies moved away from Pharaoh, from his courtiers and from his people; there was not one left. ³²But this time again Pharaoh set his mind stubbornly; he did not let the people go.

9 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: CALL on Pharaoh and tell him, "Thus speaks the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let My people go, so they may serve Me; ²for if you refuse to let them go and persist in detaining them, ³beware! The LORD's hand will be on your livestock out in the field, on the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds and the flocks with a dreadful plague. ⁴The LORD will draw distinction between Israel's livestock and that of Egypt. Nothing that belongs to the Israelites shall die." ⁵The LORD even set a definite time; He said: Tomorrow the LORD will do this in the land.^o

⁶Next day, the LORD did so. All the livestock of Egypt died; but of the Israelites' livestock not a single one. ⁷Pharaoh sent to investigate and found that not one of the Israelites' animals was dead; yet Pharaoh's mind was set; he did not let the people go.

⁸Then the LORD told Moses and Aaron: Both of you fill your hands with ashes from the furnace and, with Pharaoh looking on, let Moses toss it up to the sky. ⁹It will turn to fine dust all over the land of Egypt, that settles upon man and beast and causes boils that break out in open sores. ¹⁰So they took ashes from a furnace and, facing Pharaoh, Moses tossed it up toward the sky and it caused boils that broke out in open sores on man and beast. ¹¹The scribes could not stand before Moses because of the sores: for the scribes as well as the rest of the Egyptians were covered with sores. ¹²But the LORD encouraged Pharaoh in his own way; he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said to Moses.

¹³Again the LORD said to Moses: Get up early in the morning, face

Pharaoh and say to him, "This the LORD God of the Hebrews has to say, Let My people go, so they may serve Me; ¹⁴for this time I am sending all My plagues to reach your heart, that of your attendants and that of your people; so you may sense the fact that there is none like Me in all the earth. ¹⁵For if by now I had stretched out My hand, I could have stricken you and your people with pestilence, and destroyed you from the earth; ¹⁶but I have preserved you for this reason—to make you see My power and to publish My name in all the earth.^p ¹⁷Are you still setting yourself up against My people not to let them go? ¹⁸Take notice! Tomorrow about this time I will rain a downpour of hail so heavy, the like of it has not occurred in Egypt from its founding until now. ¹⁹So you better bring in your stock and everything you have out in the field for safety; for the hail shall come down on every man and beast found in the field and not brought home and they shall die." ²⁰Then whoever of Pharaoh's servants revered the LORD's word, hurried his slaves and his livestock under shelter; ²¹but he, who did not mind the LORD's word, left his slaves and his livestock in the field.

²²The LORD told Moses: Reach your hand up toward heaven, so that hail may fall on all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and on all vegetation in the land of Egypt. ²³So Moses raised his staff toward heaven and the LORD sent thunder and hail, with lightning bolting along the ground, and with hail falling on the land of Egypt. ²⁴There was lightning darting in between the hailstones, all so dreadful, nothing like it had occurred since Egypt had become a nation. ²⁵The hail struck down everything in the field, both man and beast, all vegetation, too, and it broke down every tree. ²⁶Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel lived, there was no hail.

o) At least two divine principles stand forth among these plagues: God gives fair warning before He administers punishment and He patiently repeats His warnings. Man may obey or disobey. p) Those doubtful of God's ways should observe that Pharaoh had stiffened his mind before God gave him definite orders; also that not merely the king of Egypt and his people were concerned but even more the Israelites and ultimately the whole earth.

²⁷Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said to them, "This time I have sinned; God is righteous; I and my people are guilty. ²⁸Pray the LORD fervently, as there is enough of God's thunder and hail, and I will let you go; you shall stay here no longer." ²⁹Moses assured him, "The moment I am out of the city I will spread my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease and there shall be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's. ³⁰As for you and your courtiers, however, I know that you do not yet revere the LORD God."

³¹The flax and the barley had been beaten to the ground, for the barley had headed and the flax was in bloom; ³²but the wheat and the spelt^a were not ruined for they were a later crop.

³³Leaving Pharaoh, Moses went out of the city^r and spread his hands to the LORD; the thunder and hail ceased; there were no more torrents of rain gushing on the earth. ³⁴But when Pharaoh felt certain that the rain, the hail and the thunder had stopped, he persisted in sinning; he stiffened his heart, he and his attendants. ³⁵Stubborn as Pharaoh was, he did not let the Israelites go, just as through Moses the LORD had declared.

10 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: CALL on Pharaoh, for I have toughened his mind and the minds of his courtiers, so that I may work these My wonders among them, ²and so that you may tell your children and your children's children how I have handled Egypt, and the signs I worked among them, so that you may know that I am the LORD.

³So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and told him. "This is the message of the LORD God of the Hebrews — 'How long will you decline submission to Me? Let My people go, so they may serve Me; ⁴for if you refuse to

let My people go, beware! Tomorrow I will bring locusts into your territory. ⁵They will cover the entire surface of the land so that the ground cannot be seen and they will devour the leftovers that survived the hail. They will strip every tree in the field of its foliage; ⁶they will fill your homes, the homes of your nobles and of all the Egyptians in a way neither your fathers nor their ancestors have experienced from the time they were born until now.'" Then he turned and left Pharaoh.

⁷Pharaoh's courtiers said to him, "How long is this person to threaten our ruin? Let the men go, so they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is in ruins?" ⁸So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, who said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God; but who are to go?" ⁹Moses replied, "We go together; our youths and our aged, our sons and our daughters, our flocks and our herds are to go; for we are celebrating the LORD's feast." ¹⁰He said, "May the LORD be with you^s if I intend to let you and your little ones go! Look out! You are plotting mischief! ¹¹No, indeed! You men go and serve the LORD, for that is what you wanted!" And Pharaoh expelled them from his presence.

¹²The LORD then said to Moses: Stretch your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts to come up on it and devour all the vegetation the hail has left. ¹³So Moses reached out his staff over Egypt and the LORD drove an east wind upon the land all that day and night till in the morning the east wind carried in the locusts. ¹⁴They swarmed all over Egypt and settled on all its domain in incredible numbers. Never before were there such locusts^t and never again will there be. ¹⁵They covered the land's surface everywhere so that it grew

q) A grain better to eat than barley but not as good as wheat, though more like it. It came later than barley and was hard to be cleaned of its chaff. Egypt used it for bread. Rye did not grow in Egypt or in Palestine.

r) Memphis was the earlier royal city and nearer Goshen than No or Thebes, the royal city higher up the Nile. At this time the Pharaoh must have resided in Memphis.

s) Mockery, derision, arrogance and anger mark this insulting harangue. The king begins to feel that he is beaten and he resents it.

t) Unusually large, too, it would seem. There were severe locust plagues in that region in 1463 and in 1763 A.D.

dark; they devoured all vegetation in the land and stripped all the fruit on the trees which the hail had left. Nothing green remained either on trees or of field vegetation in the entire Egyptian country.

¹⁶Pharaoh sent an urgent call for Moses and Aaron. "I have sinned," he said, "against the LORD your God and against you. ¹⁷Please, forgive my sin only this once and plead with the LORD your God to remove from me this fatal destruction." ¹⁸He left Pharaoh and implored the LORD. ¹⁹Then the LORD changed the wind to a mighty west wind that caught up the locusts and blew them into the Red Sea until not one locust remained in the whole land of Egypt. ²⁰However, the LORD encouraged Pharaoh in his stubborn way; he did not let the Israelites go.

²¹The LORD said to Moses: Stretch your hand toward heaven, so there may fall such a darkness upon Egypt, that they must feel their way. ²²As Moses stretched his hand toward heaven, there came a thick darkness over all the land of Egypt for three days; ²³they could not see each other; for three days they could not get up and move around, while all the Israelites enjoyed light in their homes.

²⁴Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "You go and serve the LORD; only leave your flocks and herds behind, while you take your little ones along." ²⁵Moses replied, "You must allow us our sacrifices and burnt-offerings to offer the LORD our God. ²⁶Our livestock must therefore come with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, because from them we shall take to serve the LORD our God, and we do not know what to use for the LORD's service until we reach there." ²⁷But the LORD encouraged Pharaoh in his way; he was not willing to let them go. ²⁸And Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me and see to it that you never come near me again; for if I ever see you again, you die!"

²⁹"Correctly spoken," Moses retorted, "you will not see me again."

11 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: There is one more blow I shall bring down on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you move out; in fact, he will not merely give you leave without any conditions; he will push you out. ²Tell the people to request, each man from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and of gold. ³The LORD inclined the Egyptians favorably toward the people. Besides, Moses as a man became highly esteemed in Egypt, both by Pharaoh's aristocracy and by the common people. ⁴Then Moses said,^u "This is the LORD's message: 'Around midnight I shall move in the midst of Egypt ⁵and every first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh on his throne to the first-born of the slave girl behind the hand mill and all the first-born of cattle. ⁶Throughout the land of Egypt there shall be loud wailing, the like of which never occurred and never will be again. ⁷But against any of the Israelites either man or beast, not a dog shall bark — to show you how the LORD distinguishes between Egypt and Israel. ⁸All these nobles of yours^v shall come down to me and bow deeply to me, begging of me, Do go out; you and all your followers!' And after that I will go out." He then left Pharaoh in hot indignation.

⁹The LORD had said to Moses: Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My mighty works may multiply in the land of Egypt. ¹⁰Moses and Aaron did all these wonders in the presence of Pharaoh; but the LORD encouraged Pharaoh in his own way and he did not allow the Israelites to leave his country.

March-April 1446 B.C.w

12 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²To you let this month be the first, the

u) Moses had not left Pharaoh as yet, but continued with God's message, which concerned both Egypt and Israel and which in all fairness both should know. His final departure is noted at the close of vs. 8.

v) This is definitely to Pharaoh, with his attendants taking it all in.

w) The matter of dates is far from settled; but dating aids in relating events to one another.

month with which your year begins.^x

³Announce to the whole Israelite congregation,^y that on the tenth of this month each man shall secure a lamb for his paternal family, one lamb for each home. ⁴If the household is too small for a lamb, then let him and his next door neighbor go partners, sharing the expense of the lamb according to the amount respectively eaten. ⁵Your lamb should be a perfect, male yearling, taken from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶Confine it until the fourteenth day of the same month when at twilight the whole Israelite congregation shall do the killing. ⁷Some of the blood^z they must apply to the two doorposts and to the lintel of the house in which they eat it. ⁸That night they shall eat the meat, fire roasted, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat it raw or cooked in water, but roasted, head, legs, heart and liver. ¹⁰Save nothing of it until morning and, if all is not eaten, burn it up in the morning.

¹¹Eat it this way, with your waist belted,^a your feet sandaled and your staff in hand; eat it in expectant haste; it is a Passover for the LORD. ¹²For this night I will pass through in the land of Egypt and strike down every first-born in Egypt of man and of beast and I, the LORD, will execute judgments on all the gods of Egypt. ¹³Then the blood shall mark for you the homes where you are living; when I see the blood I will pass over you. No fatal plague shall attack you while I am smiting the Egyptians.

¹⁴This day, then, shall be a memorial day for you; observe it as a feast to the LORD through the centuries, an appointed feast forever. ¹⁵For seven days you will eat unleavened bread, clearing your houses of all leav-

en the very first day; for if anyone eats anything leavened from the first until the seventh day that person shall be eliminated from Israel.

¹⁶On the first day and on the seventh have a sacred gathering; do no work at all on these days except preparing what each person needs to eat. ¹⁷Guard this unleavened bread observance; because on this historic day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt.^b Observe this day as an institution through all your generations forever. ¹⁸In the first month from the fourteenth at eventide until the twenty-first at eventide you shall eat unleavened bread; ¹⁹for seven days there must be no leavened bread whatever in your houses, for if anyone eats anything leavened, that person, whether native or immigrant, shall be excommunicated from Israel's congregation. ²⁰Eat nothing leavened; wherever you dwell, eat unleavened bread.

²¹So Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and told them, "Select and set apart lambs for your several households and kill the Passover."^c ²²Take a bunch of hyssop,^d too, dip it in the basin of blood and apply it to the posts and the lintel of the door; then none of you shall go outdoors until morning; ²³the LORD will be passing through to strike down Egypt. He will see the blood on the lintel and on the two door posts, and the LORD will pass over the door; He will not allow the destroyer to enter your homes for destruction.^e

²⁴"Observe this order as an institution for yourself and for your descendants evermore. ²⁵Faithfully guard this worship service when you enter the land which, in agreement with His promise, the LORD will give you. ²⁶And when your children ask you, 'What

x) Named Abib — ear of grain. Months dated differently with the new moon, but from the middle of March to the middle of April is near Abib.

y) Here for the first time Israel is called a congregation.

z) Which does not mean that the blood remained in the body, the lamb's blood was used for marking doorposts and lintel. And no faithful Hebrew ate meat from which the blood had not been drained.

a) To tuck under whatever of the upper garment might impede walking.

b) So certain to occur, it can be mentioned as having happened.

c) Name for the lamb or kid killed and eaten at the Passover Festival. In this spirit Christ is called "our Passover" [I Cor. 5:7].

d) A fragrant plant of the mint family, small, bushy, serving as a brush.

e) The Lord Himself, then, is not the destroyer. He seems to have crossed the threshold of each house marked with the blood of the lamb, to protect the first-born there.

does this service mean to you?" Then you will say, 'It is a Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He was smiting Egypt, and saved our homes!'" The people bowed their heads and worshiped; ²⁸the Israelites went out and did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.

²⁹At midnight the LORD struck down every first-born in Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh on his throne^e to the first-born of the prisoner in the dungeon; all the first-born of the cattle, too. ³⁰That night Pharaoh got up and his courtiers as well, and all the Egyptians; there was loud wailing in Egypt, because there was not a home without someone dead. ³¹During the night he sent word to Moses and Aaron, "Get up and get out from among my people; both you and the Israelites. Go and serve the LORD as you argued; ³²take along your flocks and your herds as you said and be gone. Ask a blessing for me, too."

³³The Egyptians urged the people to hurry them out of the country, for they said, "We all face death." ³⁴So the people shouldered their dough before it was leavened, tying their kneading-bowls in their robes and on their shoulders. ³⁵And in agreement with the instructions of Moses they asked the Egyptians for silver and golden articles, also for clothing, ³⁶and the LORD had inclined the Egyptians so favorably toward the people that they granted them (all they asked); so they took heavy payment from Egypt.^h

³⁷The Israelites moved from Rameses to Succoth, about 600,000 men and their households. ³⁸A great, motley throng went up with them,ⁱ too; also flocks and herds, very much livestock. ³⁹From the dough which they had brought along out of Egypt they baked

unleavened cakes. The dough was not leavened because they had been expelled from Egypt; they could not delay to prepare food for themselves.

⁴⁰The period of the Israelites' stay in Egypt was 430 years. ⁴¹At the end of 430 years to the day^j all the hosts of the LORD left the land of Egypt. ⁴²That was a night when the LORD kept watch to bring them out of Egypt; it is the night in which through all their generations the Israelites shall keep watch in the presence of the LORD.

⁴³The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: This is the way to observe the Passover — No alien may eat of it; ⁴⁴but every slave bought for money, after you have circumcised him, may partake of it. ⁴⁵Neither a foreigner nor a hired servant shall participate. ⁴⁶It shall be eaten in a single house; you must not carry any of the meat outside the house; neither shall you break a bone of it.^k ⁴⁷Also, the whole Israel congregation shall observe it. ⁴⁸In case an alien lives among you and desires to observe the Passover to the LORD, let all the male members of his family be circumcised; then he may approach to observe it; he shall be like a native of the land; but no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. ⁴⁹One law shall hold for the native and for the stranger who lives among you.

⁵⁰In every point the Israelites carried out what the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹And on this very day the LORD brought the children of Israel out of Egypt in martial order.^l

13 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Dedicate to Me every first-born in Israel that opens the womb, human or animal; it is Mine.^m ³And Moses charged the people, "Commemorate this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery; for by a

f) God made our children questioners because they have much to learn. And many of their questions, if understood and wisely answered, will lead their thoughts toward God.

g) Egyptian history records a crown-prince at this time, Meneptan Seti, who had won back lost territory for his father, but never took the throne.

h) The Hebrews had earned much more from the Egyptians than they received.

i) Whom the mighty works of God had deeply impressed; if they, too, applied blood to their doorposts, they suffered no fatalities. But some of them became sources of constant trouble.

j) On the anniversary of Jacob's arrival, some Rabbis tell us.

k) Fulfilled John 19:36.

l) They had kept their family records, so they could move by families, clans and tribes.

m) Because God had saved every firstborn in the blood-applied home.

mighty hand the LORD brought you out of there. So, no leavened bread must be eaten ⁴this day of the month Abibⁿ on which you are going out.

⁵"When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you — a land flowing with milk and honey — then you shall hold this service in this month. ⁶For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, with a feast to the LORD on the seventh day. ⁷During the seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten; you shall have no leavened bread around; neither shall any fermented dough be present within your boundaries.

⁸"You must tell your son on that day, 'This is on account of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' ⁹It will serve as a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead, so that the LORD's law may be on your lips; for with a mighty hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰Observe this institution annually at its appointed time.

¹¹"When the LORD brings you into the Canaanite country and gives it to you, as He swore to you and to your fathers, ¹²then you shall pass on to the LORD every first opener of the womb, including the firstling of the cattle you own; the males are the LORD's.^o ¹³Each firstling of a donkey you may redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, then break its neck. Redeem also every first-born son.

¹⁴"When hereafter your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' then you will answer him, 'With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵and when Pharaoh steeled himself against letting us go, the LORD killed every first-born in the land of Egypt,^p both of man and of cattle. I am therefore sacrificing to

the LORD every first-born male, but the first-born of my sons I redeem.^q ¹⁶It will be as a sign on your hand and on your forehead, for with great might the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

¹⁷When Pharaoh had allowed the people to go, God did not lead them by way of the Philistines' land, although that was a shorter route; for God considered that, on tasting war, the people might feel regret and go back to Egypt. ¹⁸So God detoured the people toward the desert by the Red Sea. In martial order the Israelites went up from the land of Egypt.^r ¹⁹Moses took with him the bones of Joseph, because he had demanded an oath from the sons of Israel, saying, "God is certain to visit you and you shall carry my bones up with you."^s

²⁰They trekked from Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. ²¹The LORD moved before them in a column of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and at night in a column of fire to give them light, so they could travel day and night. ²²The column of cloud did not fail by day nor the column of fire by night, leading the people.

14 THE LORD THEN SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell the Israelites to turn about and make camp facing Pi-Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal-Zephon; make camp, fronting it by the sea. ³Then Pharaoh will say about the Israelites, "They have lost their way; the desert has cooped them in." ⁴I will encourage Pharaoh in his own way, and he will pursue them. So through Pharaoh and his whole army I will be honored; the Egyptians will learn that I am the LORD.^t

They did so, ⁵and when it was told Pharaoh that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his attendants changed their minds about the people. They said,

n) First month of the Hebrew year. Its exact date followed lunar changes, like our Easter date, the Passover, starting the 14th day, often running into April.

o) As first planned, each oldest son a spiritual leader, a function later assigned to the Levites.

p) Previous messages are repeated now that all have gotten together.

q) From this time the words redeem, ransom, deliver become frequent.

r) The Hebrew blood relationship, Israel, tribes, clans, families, households, persons, established order and identity rarely known elsewhere.

s) Proof that Joseph remained a Hebrew and a follower of Jehovah throughout all his years.

t) They still needed this final and fatal lesson.

"What have we done? We gave Israel leave from working for us!" ⁶So he ordered his chariot and took his army with him, ⁷600 choice chariots and what other chariots Egypt had, all manned and captained. ⁸The LORD encouraged Pharaoh king of Egypt in his own way so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out under a higher guidance.

⁹The Egyptians went after them and caught up with them at their camp by the sea near Pi-Hahiroth, ¹⁰fronting Baal-Zephon — all of Pharaoh's chariots and his horsemen, also his cavalry and infantry. ¹¹As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and saw the Egyptians there marching behind them and they were frantic. The Israelites cried out to the LORD ¹²and they said to Moses, ¹³"Did you take us away to die in the desert because there are no graves in Egypt? Why did you treat us this way, to bring us out of Egypt? ¹⁴Did we not tell you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians!' Better for us to work for the Egyptians than to die in the desert." ¹⁵Moses answered the people, "Have no fear; be steadfast and watch how the LORD will be your salvation today. As for the Egyptians whom you see today, you will never, never see them again; ¹⁶the LORD will fight for you while you keep still."

¹⁷The LORD then said to Moses: Why do you call to Me? Tell the Israelites to move forward. ¹⁸Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea; divide it, so that the Israelites may go right through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁹As for Me, take note! I will encourage the minds of the Egyptians to follow them. Through Pharaoh, through his armed forces, his chariots and his horsemen My honor will be

sustained; ²⁰the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD when My honor is advanced over Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen.

²¹Then the Angel of God, ²²who had been moving ahead of Israel's camp, withdrew and went behind them — the column of cloud withdrew from the front and stood behind them — ²³and came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; it was cloud and darkness; it also lit up the night; ²⁴so they did not get close to each other at night.

²⁵Moses then stretched out his hand over the sea and the LORD moved the sea all night by a mighty east wind turning the sea into dry land. The waters were divided ²⁶and the Israelites went into the midst of the sea on dry ground. To their right and to their left the waters formed a wall for them. ²⁷In hot pursuit the Egyptians followed them, all the horses, the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh into the midst of the sea. ²⁸Around 6:00 in the morning the LORD looked upon the Egyptian army from the column of fire and cloud and brought on panic among the Egyptian host; ²⁹He clogged their chariot wheels and made them move so heavily that the Egyptians said, "Let us get away from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians." ³⁰

³¹The LORD said to Moses: Stretch out your hand over the sea and let the waters flow back upon the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen. ³²So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and at break of day the sea returned to its usual flow, with the Egyptians fleeing against it. The LORD tumbled ³³the Egyptians into the middle of the sea. ³⁴The waves rolled back and submerged the chariots and their driv-

u) Sedge-place, on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea.

v) Some, it would seem, called out to God; others complained to Moses.

w) No disagreement or rebuke; silence and confidence were needed before God's help could be appreciated. x) Previously mentioned as the Lord Himself, Ch. 13:21.

y) Darkness to the Egyptians and light to the Hebrews.

z) A wall of water due to a mighty wind is not perpendicular; it bulges. All pictures that so portray it are false to this Bible passage. Mighty winds moved waters to right and to left, making a wide path for the Hebrews and all they had.

a) After the Hebrews had well passed the earlier portion of their miraculous path, the sandy bottom started moistening and softening so that chariot wheels went deeper and deeper; for the winds that had turned the waters back ceased blowing. b) As fruit is shaken from a tree.

ers together with the whole army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not even one of them was left. ²⁹But the Israelites had walked on dry ground in the middle of the sea with the waters for their wall to the right and to the left. ³⁰So did the LORD save Israel that day from Egypt's dominance, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹When Israel looked upon the mighty work which the LORD had wrought upon Egypt, the people revered the LORD and came to believe in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

15 THEN MOSES AND THE ISRAELITES sang this hymn to the LORD, "I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider He has hurled into the sea. ²The LORD is my strength and song; He has become my salvation.^c This is my God and I will glorify Him; my father's God and I will exalt Him.

³"The LORD is a warrior;^d Jehovah is His name; ⁴the chariots of Pharaoh and his army He has thrown into the sea; the pick of his fighters are drowned in the Red Sea. ⁵The floods cover them; they sank into the depths like a stone.

⁶"Thy right hand, O LORD, is glorified in power; Thy right hand, O LORD, shattered the foe. ⁷In the greatness of Thy majesty Thou didst pull down those who rose up against Thee; Thou didst loosen Thine indignation which consumed them like stubble. ⁸At the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were heaped up; the streams stood up like a wall; the waves were congealed in the heart of the sea.

⁹"The foe said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will share the plunder; I shall have my satisfaction on them; I will unsheath my sword; my hand shall destroy them.'

¹⁰"Thou didst blow with Thy wind; the sea covered them; they sank as lead in mighty waters." ¹¹Who is like Thee among the gods, O LORD? Who is like Thee, glorified in holiness,^e re-

vered in hymnody, doing wonders! ¹²Thou didst stretch out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

¹³"In Thy mercy Thou hast led the people Thou hast redeemed; in Thy might Thou hast guided them to Thy holy dwelling. ¹⁴Nations heard of it and trembled; anguish gripped the Philistines. ¹⁵Edom's princes were confounded; the Moab chiefs — trembling attacks them. All the dwellers of Canaan melted away; ¹⁶terror and dread come down on them. By the greatness of Thy arm they are static as a stone, until Thy people, O LORD, come through, until the people come through whom Thou hast made Thine own. ¹⁷Thou bringest them in and plantest them in the mountain of Thy heritage, the place, O LORD, which Thou hast made Thy dwelling, the sanctuary which Thy hands, O LORD, have established. ¹⁸The LORD shall reign forever and ever."

¹⁹For Pharaoh's horses went into the sea with his chariots and his horsemen, and the LORD returned upon them the waters of the sea, but the children of Israel walked on dry ground through the middle of the sea.

²⁰Then Miriam, the prophetess, sister of Aaron, took in her hand a tambourine and all the women followed her with tambourines to which they danced. ²¹While Miriam taught them to sing, "Sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider has He plunged into the sea."

²²Then Moses ordered Israel to move away from the Red Sea and they went on into the Shur desert; for three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³Arriving at Marah they could not drink the Marah water, for it was bitter; for that reason they named it Marah.^f ²⁴So the people complained against Moses, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵He called out to the LORD and the LORD showed him a log, which he threw into the water and the water became enjoyable.

Then he laid down a statute and

c) To this hymn the Hebrew prophets and singers referred repeatedly [see Isa. 12]. They quoted from it verbally, and the majesty, the might and the sublimity of God remained a main source of courage, so continuing through the Christian era.

d) With this phrase of God's nature Pharaoh had not reckoned.

e) With their heavy armor unable to swim or float. f) First mention of God's holiness.

g) Which means, bitter. Miriam, Mary, myrrh, are built on the same stem.

ordinance for them;^b there He tested them; ²⁶He said: If you will carefully listen to the voice of the LORD, your God, do what is right before Him, give ear to His commands and observe all His injunctions, then I will put on you none of the diseases I put on Egypt; for I am the LORD, your healer. ²⁷They came to Elim with its twelve springs of waters and seventy palm trees; there they camped beside the waters.¹

16 THE WHOLE CONGREGATION OF Israelites set out from Elim and came into the Sin desert,^j which lies between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth of the second month^k since their leaving Egypt. ²In the desert the entire Israelite congregation grumbled against Moses and Aaron, ³saying, "We had rather have died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, where we sat¹ by our flesh pots and ate all the food we wanted; for you have led us into this desert to kill all of us by starving." ⁴Then the LORD said to Moses: Observe! I am going to shower bread for you from heaven. The people shall go out and collect one day's ration each day, so that I may test them, whether they will follow My instructions or not. ⁵And on the sixth day they shall be ready to bring in double the daily ration.

⁶So Moses and Aaron told all the Israelites, "This evening you shall recognize that the LORD has brought you from the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, who hears you grumble against the LORD. For who are we, that you should grumble against us!" ⁸Moses continued, "The LORD is giving you flesh to eat in the evening and bread in the morning as much as you want, because the LORD is hearing your complaints against Him. Who are we?

Your complaints are not against us, but against the LORD."

⁹Moses said to Aaron, "Tell the whole assembly of Israel, 'Present yourselves before the LORD, for He has heard your grumbings.'" ¹⁰And while Aaron was addressing the whole congregation of Israel and they looked toward the desert, they beheld the glory of the LORD manifested in the cloud.^m ¹¹Then the LORD said to Moses: ¹²I have heard the grumbings of the Israelites. Tell them, "At twilight you will have flesh to eat and in the morning plenty of bread and you will recognize that I am the LORD your God."

¹³So it was. At twilight quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning a heavy dew lay all round the camp. ¹⁴When the dew evaporated, there lay on the surface of the desert something small and flaky, as fine as hoarfrost, on the ground. ¹⁵As the Israelites looked at it, they said to one another, "What is it?"ⁿ For they did not know what it was.

Moses told them, "This is the bread which the LORD has given you for food. ¹⁶The LORD's command is this: Each one of you gather of it what you need, three quarts for each as you number the persons; let each man gather for those in his tent." ¹⁷The Israelites did so, some gathering much and some less. ¹⁸Measuring it with a six-pint vessel,^o he who gathered much had none to spare, while he who gathered little did not come short; they collected according to personal needs.

¹⁹Moses said to them, "Let no one save any of it until morning." ²⁰But they did not listen to Moses and left some of it till morning, and it grew wormy and rancid. So Moses felt angered by them.

²¹Morning after morning they gathered, each according to his eating and,

h) God established the eternal principle that He hears and helps them who sincerely "trust and obey" Him. i) Still called, Springs of Moses. j) A local name without reference to good or evil. k) Named Ziv in I Kings 6:37. The seventh month was called Ethanim and the eighth Bul. After the Captivity different names were used.

l) So soon they had forgotten how seldom their slavery had allowed them to sit at ease.

m) The column of cloud and of fire.

n) The word manna carries the meaning, "What is it?" It was so used in Egypt and in the Sinai peninsula. Young Nez Perce Indians, whom we watched playing ball, often turned to the leader with, "Manna?" They told us it meant, "What do you mean?"

o) An omer, between six and seven pints.

as the sun grew hot, it melted; ²²but on the sixth day they collected a double ration, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, ²³he assured them, "This is what the LORD said, There is rest tomorrow, a Sabbath holy to the LORD. Bake and cook what you need and lay aside the rest for yourselves till next morning." ²⁴They saved it till morning as Moses had ordered and it was neither rancid nor wormy.

²⁵Moses said, "Eat it today, because today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it outdoors. ²⁶Collect it six days but on the seventh day, a Sabbath, there will be none." ²⁷Yet, on the seventh day some of the people went out to gather it; but they did not find any.

²⁸The LORD then spoke to Moses: How long will you^p refuse to obey My commands and My instructions? ²⁹Mind this: Because the LORD has given you the Sabbath, He is giving you two days' bread on the sixth day, while everyone should stay home and not leave his place on the seventh day. ³⁰So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹The house of Israel named it manna; it was white like coriander seed^q and it tasted like honeyed cakes. ³²Moses said, "This is the LORD's command: 'Fill an omer of it to keep for future generations, so they may see the bread I fed you in the desert when I brought you from the land of Egypt.'" ³³So Moses told Aaron, "Take a jar, put an omer of manna in it and deposit it before the LORD to keep for your descendants." ³⁴So, in agreement with the LORD's command to Moses, Aaron deposited it in front of the Testimony^r to be preserved. ³⁵The Israelites ate the manna for forty years, until they en-

tered a settled land; they ate the manna until they reached the outskirts of the land of Canaan. ³⁶An omer is a tenth of a bushel.^s

17 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LORD's orders the whole community of Israel traveled from the Sin desert by stages and made camp at Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people quarreled with Moses; they said, "Give us water to drink!" Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put God to the test?" ³There the people thirsted for water and grumbled against Moses; they said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? To kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" ⁴Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are not far from stoning me!"

⁵The LORD said to Moses: Advance before the people and take along some of the elders of Israel; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go forward. ⁶Take note! I will stand there ahead of you on the Horeb rock.^t When you strike the rock, water will gush out of it and the people will drink. And Moses did so, with the elders of Israel looking on. ⁷He named that place Massah and Meribah,^u because of the Israelites' quarreling and their testing the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

⁸At Rephidim, Amalek^v came and fought Israel; ⁹so Moses said to Joshua, "Pick us out men; march and fight Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

¹⁰As Moses had told him to fight Amalek, so Joshua did, and Moses, Aaron and Hur^w climbed to the hilltop.

p) The verb in which "you" is conveyed, is plural, it concerns the people. Without "ye" our language has become less clear, and those who say "you-all," have good reason for it.

q) Of the parsley family, cultivated in Palestine but growing wild in Arabia and northern Africa. One species of it was used to season dishes.

r) When the Ark of the Covenant was finished; later on, the Testimony or Decalogue was also deposited there.

s) The ephah measure that equalled about seven gallons and five pints, a good sized bushel.

t) "Sinai" and "Horeb" are used interchangeably, possibly peak and range.

u) Near Rephidim where they camped when the grumbling occurred.

v) The Amalekites were descended from Esau [Gen. 36:12].

w) Hur was of Judah's tribe; the Jewish historian Josephus calls him Miriam's husband.

¹¹Then, while Moses held his hand raised, Israel gained the upper hand, but when he lowered his hand, Amalek won. ¹²But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and placed it under him. He sat on it and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side, so that his hands kept steady until sunset. ¹³Thus Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the sharpness of the sword.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses: Write this for a record in a book and rehearse it to Joshua; for I shall completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. ¹⁵Also Moses built an altar and named it, "The LORD my Banner,"^x ¹⁶for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn His war against Amalek from generation to generation."

18 WHEN JETHRO, THE PRIEST OF Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had wrought for Moses and for His people Israel, and how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt, ²Jethro had taken Zipporah, the wife of Moses, who had sent her back;^y ³ also her two sons, — the one named Gershom, for he said, "I am an alien in a foreign land,"^z ⁴and the other named Eliezer, for he said, "My father's God is my help, and saved me from Pharaoh's sword." ⁵Now Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came to Moses with his sons and his wife, to the desert by the mountain of God, where he was camping. ⁶He sent word to Moses, "I, Jethro, your father-in-law, have come to you with your wife and her two sons with her." ⁷So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed deeply to him and kissed him. They then inquired about each other's welfare and entered the tent. ⁸Moses recounted to his father-in-law everything the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians because of Israel; all the hardship they had experienced on the

way, and how the LORD had delivered them.

⁹Jethro felt glad over all the goodness the LORD had wrought for Israel, delivering them from Egypt's oppression. ¹⁰Jethro exclaimed, "Blessed be the LORD who saved you from Egypt's oppression and from Pharaoh's heavy hand, who delivered Israel from Egypt's grip. ¹¹Now I recognize that Jehovah is greater than all the gods; so much so that their impudence went against them."^a ¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to join Moses' father-in-law in eating a meal before the LORD.^b

¹³Next morning Moses sat down to administer justice for the people, and the people stood around Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴When Moses' father-in-law noticed all his dealings with the people, he remarked, "What are you doing to the people? Why do you hold court alone, with all the people standing around from morning till evening?"^c

¹⁵Moses answered his father-in-law, "The people come to inquire of God. ¹⁶When they meet with difficulty they come to me for justice between each other; so I instruct them in God's rules and laws." ¹⁷Then Moses' father-in-law rejoined, "You are not doing it most helpfully; ¹⁸you are wearing out yourself and the people as well. The work is too exacting for you; you cannot handle it alone. ¹⁹Now listen to me; I have counsel for you, and God be with you. You represent the people before God and bring the cases to God. ²⁰You make clear to them the rules and the laws; you show them the way to behave and what they ought to do. ²¹Now search for able men among all the people, men who revere God and are honest, men who despise unfair profits, and appoint them leaders of

x) Jehovah Nissi.

y) Finding it unsafe for his family, with Pharaoh so adverse, Moses had sent wife and children back to Midian. z) Moses so named his elder son [Ex. 2:22]; his second son, [Ex. 18:4].

a) A people and their idols stand or fall together.

b) Jethro was a descendant of Abraham by Keturah and was a priest of God.

c) Because he could conduct a court session better than others, Moses let all the work be loaded on him, without training others to share the labors with him, a serious mistake of Christian leaders to this day.

thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. ²²Let them regularly administer justice for the people and only when there is an extremely difficult case, let them bring it to you; but for ordinary affairs let them judge. It will make it easier for you and they will share with you the responsibility. ²³If you work this out, and if God commands you, you will be able to stand the strain and all these people will go home satisfied."^d

²⁴Moses listened to his father-in-law and carried out all he had suggested; ²⁵he chose able men from all Israel and made them chiefs of the people — leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, ²⁶and they judged on ordinary matters. Difficult cases they referred to Moses; but those of lesser import they judged. ²⁷And Moses let his father-in-law return to his own country.

19 ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE third month after their leaving Egypt the Israelites entered the Sinai desert; ²for they had traveled from Rephidim and reached the Sinai desert, where they encamped facing the mountain, ³while Moses went up to God.^e

The LORD called to him from the mountain: Say this to the house of Jacob and announce to the Israelites, ⁴"You have seen what I did to Egypt, while I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵Now then, if you will obediently observe My message and keep My covenant, then you will be above all nations My personal possession; for the whole earth is Mine. ⁶You will become to Me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation." Announce this message to the Israelites. ⁷So Moses came and summoned the elders of the people, to whom he conveyed all these words which the LORD had commanded him,^f ⁸and unitedly all the people answered, "Everything the LORD has said we will do"; which

response of the people Moses reported back to the LORD. ⁹The LORD then said to Moses: Observe! I am coming to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear My conversation with you and may always trust you.

Moses reported the people's words to the LORD,^g ¹⁰ and the LORD said to Moses: Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow; have them wash their clothes ¹¹and let them be ready for the third day; for day after tomorrow the LORD will, in the sight of all the people, descend upon Mount Sinai. ¹²Mark boundaries for the people all around and caution them, "Each of you be careful not to climb the mountain or even to touch the edge of it; for whoever touches the mountain shall without exception be executed."^h ¹³Not a hand shall touch him, but he will be stoned or pierced with arrows; whether man or beast, he shall not survive. At the lengthy blast of the ram's horn they may come up to the mountain."

¹⁴Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated them and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵He told the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near a woman."

¹⁶On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a heavy cloud on the mountain and a trumpet blast so unusually loud that all the people in the camp trembled. ¹⁷Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God and they stood at the base of the mountain. ¹⁸All of Mount Sinai was smoking, because the LORD came down upon it in fire; its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace and the whole mountain quaked severely. ¹⁹When the loud trumpet peal grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the LORD answered him with a voice. ²⁰The LORD then descended to the summit of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the mountain top; so Moses went up ²¹and the

d) Such counselors as Jethro are sorely needed in most churches and all Christian workers may well make these suggestions part of their own program.

e) A preliminary visit with God, with features of a definite appointment from the Lord.

f) The elders relaying it to the people.

g) Which, of course, the Lord knew without being told; but so He knows what we tell Him in prayer. h) It is well for all His offspring to grow keenly aware of His holiness.

LORD told him: Go down! Warn the people not to intrude in order to look at the LORD, for then many of them would perish. ²²Have the priests, too, who draw near to the LORD, consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them.

²³Moses answered the LORD, "The people cannot climb Mount Sinai, for Thou hast warned us, Set boundaries to the mountain and consecrate it."

²⁴The LORD said to him: Go down and then come up with Aaron; but let not the priests and the people intrude to climb up to the LORD, lest He punish them. ²⁵So Moses went down to the people and told them.

20 GOD SPOKE ALL THESE WORDS, saying: ²¹I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³You shall have no other gods before My face. ⁴You shall make for yourself no idol in the likeness of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am God who brooks no rival; ¹bringing home to children of the third and fourth generation of those who hate me the sins of their fathers, ⁶and applying kindness to thousands of those who love Me and obey My commandments.

⁷Do not use the name of the LORD your God profanely; for the LORD will not regard him innocent who uses His name profanely.

⁸Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you will labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; then you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your servant, your maid, your cattle or the alien in your household. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea and everything these contain, and He rested on

the seventh day. The LORD therefore blessed the Sabbath Day and consecrated it.

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that your life may be lengthened in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder! ¹⁴You shall commit no adultery! ¹⁵You shall not steal! ¹⁶You shall not witness falsely against your neighbor! ¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's household: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, his ox, his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

¹⁸As all the people observed the thunderings and the lightnings, the trumpet peal and the smoking mountain, and as the people looked at them, they moved away and stood at a distance. ¹⁹They said to Moses, "You converse with us and we will listen. Let not God address us, lest we die." ²⁰Moses assured the people, "Be not afraid! God has come to test you, so you may revere Him enough not to sin." ²¹But the people stood at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.

²²The LORD said to Moses: Convey¹ this message to the Israelites: You have experienced My speaking to you from heaven. ²³Make yourselves no gods of silver or gold to rival Me. ²⁴Make Me an earthen altar and upon it sacrifice your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. Wherever I would have My name memorialized, there I will come to you and bless you. ²⁵If you build Me an altar of stone, do not construct it of dressed stone, for you profane it by applying tools to it. ²⁶Neither go up to My altar by steps, lest on it your nudity be exposed.

21 THESE ARE THE LEGAL ORDERS you shall announce to them: ²When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years and in the seventh

i) No other God exists; there is no place for rivals. Worship of others is destructive to the soul, deceptive and disappointing.

j) God complied with their entreaty, although it was not wholesome for them; they should have shared in divine fellowship, to know and serve Him well.

he shall go out free, without charge.¹

³In case he started single, he shall leave single; if he had a wife, his wife shall go free with him. ⁴If his master gave him a wife and she bore him sons or daughters then the wife and her children shall belong to her master; he shall go out by himself. ⁵Should the slave persistently say, "I love my master, my wife and my children; I do not care to go free," ⁶then his master shall bring him to the gods.^m He shall also bring him to the door or to the door post, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him permanently.

⁷When a man sells his daughter to be a slave, she shall not go free the way the male slaves do. ⁸In case she does not please her master, who engaged her for himself, he shall allow her to be bought back; he shall have no right to sell her to outsiders, because he has treated her unfairly. ⁹If he engaged her for his son, then the custom of daughters shall be observed. ¹⁰Should he marry another wife, then her food, her clothing and her marriage rights shall not lessen, ¹¹and if he fails to maintain these three obligations, then she may go out free without any reimbursement.

¹²Whoever hits another fatally must certainly be executed. ¹³However, if he did not plan it, but God allowed an accident, then I will appoint a place for you to which he may flee.ⁿ ¹⁴But when a man is resentful against his neighbor and kills him with design, you shall take him to his execution even from My altar.^o

¹⁵Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death. ¹⁶Whoever kidnaps a person and sells him, or holds him in his possession, shall be executed. ¹⁷Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁸When two men quarrel and one hits the other with a stone or with

his fist and the victim does not die, but is confined to bed, ¹⁹then gets up and with a staff walks about on the street, the one who hit him shall go unpunished, except that he must pay for lost time and must see to it that he is completely healed.

²⁰When a man beats his male or his female slave with a club, so that the slave dies then and there, the victim shall be avenged; ²¹but if he survives a day or two then he must not be avenged, because he is his property.

²²If in a quarrel between men a pregnant woman is hit, so that she miscarries, but is not otherwise injured, the offender shall be fined by the woman's husband with consent of the judges. ²³But if there is further harm, then it is life for life, ²⁴eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵burn for burn, wound for wound and lash for lash.^p

²⁶When a man hits the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he must let the slave go free for his eye; ²⁷if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female slave, he must let him go free for his tooth.

²⁸When an ox fatally gores a man or a woman, the ox must unquestionably be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox is guiltless. ²⁹However, if an ox has repeatedly been goring people and its owner has been cautioned, but he failed to corral it, and it kills a man or a woman, then the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰But if atonement is applied to him, then he shall pay the redemption of his life as it is imposed on him. ³¹The same law holds for him where an ox has gored a boy or a girl. ³²And if an ox gores a male or a female slave, the owner shall pay to their master thirty silver shekels^q and the ox must be stoned.

³³When a man uncovers or digs a

1) The Hebrew was a citizen in a commonwealth of which God was King; for him perpetual slavery would be dishonorable, also for God, his Owner.

m) From Ch. 22:8 and from our Lord's retort to opponents, John 10:34-36, it appears that judges are here called gods, probably because in dealing out justice, they represented God.

n) A city of refuge, six of which were appointed in the promised land.

o) Ordinarily a place of refuge, but not always. Joab was slain there [I Kings 2:28].

p) While this is not the law of love, to be practiced in neighborly relationships, it has remained through the ages the essence of civil law, still practiced in our courts.

q) A silver shekel was for centuries equivalent to 65 cents. Today the dollar more truly equals it.

pit and fails to cover it, so that an ox or a donkey falls in, ³⁴the owner of the pit shall pay its owner full damage and shall keep the dead body.

³⁵When a man's ox hurts another's ox fatally, they shall sell the live ox and equally divide the price and shall equally divide the dead ox. ³⁶But if the ox was known to gore previously and its owner did not keep it corralled, then he must fully pay ox for ox, and the carcass shall be his.

22 IF SOMEONE STEALS AN OX OR A sheep, and butchers or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for the ox and four sheep for the sheep. ²When a burglar is caught breaking in and is fatally beaten, there shall be no charge of manslaughter, ³unless it happened after dawn, in which case there is manslaughter. The thief^r must make full restitution. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for what he stole. ⁴In case the theft is found alive in his possession, whether an ox, a donkey or a sheep, he shall refund double.

⁵If a man pastures livestock in his field or vineyard and then allows the animal to graze in another's field, he shall repay with the choicest of his own field or vineyard.

⁶When a field fire spreads and gets in the thorns with the result that shocked or standing grain burns up, the one who started the fire shall make refund.

⁷When a man hands his neighbor money or articles for safe keeping, and it is stolen from that man's house, if the thief is discovered, have him pay double; ⁸if the thief is not found, the householder shall be brought before the judges^s to inquire whether or not he has laid his hand on his neighbor's goods.

⁹For every kind of misconduct, whether it concerns an ox, a donkey, a sheep or clothing or anything lost, about which someone says, "This is

mine," the case of both parties shall come before the judges. Whom the judges pronounce guilty, he shall repay his neighbor double.

¹⁰When someone commits to his neighbor's care a donkey, an ox, a sheep or any livestock, and it dies or is injured or is driven off,^t without anyone observing it, ¹¹an oath before the LORD shall be required between the two, that he has not laid his hand on his neighbor's property. The owner shall accept that and there is no refund. ¹²But if it is actually stolen from him,^u then he must repay the owner. ¹³If it was torn to pieces, he shall bring it for evidence; he shall make no refund for what was torn.

¹⁴When a person borrows a neighbor's animal and it is injured or dies away from its owner, the borrower shall certainly make refund. ¹⁵If its owner is present there shall be no refund; in case it was hired, the hire suffices for payment.

¹⁶If a man seduces a virgin to whom he is not engaged and cohabits with her, he must without fail pay her dowry and marry her. ¹⁷If her father steadfastly refuses to let him have her, then the man must weigh out the cash equivalent to the dowry of virgins.^v

¹⁸Allow no sorceress to live. ¹⁹Whoever lies with an animal must be executed.

²⁰He who sacrifices to gods, except to the LORD alone, shall be destroyed.

²¹Do not affront or maltreat an alien; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; ²²neither cause distress to any widow or orphan. ²³If you distress them in any way and they cry out to Me, ²⁴I will hear their cry and My indignation shall burn; I will slay you with the sword,^w so that your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

²⁵If you lend money to the poor of My people, do not act the creditor to him; do not charge him interest. ²⁶If

r) In the text the word thief does not occur here. "He" must refer to the burglar just mentioned.

s) The name Elohim, regularly translated God, is used here. It is almost always used in the plural and our Lord so quotes it, but with "judges" in mind, as God's representatives. We therefore use the word "judges."

t) In a raid. u) Appropriated by the neighbor who was to care for it.

v) As there was no minted coin, cash payment had to be weighed.

w) God will bring war upon you; for retribution is a divine law.

you actually take your neighbor's coat in pawn, return it to him by sunset; ²⁷for it is the only cover he has for his naked body. In what else shall he sleep? When he cries out to Me, I will hear, for I am sympathetic.

²⁸Heap no abuse upon judges and do not curse a ruler of your people.*

²⁹Do not delay the offerings of your grains and vines. Give Me the first-born of your sons. ³⁰Do the same with your oxen and sheep; for a week the firstling may stay with its dam; on the eighth day present it to Me.

³¹Since you are yourselves to be dedicated to Me, eat no meat that was dismembered in the field; throw it to the dogs.⁷

23 PRESENT NO HEARSAY, UNSUPPORTED evidence; do not cooperate with an evil-minded person to become a malicious witness. ²Do not follow the crowd in wrongdoing, nor, when witnessing in a lawsuit, lean toward the majority to thwart justice; ³neither be partial to the poor man in his lawsuit.

⁴When you happen upon your enemy's stray ox or donkey, be sure to bring it back to him. ⁵In case you see the donkey of one who hates you lying helpless under its pack and you hesitate lending a hand, by all means give him aid.

⁶Do not twist the rights of your poor in his lawsuit; ⁷keep clean from a false charge; do not execute the innocent and guiltless; for I do not justify the wicked. ⁸Accept no bribe; for a present blinds one who can see and thwarts a just man's testimony.

⁹Do not make life hard for the foreigner; you know the alien's attitude, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt,

¹⁰Put in your crops in your land for six years and gather its harvest; ¹¹in the seventh year let it rest and fallow

it,⁸ so that the needy among your people are fed, and what they leave, the field animals may eat. Similarly with your vineyard and with your oliveyard.

¹²You shall work six days and rest on the seventh day so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the son of your slave maid, and your alien may enjoy a breathing spell.

¹³Pay strict attention to everything I have told you; do not mention the name of another god; let it not be heard from your lips.

¹⁴Thrice a year observe a feast for Me. ¹⁵Keep the feast of unleavened bread; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread at the appointed time, the month Abib, because in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear in My presence empty-handed.

¹⁶Also keep the harvest feast, the first fruits of your toil, of what you sowed in the field. Then keep the feast of ingathering^a at the end of the year,^b when you are through gathering in the fruits of your field work. ¹⁷Thrice a year your every male shall appear before the LORD God.

¹⁸Do not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of My feast remain overnight until morning. ¹⁹Bring the choicest of the first fruits of your land into the house of the LORD your God.

Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk.^c

²⁰Take note! I am sending an Angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared; ²¹mind His presence; heed His suggestions; do not offend Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions, since in Him is My name. ²²But if you will heartily obey His word and do everything I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an opponent to your opponents. ²³For My Angel^d will go before you and bring you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the

x) Again the name Elohim is used, which usually stands for God, but balanced, Hebrew fashion, with "rulers" in the next clause, it must denote judges as it did previously.

y) Not butchered by men, and the blood, which represents life, not properly drained.

z) Plowing was done on some acres and weeding on others, as Jer. 4:3 and Hosea 10:12 indicate.

a) The three great annual Feasts are scripturally known as Passover, Pentecost and Feast of Booths or Tabernacles. b) The end of the harvest season including fruits and grapes early October.

c) Be gentlemen even toward your animals.

d) Notice how "My Angel" and "I" are mentioned interchangeably; so in the burning bush; commissioning Gideon [Judg. 6:12,14,16]; there seems to be the presence of the Son of God.

Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, whom I will eliminate.

²⁴Do not bow down to their gods; do not serve them and do not behave their way; demolish them and break to fragments their worship pillars.^e ²⁵Serve the LORD your God and He will bless your food and your drink and I will remove sickness from among you. ²⁶There will be none miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fill out the number of your days. ²⁷I will send My terror ahead of you and bring panic on all the people you approach. I will turn your enemies from you in flight. ²⁸I will send wasps in advance of you, for driving out the Hivites, the Canaanites and the Hittites before you reach there. ²⁹I will not move them out of your way in a single year, lest the land turn desert and the wild beasts grow too numerous for you. ³⁰Little by little I will move them out of your way until you are numerous enough to take possession of the land.

³¹I will fix your boundaries from the Red Sea to the Philistine coast and from the desert as far as the river,^f for I will hand over to you the natives whom you will expel to make room for you. ³²Seal no covenant with them or with their gods; ³³they must not live in your land, lest they cause you to sin against Me. To serve their gods would ensnare you.

24 HE SAID TO MOSES, COME UP to the LORD — you, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of Israel's elders, and worship at a distance; ²let Moses alone draw near to the LORD. The others must not come close; neither shall the people come up with him.

³When Moses came back, he recited to the people all the LORD's announcements and all the legal instructions, to which the people unanimously replied, "Everything the LORD said we will do,"

⁴so Moses wrote down all the LORD's pronouncements. He got up early next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain along with twelve pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵He then dispatched young men of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and oxen as peace offerings to the LORD. ⁶But Moses himself put half the blood in basins and sprinkled half the blood upon the altar. ⁷He then took the Book of the Covenant, which he read for the people to hear. They said, "All the LORD's directions we shall obediently carry out."^g ⁸Moses then took the blood^h and sprinkled it on the people, saying, "Behold, the blood of the Covenant which the LORD has sealed with you is centered on all these words."

⁹Then Moses with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel, ¹⁰went up, and they saw the God of Israel; under His feet there was the likeness of a sapphire pavement, clear as the heavens. ¹¹He did not let His hand come down on the chiefs of Israel; they looked upon God, yet they ate and drank.ⁱ

¹²The LORD said to Moses: Ascend the mountain to Me and remain there. I will give you the stone tablets with the Law and the commandment which I have written for you to teach them. ¹³So Moses and Joshua, his assistant, rose and Moses ascended the mountain of God. ¹⁴To the elders he said, "Wait here until we return to you. Keep in mind that Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a case to settle can go to them."

¹⁵So Moses went up the mountain, which was covered with a cloud. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD was resting upon Mount Sinai; for six days the cloud covered it. On the seventh day He called to Moses from the depth of the cloud. ¹⁷To the onlooking Israelites the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top. ¹⁸Still

e) Those pillars, sometimes called "groves" in the KJV, were shameful images, encouraging licentious practices under cover of religion.

f) The Euphrates eastward, the Mediterranean westward.

g) This sacred event was ever after held before the Hebrews as their marriage ceremony, with God the Husband and Israel the wife. h) The remaining half.

i) As God is Spirit, they saw no body [Deut. 4:15], but a glory and even this remained a marvel through sacred history, for "no man shall see Me and live" [Ex. 33:20].

climbing, Moses entered the depths of the cloud and he remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

25 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES:

²Tell the Israelites to take up an offering for Me. Every person of a willing mind shall contribute^j for the offering ³which shall consist of gold, silver and bronze; ⁴blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goats' hair, ⁵rams' skins dyed red, goatskins and acacia wood; ⁶lamp oil, spices for anointing oil and for perfumed incense, ⁷onyx stone and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.^k ⁸Also have them construct for Me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them; ⁹make it in exact agreement with all that I am about to show you, the plan for the tabernacle as well as for its furniture.

¹⁰They shall make an Ark of acacia wood, ³/₄ feet long, by ²/₄ feet wide and high. ¹¹Overlay it inside and out with pure gold and run a gold molding around it. ¹²Cast four rings of gold for it to be attached to the four lower corners, two rings on one side and two on the other. ¹³Make poles, too, of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴Put the poles through the rings on the side of the Ark for carrying the Ark; ¹⁵the poles shall stay in the rings of the Ark; they must not be taken out.

¹⁶Deposit the Testimony^l which I will give you inside the Ark ¹⁷and make a mercy seat of pure gold, ³/₄ feet long, ²/₄ feet wide. ¹⁸Make two golden cherubim of beaten work,^m ¹⁹one cherub at the near end, the other at the further end and both of one piece with the mercy seat. ²⁰The cherubim shall spread their wings over the mercy seat, facing each other and both faces turned toward the mercy seat.ⁿ

²¹Top the Ark with the mercy seat

and deposit the Testimony which I will give you, inside the Ark. ²²There I will meet with you and convey to you, above the mercy seat between the two cherubim upon the Ark of the Testimony all that I command you for the Israelites.

²³Make a table of acacia wood three feet long, ¹/₂ feet wide and ²/₄ feet high; ²⁴plate it with pure gold and run a golden molding around it; ²⁵make a three-inch frame all around and a golden molding all the way around the frame. ²⁶Then make four gold rings for it and put them on the four corners at the table's four legs. ²⁷The rings must be close to the frame to hold the poles for carrying the table. ²⁸Make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold; with them the table will be carried. ²⁹Make its plates, its bowls, its pitchers and its flasks to pour with all of pure gold ³⁰and have the showbread perpetually on the table before Me.^o

³¹Make a lampstand, too, of pure gold; its base and shaft of beaten gold; its bowls, its knobs and its blossoms all of one piece with it. ³²Six branches shall rise out of its sides, three branches on this side of the lampstand and three on the other; ³³three cups of almond-blossom shape, each cup with calyx and petals on one branch and three almond shaped cups with calyx and petals on the other branch; and so on for all six branches coming out of the lampstand; ³⁴but on the shaft itself four cups of almond-blossom form, each with calyx and petals. ³⁵Also make a calyx under each pair of branches for the six that rise from the lampstand, ³⁶their calyxes and branches being of one piece with it, so that the whole shall be a single piece of pure, beaten gold. ³⁷Make its seven lamps for it, and so place them that they shall illumine what is in front of them. ³⁸The snuffers

j) Not a tax; not compulsory, but voluntary, the rich and the poor participating.

k) Ephod is the Hebrew name for the sacred upper garment of the priest, of plain linen for the regular priest; embroidered, many-colored for the high priest. The breastplate, worn by the high priest alone, went above the ephod or upper garment; it was square and twelve precious stones were set in it, one for each tribe. l) The two tables of the Ten Commandments.

m) Solid gold, not hollow; not molten. The Hebrew plural of cherub is cherubim.

n) Suggesting the holy ones forever curious about the marvels of God's grace to men.

o) God's people daily acknowledging their dependence on God and His constant care for them. Literally the bread was termed Face-bread, or Bread of the Presence.

and the ashtrays shall be of pure gold; ³⁹use a circle of gold^p for it, including all the utensils. ⁴⁰And see to it that you make it in agreement with their pattern that was shown you in the mountain.

26 ¹FOR MAKING THE TABERNACLE^q use ten curtains of fine twined linen, blue, purple and scarlet, with cherubs skilfully wrought in. ²The curtains shall each be forty-two feet long and six feet wide, all of the same size. ³Five curtains shall be joined together and similarly the other five. ⁴Make blue loops on the edge of the first curtain at the joint; so on the edge of the second joint — ⁵fifty loops for the one curtain and fifty loops for the edges of the other curtain so that the loops correspond between them. ⁶Then make fifty golden clasps and fasten the curtains to each other with the clasps so the Dwelling becomes a unit.

⁷Make goats'-hair curtains, too, for a covering of the tabernacle, eleven curtains altogether, ⁸the length of one curtain forty-five feet and its width six feet and the eleven curtains all the same size. ⁹Join five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves and double the sixth curtain to hang in front of the tent.^r ¹⁰Make fifty loops on the edge of the first curtain set and fifty loops on the edge of the other set; ¹¹then make fifty bronze clasps and put the clasps into the loops, thus fastening the covering together to make it a unit. ¹²The leftover portion of the curtains, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the rear end of the tabernacle ¹³and the 1½ foot left over in the length of the curtains on each side of the Dwelling shall hang over it for coverage. ¹⁴Construct a roof, too, for the tent, of rams' skins dyed red and on top of them goatskins.

¹⁵Prepare uprights of acacia wood for the tabernacle, ¹⁶fifteen feet long, 2¼ feet wide,^s ¹⁷with two tenons in each frame to fit tightly to the next frame, and so construct all the frames in the Dwelling. ¹⁸Make the frames for the Dwelling, twenty for the south side ¹⁹with forty silver sockets under them, two for each frame for its two tenons; ²⁰twenty frames for the second side of the Dwelling, the north side, ²¹with their forty silver sockets, two under each frame. ²²For the rear of the Dwelling, the west side, make six frames; ²³also two frames for the rear corners. ²⁴These must be coupled down below, and coupled with a ring on top, both frames, for the two corners. ²⁵So there will be eight frames with their sixteen silver sockets, two sockets under each frame.

²⁶Make bars, too, of acacia wood, five for the frames on one side of the Dwelling ²⁷and five for the frames on the other side; also five for the rear that looks westward, ²⁸the middle bar running all the way from end to end. ²⁹Overlay the frames with gold and make gold rings on them to hold the bars, which also you shall overlay with gold. ³⁰Erect the Dwelling^t according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.

³¹Make a blue, purple and scarlet veil of fine, twined linen with cherub design skilfully embroidered; ³²hang this by golden hooks on four acacia pillars overlaid with gold and resting on four silver sockets. ³³Hang the veil from the clasps, and bring the Ark of the Testimony within the veil. The veil shall divide for you the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.

³⁴Place the mercy seat upon the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies; ³⁵but set the table^u outside the veil; also the lampstand opposite the table

p) A talent; its weight of gold equal to at least \$30,000. The word "circle" suggests that shaping preceded coining of the precious metal.

q) The five curtains joined by clasps are thought of as one curtain both in this paragraph and in the next.

r) The goats' hair curtains were hung over the linen curtains for protection and for moderating the temperature both winter and summer.

s) Acacia trees would not likely grow that large and the Hebrew name for them, left untranslated in the KJV, intimates more than one piece of wood for each frame.

t) The tabernacle's Biblical name is most truly Dwelling because [Ex. 25:8,9] God came to dwell there. Another name is Tent of Meeting, as there God met with his people [Ex. 25:22; Num. 17:4]. Also, Tent of Testimony, as the two tables of Law were deposited there [Num. 9:15; Ps. 122:4].

u) The table of show-bread in the holy place, the bread of the Presence.

on the south side of the Dwelling, as the table is on the north side.

³⁶For the entrance to the Dwelling make a blue, purple and scarlet veil of fine twined linen, skilfully embroidered. ³⁷To hang the veil, make five acacia pillars, overlay them with gold and supply them with gold clasps; also cast five bronze sockets for them.

27 CONSTRUCT THE ALTAR OF ACACIA wood; make it square, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and wide, $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. ²Make horns of one piece with it on the four corners and overlay it all with bronze. ³Make ashpens for it and shovels, basins, fleshhooks and firepans; make all the utensils of bronze; ⁴make a network grating, too, of bronze with four bronze rings on its four corners. ⁵Fit the grating under the altar's ledge, so it comes halfway of the altar. ⁶Make poles of acacia wood for the altar and overlay them with bronze. ⁷Thrust the poles through the rings along both sides of the altar for carrying it. ⁸By the use of boards make the altar concave; make it as it was shown you on the mountain.

⁹You shall construct the court of the tabernacle. On the south side have hangings of fine twined linen, the length of 150 feet, ¹⁰with 20 pillars and their 20 sockets; the clasps of the pillars and their bands are to be of silver. ¹¹So also for the north side, make the hangings 150 feet long with 20 pillars and their 20 bronze sockets, the clasps of the pillars and their bands to be of silver.

¹²For the court's width, on the west side the hangings shall be 75 feet, with 10 pillars and their 10 sockets. ¹³The east side of the court shall be 75 feet, ¹⁴with hangings on one side of the entrance, $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet with 3 pillars and their 3 sockets ¹⁵and similarly on the other side of the entrance.

¹⁶The entrance to the court shall have a thirty-foot veil of fine twined linen, blue, purple and scarlet, skilfully

embroidered, with four pillars and their four sockets. ¹⁷The pillars all around the court shall be connected by silver bands; their hooks also of silver and their sockets bronze. ¹⁸The court shall be 150 feet long, 75 feet wide all the way and $7\frac{1}{2}$ -foot hangings of fine twined linen. The sockets shall be of bronze; ¹⁹so all the utensils of the tabernacle, all its pins and all the pegs for the court shall be of bronze.

²⁰Order the Israelites to bring you pure, beaten olive oil for illumination, so that a lamp may stand to burn perpetually. ²¹In the Tent of Meeting^v outside the veil that faces the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it supplied from evening until morning before the LORD, an everlasting institution for the Israelites.

28 HAVE YOUR BROTHER AARON with his sons as your associates from among the Israelites to officiate as My priests — Aaron and Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron. ²Make for your brother Aaron dedicated garments for honor and for beauty ³and tell all artisans whom I have endowed with skill, to make Aaron garments for his dedication to serve Me in the priestly office. ⁴And these are the garments they shall make: A breastplate, an upper garment,^w a robe, an undergarment of woven material, a turban and a sash. They shall make dedicated garments for your brother Aaron and for his sons to serve Me as priests. ⁵They must use gold; blue, purple and scarlet material and fine twined linen.

⁶The upper garment they shall make of gold; blue, purple, scarlet and pure twined white linen with artistic workmanship. ⁷It shall have two shoulder straps to bring it together at the two ends. ⁸The artistic sash shall be of the same material and workmanship — gold; blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen. ⁹Get two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of Israel's

v) The Dwelling, known to most of us as the Tabernacle, composed of the holy place, with table of showbread and sevenfold lamp, and the Holy of Holies, separated by the veil and containing the Ark of the Covenant, called Testimony here because the two tables of the Law were in it.

w) Hebrew name "ephod," reaching from loins to shoulders, connected on shoulders by a precious stone, inscribed with six tribal names in each stone. Front and back were covered to that length.

sons, ¹⁰the names of six on the one stone and the names of six on the other stone, according to their birth. ¹¹Engrave the names of Israel's sons on the two stones as a seal is engraved by a jeweler and have them set in gold sockets, ¹²to have the two stones fastened upon the upper garment's shoulder straps as memorial stones for the Israelites. As a memorial Aaron shall bear their names upon his shoulders before the LORD.

¹³Make sockets, too, of pure gold ¹⁴and two chains of pure gold, twining like cords, and fasten the twined chains to the sockets. ¹⁵Then make the judicial breastplate,* the work of a skilful craftsman, made, like the upper garment, of gold; blue, purple, scarlet and pure twined linen, ¹⁶nine inches square and doubled. ¹⁷Set in it four rows of jewels, the first row sardius, topaz and emerald; ¹⁸the second row carbuncle, sapphire and jasper; ¹⁹the third row amber, agate and amethyst ²⁰and the fourth row chrysolite, onyx and beryl;⁷ all shall be set in gold enclosures. ²¹There shall be twelve stones named after the twelve sons of Israel, engraved like a seal, for the twelve tribes.

²²Make upon the breastplate twined chains, cordage fashion, of pure gold, ²³also two gold rings for the two ends of the breastplate; ²⁴then fasten the two gold chains to the two rings at the end of the breastplate. ²⁵Fasten the other two ends of the twined chain to the two sockets and place them on the front part of the shoulder straps of the upper garment. ²⁶Make two more gold rings to put on the two ends of the breastplate inside the edge next to the upper garment ²⁷and two gold rings to put on the two shoulder straps of the upper garment where they join underneath in front, above the skilfully woven sash. ²⁸Fasten the rings of the breastplate to the rings of the upper garment²

with a blue cord so that the breastplate may not swing loose from the upper garment.

²⁹Aaron shall wear the names of Israel's sons over his heart on the breastplate of judgment as he enters the holy place, for a perpetual memorial in the presence of the LORD. ³⁰Insert the Urim and the Thummim^a into the breastplate over Aaron's heart as he enters the LORD's presence, so that Aaron may perpetually bear the rights of Israel over his heart before the LORD.

³¹Make the entire robe of the ephod blue ³²with a central opening at the top, the edges of which shall be bound all around with woven work, like the neck of a coat of mail, so that it may not fray. ³³Embroider the skirts with pomegranates, blue, purple and scarlet, interspersed with golden bells, ³⁴a gold bell and a pomegranate alternating all around near the edges. ³⁵Aaron is to wear it as he ministers, so that its sound shall be heard as he enters the Holy Place before the LORD and as he retires, that he may not die.

³⁶Make also a plate of pure gold and engrave on it with seal engravings: "Holiness to the LORD." ³⁷Attach it with a blue cord to be part of the turban at the turban's front ³⁸on Aaron's forehead, so that Aaron may take on him the guilt connected with the sacred gifts which the Israelites dedicate.^b It shall always be on his forehead, so there may be acceptance for them in the presence of the LORD.

³⁹Weave the tunic of checkered fine linen and make a turban of fine linen; also a sash of embroidered workmanship. ⁴⁰Make tunics for Aaron's sons, too, and sashes and turbans for honor and for beauty; ⁴¹dress your brother Aaron and his sons in them; anoint them, install^c and consecrate them to serve Me as priests. ⁴²Make them linen trunks to reach from waist to thigh to

x) By which God's will is known, if rightly sought.

y) Translators do not agree on the respective names of the twelve stones. Diamond seems impossible, because of its hardness, and sapphire not much better (see Rev. 21:19-21 for large precious stones).

z) Or ephod, its Hebrew name, which we shall often use hereafter.

a) Hebrew words for "lights and perfections," used for seeking direction from God, never for personal but always for national matters. They were objects that could be put in the breastplate; some think they were used like dice. We believe they were symbols of the high-priest's holy office, that God would reveal His will and plan if humbly approached.

b) Prophetic of our Lord's taking "on Him the iniquities of us all."

c) Literally, "fill their hand," that is, impart power to them.

cover their bare flesh. ⁴³Aaron and his sons shall wear them as they enter the meeting tent or approach the altar to serve in the holy place, so they may incur no guilt and die. It shall be a perpetual ordinance for him and for his descendants.

29 TO CONSECRATE THEM TO ME for the priestly office, do this for them: Select one young bull and two flawless rams; ²have unleavened bread and unleavened cakes mixed with oil; also unleavened wafers sprinkled with oil, using fine wheat flour to make them. ³Place them in one basket and present them in the basket, along with the young bull and the two rams. ⁴Then have Aaron and his sons come to the door of the meeting tent and wash them with water. ⁵Take the garments and dress Aaron in the tunic, the ephod, its robe^d and the breastplate, girding him with the artistic sash. ⁶Place the turban on his head and attach the sacred diadem to the turban. ⁷Then take the anointing oil and, pouring it on his head, anoint him.

⁸Bring his sons, too, and dress them with tunics; ⁹gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons; bind the turbans on them and theirs shall be the priestly office by perpetual ordinance. Ordain Aaron and his sons this way. ¹⁰Then have the bullock led in front of the meeting tent and Aaron and his sons shall place their hands on the head of the bullock before the LORD at the door of the meeting tent. ¹¹Slaughter the bullock before the LORD at the door of the meeting tent; ¹²take some of the bullock's blood and smear it with your finger on the horns of the altar; then pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar. ¹³Take all the fat that covers the entrails and the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them and burn them on the altar; ¹⁴but the bullock's meat, its hide and its offal you shall burn outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

¹⁵Then take the one ram and have Aaron and his sons lay their hands on the ram's head. ¹⁶Slaughter the ram, catch its blood, and sprinkle it all around on the altar; ¹⁷cut the ram into pieces, wash its entrails and its legs, place them upon its pieces and its head ¹⁸and burn the whole ram upon the altar for a burnt offering to the LORD; it is an acceptable odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.

¹⁹Take the other ram and have Aaron and his sons lay their hands on its head. ²⁰Kill the ram and, catching some of its blood, put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the tip of his sons' right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the great toe of their right feet; also sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. ²¹Take some of the blood from the altar and the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and on his garments; also on his sons and on their garments, so that he and his garments, also his sons and their garments will be consecrated.^e

²²Then take the ram's fat, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them, also the right thigh — for it is a consecration ram—²³with one loaf of bread, a cake made with oil, and one wafer from the basket of unleavened bread that is set before the LORD, ²⁴and lay them all in the hands of Aaron and of his sons to wave them as a wave-offering before the LORD.^f

²⁵Next receive them from their hands and burn them on the altar for a burnt-offering, an acceptable fragrance before the LORD, an offering to the LORD made by fire.

²⁶Take the breast of Aaron's ordination ram and wave it before the LORD; that will be your share. ²⁷Then consecrate the waved breast and the thigh of the ordination ram that was donated; ²⁸it belongs to Aaron and to his sons as a perpetual obligation from the Israelites, a contribution from the children of Israel from their thanksgiv-

d) A sleeveless robe, all blue, worn underneath the upper garment or ephod and longer; the fringe of alternate pomegranates and gold bells belonged to it.

e) From head to foot the person is dedicated — all he is, all he does and all he has.

f) A person's hand represents his powers and the waving indicates harmony. There is to be full agreement between the worshiper and his Lord.

ing sacrifices, their contribution to the LORD.

²⁹Aaron's sacred garments shall pass to his sons who succeed him, to be anointed and ordained in them. ³⁰The son who succeeds him in the priesthood shall wear them seven days as he enters the meeting tent to serve in the sanctuary. ³¹Take the ordination ram and boil its flesh in a sacred place.^s ³²Aaron and his sons shall eat the ram's meat and the bread that is in the basket, at the entrance of the meeting tent. ³³They shall eat the things with which atonement was made to install and to consecrate them; but no layman shall partake, for they are holy. ³⁴If any of the ordination meat or bread is left till morning, it must be burned; it must not be eaten, because it is dedicated.^b

³⁵Deal with Aaron and with his sons just as I gave you orders. Devote seven days to their installation ³⁶and each day offer a bullock for a sin offering to make atonement. Purify the altar, too, as you make atonement for it and anoint it for its sanctification. ³⁷For seven days make atonement for the altar, to sanctify it and it shall become a completely holy altar; everything that touches it shall be dedicated.¹

³⁸Here is what you shall offer upon the altar: two yearling lambs daily without fail, ³⁹the one lamb to be offered in the morning and the other at twilight. ⁴⁰With the first lamb you shall offer an ample six pints of fine flour mixed with 3 pints of pressed olive oil; and a libation of 3 pints of wine. ⁴¹Offer the second lamb at twilight, adding a similar cereal offering and libation for an acceptable fragrance, an offering by fire to the LORD, ⁴²a daily burnt offering through your generations at the entrance of the meeting tent before the LORD, where I meet with you and speak with you. ⁴³And

there I will meet with the children of Israel and by My glory it will be sanctified. ⁴⁴I will sanctify the meeting tent and the altar and I will sanctify Aaron and his sons to serve Me as priests. ⁴⁵I will dwell among the children of Israel and I will be their God; ⁴⁶so they shall know that I am the LORD, who brought them out of the land of Egypt to dwell among them, I, the LORD their God.

30 MAKE AN ALTAR ALSO FOR BURNING incense; make it of acacia wood and square, ²¹ $\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and wide, by three feet high; its horns of one piece with it. ³Overlay it with pure gold, its top, its sides all around and its horns, and run a gold molding around it. ⁴Just below the molding at the corners on both sides, fashion two gold rings for holding the poles to carry it. ⁵Make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. ⁶Place it in front of the veil that screens the Ark of the Testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is above the Testimony at which I will meet with you.¹

⁷Aaron shall burn perfumed incense on it every morning when he trims the lamps ⁸and again when he lights the lamps at twilight; it shall be a continual burning of incense before the LORD for your successive generations. ⁹Offer on it no unprescribed incense, nor any burnt offering or meal offering; neither pour libations on it. ¹⁰But once a year Aaron shall make atonement on its horns with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement and thus make an annual atonement through your successive generations. It is supremely sacred to the LORD.

¹¹The LORD said to Moses: ¹²When you take the Israelites' census, to muster them, each person shall give a ransom for his life to the LORD at the census-taking, so that no plague may fall on them as they are being counted.

g) Not within the tabernacle itself, which was not yet built, and within which there was no altar except that of incense connected with the Holy of Holies. The altar for animal offerings belonged to the tabernacle but was located in the court.

h) There are two meanings to "holiness"; one is the acme of purity and righteousness; the other separation, a setting apart for God, consecration or dedication.

i) Holy to the Lord, because of the purpose of the altar.

j) This little golden altar belonged to the Holy of Holies, although not placed within it; not for burnt sacrifices but only incense would ascend from it.

¹³Every one enumerated shall pay half a dollar by sanctuary money standards,^k a contribution to the LORD. ¹⁴Every one who joins those who are numbered, 20 years of age and over, shall make this contribution to the LORD; ¹⁵the rich no more, the poor no less,^l than 50 cents in contributing to the LORD to make atonement for your souls. ¹⁶Receive the atonement money from the Israelites and apply it to the tabernacle service so that for the children of Israel it may be a reminder that they make personal atonement in the presence of the LORD.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses; ¹⁸Make a bronze washbasin, too, with a bronze base for washing; locate it between the tabernacle and the altar and supply it with water, ¹⁹in which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet; ²⁰as they enter the tabernacle they shall wash with water, so they may not die; or when they approach the altar to minister by burning a sacrifice to the LORD, ²¹they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. It shall be a statute to them forever for him and for his offspring through their successive generations.

²²The LORD further said to Moses: ²³Secure for yourself the choicest spices, 250 dollars worth of pure myrrh,^m half as much of fragrant cinnamon, that is 125 dollars worth; 125 dollars worth of aromatic calamus ²⁴and 250 dollars of cassia, by sanctuary money values; also six quarts of olive oil. ²⁵Compound these into a sacred anointing oil, scientifically prepared as by a druggist; it shall be a holy anointing oil. ²⁶Anoint with it the tabernacle,ⁿ the Ark of the Testimony, ²⁷the table and all its furnishings, the lampstand and its utensils, the altar of incense; ²⁸the altar of burnt offerings with all its utensils, the washbowl and its base. ²⁹Sanctify them so

as to become completely dedicated; whoever touches them shall be dedicated.

³⁰Anoint also Aaron and his sons and consecrate them to serve as My priests ³¹and give this message to the Israelites, that this is to be holy anointing oil for Me through your generations; ³²it is not to be poured on a layman's body; nor must you compound anything like it for yourself, for it is holy; you must hold it holy. ³³Any person who compounds the like or who applies it to a layman shall be eliminated from his people.^o

³⁴The LORD said to Moses: Acquire perfumes, myrrh-oil drops, powdered mollusk^p shell and Persian gum with pure frankincense, these of equal portions, ³⁵and prepare these into a perfume, an ointment, a druggist's preparation, salted, pure and holy. ³⁶Grind some of it fine and place some of it in front of the Testimony in the tabernacle, where I shall meet with you. It shall be most holy to you. ³⁷Make none by this formula to be perfume for yourself; it shall be dedicated to the LORD. ³⁸Whoever prepares the like of it to enjoy its fragrance shall be eliminated from his people.

31 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Take notice! I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah ³and have filled him with God's Spirit in skill, intelligence and understanding for all craftsmanship ⁴to plan designs in gold, silver and bronze work, ⁵for cutting precious stones for setting, for woodcarving and for all sorts of craftwork. ⁶And know further that for his collaborator I have appointed Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. And I have endowed all the skilful-

k) One evidence of true democracy — all alike are invited to pay that small religious tax, a principle that should obtain in our churches; not because God is in need, but because we need that experience of participation. l) In terms of a day's wages, the value was much higher.

m) Product of a small tree in Arabia with fragrant wood and bark; also found in Eastern Africa; a yellowish brown and gummy substance, it exudes from its tree — like resin.

n) Dwelling, meeting tent and tabernacle refer to the home structure — Dwelling because God dwelt there; meeting tent because He met the people there and they each other; tabernacle because moveable — the name usually given in the KJV.

o) Possibly by execution, but more likely by banishment; even excommunication might be applied, depriving the culprit of his Hebrew privileges.

p) Mollusc shells were found in Indian lakes; they are fragrant when ground and burned. Persian gum oozes from two plants found in Persia, Syria and Arabia.

minded with skill^a to make everything I have ordered you — ⁷the meeting tent, the Ark for the Testimony, the mercy seat upon it, all the furnishings of the tent, ⁸the table and its utensils, the pure lampstand and all its fittings, the altar of incense, ⁹the altar of burnt-offering and all its utensils, the wash-basin and its base, ¹⁰the woven garments, the sacred garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons to wear when they serve as priests, ¹¹the anointing oil and the perfumed incense for the sanctuary — have them work it out just as I have ordered you.

¹²The LORD said to Moses: ¹³Tell the Israelites to keep My Sabbaths by all means; for this is through your generations a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD, who consecrates you. ¹⁴You therefore must keep the Sabbath, as it stands for your holiness. Those who profane it shall surely be executed; whoever works on it, that person shall be eliminated from among his people. ¹⁵For six days work may be done but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of rest enjoyment, holy to the LORD. Whoever works on the Sabbath day shall certainly be executed. ¹⁶So then the Israelites shall keep the Sabbath, with Sabbath observance through their successive generations as an everlasting covenant. ¹⁷It is a sign forever between Me and the children of Israel; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth and on the seventh day He rested and refreshed Himself.^r

¹⁸When He had finished conversing with Moses on Mount Sinai He gave him the two tablets of the testimony, stone tablets written with the finger of God.

32 WHEN THE PEOPLE NOTICED that Moses delayed his coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and told him, "Get up! Make gods for us to lead us on;

for this man Moses, who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we have no idea what has happened to him."

²Aaron told them, "Pluck off the gold rings in the ears of your wives, your sons and your daughters and bring them to me." ³So all the people tore off the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron, ⁴who took them from their hands, fashioned it with a graving tool^s and molded it into a calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

⁵Seeing that, Aaron built an altar in front of it and proclaimed, "A feast to the LORD tomorrow!" ⁶So next morning they rose early; they offered burnt-offerings and brought peace-offerings: the people sat down to eat and drink; then they got up to make merry.

⁷The LORD said to Moses: Go, get down, for your people whom you brought up from the land of Egypt have behaved wickedly. ⁸They have quickly swerved from the path in which I directed them; they have made for themselves a molten calf, have bowed to it, have sacrificed to it and have said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

⁹The LORD further told Moses: I have observed this people and, see, it is a stubborn people; ¹⁰so, leave Me alone so that My indignation may flame against them and I may consume them; then I will make you into a great nation. ¹¹But Moses pleaded before the LORD his God; he said, "LORD, why does Thy indignation flame against Thy people whom Thou hast brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹²Why should the Egyptians say, 'To their misfortune He brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to sweep them from off the face of the earth.' Do turn from Thy fierce anger and change Thy purpose about Thy

q) We might wisely recognize divine influence on human minds today when benevolent discoveries and inventions are made.

r) Literally in the Hebrew, He took a breath; or enjoyed a breathing spell.

s) The mold could be made of sand or of bronze, in the form of a yearling calf, and the gold melted and poured into the cast. No doubt skilled craftsmen, rather than Aaron himself accomplished the task.

people's punishment. ¹³Turn Thy thought to Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou didst swear by Thyself and to whom Thou didst say, I will make your offspring as countless as the stars of heaven and all this land that I have mentioned I will give your descendants; they shall possess it forever." ¹⁴And the LORD felt grieved regarding the punishment He had thought to apply to His people.^t

¹⁵Moses then turned and went down from the mountain, with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand, both tablets written on both sides; ¹⁶the work of God they were; the writing was God's writing engraved upon the tablets. ¹⁷As Joshua heard the noise of the shouting people, he said to Moses, "A sound of war in the camp." ¹⁸But he said, "It sounds neither as a shout of victory nor as a cry of defeat; I am hearing the sound of singing." ¹⁹Then as he came close to the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger grew hot; he flung the tablets from his hands and broke them at the base of the mountain. ²⁰He took the calf they had made, committed it to the flames and ground it to powder, which he scattered on the water and made the Israelites drink^u of it.

²¹Moses said to Aaron, "What has this people done to you that you have saddled them with so great a sin?" ²²Aaron replied, "Let not my master's anger blaze! You know this people and their wickedness. ²³They said to me, 'Make us gods to go ahead of us, for this man Moses, who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we have no idea what happened to him.' ²⁴So I said to them, 'Whoever has gold, let him pluck it off.' They gave it to me; I cast it into the fire, and out came this calf."

²⁵When Moses saw that the people were unrestrained — for Aaron had allowed them to cast off restraint until

their foes would deride them"—²⁶Moses stationed himself at the camp entrance and said, "To me, whoever sides with the LORD!" All the Levites then joined him, ²⁷and he told them, "Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, Gird on your sword, each of you, move back and forth from gate to gate in the camp and each one slay his brother, his neighbor and his kin."^w

²⁸The Levites carried out Moses' order and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. ²⁹Moses said,^x "You are installed today for the LORD, because each was against his son and against his brother so that today He may bestow on you a blessing." ³⁰Next day Moses told the people, "You have committed an enormous sin. Now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can obtain forgiveness for your sin."

³¹So Moses went back to the LORD and said, "Oh, please! this people has sinned an enormous sin; they have made for themselves a god of gold. ³²And yet, if Thou wilt forgive their sin . . . and if not, please blot me out of Thy book which Thou hast written."^y

³³The LORD said to Moses: Whoever has sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. ³⁴Go now and lead the people where I have told you. Mind you, My Angel will go ahead of you. However, in My time of retribution I will punish them for their sin. ³⁵And the LORD plagued the people because they were the makers of the calf which Aaron fashioned.

33 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES:
Move on up there, you and the people you have brought up from the land of Egypt; go up to the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, saying, "To your offspring I will give it." ²I will send an angel before you — and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the

t) Jonah 3:10 is of similar import, but the Ninevites had shown humble repentance.

u) It would seem that pedestal and other appurtenances of the shrine were burned and the golden calf itself ground to powder.

v) Idolatry involves not only the worship of material things, but it is almost invariably accompanied with sexual immoralities. w) Almost certainly those who were immorally indulging.

x) Being of the same tribe with Moses may have influenced the Levites, but even so their siding with God against idolatry marked them best fitted for the religious ministries, not as priests, but as assistants to the priests and as teachers of the people.

y) Somewhat prophetic of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ.

Perizzites and the Jebusites—³to a land flowing with milk and honey. For I shall not go up in your midst, because you are a stubborn people; I might destroy you on the way.

⁴When the people heard this adverse message, they felt sorry; no one wore his ornaments; ⁵for the LORD had told Moses to say to the Israelites, "You stubborn people, if I went up in your midst for but a moment I would destroy you; so lay off your ornaments to have Me know what to do with you."² ⁶The Israelites therefore stripped themselves of their ornaments at Mount Horeb.

⁷Moses regularly pitched the tabernacle outside the camp at some distance from it and called it the meeting tent. Anyone who sought the LORD^a would go out to the meeting tent outside the camp. ⁸Whenever Moses went to the tent, all the people would rise and everyone would remain standing at his tent door with eyes fixed on Moses until he entered the tent. ⁹And as Moses entered the tent the cloudy column would come down and stand at the entrance of the tent, where He would converse with Moses. ¹⁰Then all the people would see the column of cloud standing at the tabernacle^b entrance and would rise to worship, each at his tent door, ¹¹and the LORD would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. Then he went back to the camp, but his assistant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, did not leave the tabernacle.

¹²Moses said to the LORD, "Consider! Thou art saying to me, 'Lead this people up'; but Thou hast not made known to me whom Thou wilt send with me. Yet, Thou hast said, 'I know you personally' and, 'You have found favor with Me, too.' ¹³Now, then, I pray, if I have found favor with Thee, please do make Thy ways clear to me

so that I may understand Thee^c and always find favor with Thee. Consider also that this nation is Thy people."¹⁴ Shall I Myself, said He, go along and put you at ease? ¹⁵"If Thou Thyself," said he, "art not going, then do not bring us up there. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favor with Thee, unless Thou goest with us? Then we shall be distinguished, I and Thy people, from all the nations on the face of the earth." ¹⁷The LORD said to Moses: I will do what you have mentioned, for you have found favor with Me; I know you by name.^d

¹⁸Then he said, "Show me Thy glory, I pray." ¹⁹He answered: I will cause all My goodness to pass before you and I will proclaim the LORD's name before you; for I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.^e ²⁰He further said: You are not able to see My face, for no human being can see Me and live. ²¹But note! the LORD said, there is a place near Me. Take your stand on the rock ²²and as My glory passes by, I will place you in a cleft of the rock and I will cover you with My hand while I am passing by. ²³Then I will remove My hand, so you will see My back; My face shall not be seen.

34 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: HEW out for your use two stone tablets like the first and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you broke.^f ²Be ready by morning and in the morning ascend Mount Sinai; there on the mountain top present yourself to Me. ³No one must come up with you, nor shall any person be seen on the whole mountain; neither let any flocks or herds graze close to the mountain.

⁴So Moses hewed two stone tablets similar to the first, rose early in the

2) God tested their willingness to obey even when that meant deprivation.

a) Either to seek divine counsel, or for communion with God.

b) Since the name "tabernacle" is most familiar to every devout Bible reader, we plan to use it often for the sanctuary that was erected in the desert, remembering that meeting tent, tent and Dwelling relate to the same structure.

c) A prayer which we may well use and practice in our work and in our worship.

d) Intimately.

e) Grace and mercy are undeserved; we have no claim to them, except as it has pleased God to promise and to grant them.

f) In this life God is so willing to give His offspring a second chance.

morning and ascended Mount Sinai as the LORD had ordered him, taking the two stone tablets in his hand. ⁵Then the LORD descended in a cloud and took His stand with him there, as he called on the name of the LORD. ⁶The LORD passed in front of him, and declared: The LORD, Jehovah, God, is compassionate and kind, slow to anger and abounding in mercy and faithfulness, ⁷keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, but not at all acquitting the guilty; visiting the sins of fathers on their children and on their grandchildren to the third and fourth generation.⁵

⁸Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshiped. ⁹He said, "If I have found favor with Thee, O LORD, then let the LORD, I pray, go among us; for we are a stiffnecked people. Forgive our iniquity and our sin and take us for Thine own."

¹⁰Then He said: Look! I am making a Covenant. Before all your people I will work such wonders as have never been wrought anywhere on earth among any nation. All the people among whom you are, shall see the work of the LORD, for what I am about to do with you inspires awe. ¹¹Mark well what I am commanding you today. Understand that I am about to drive out of your way the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; ¹²so practice great care to make no covenant with the natives of the land you are going to enter, lest they become a snare in your midst. ¹³Instead you must break down their altars, smash their images and cut down their sacred trees.^h ¹⁴For you shall not worship another god, because the LORD, whose name is Ardent, is a God who brooks no rival.ⁱ ¹⁵If you make a covenant with the natives of the land, while they run wantonly after their gods and sacrifice to their gods, they will invite you to eat of their sacrifice. ¹⁶When you also marry your sons to their

daughters, who go wantonly after their gods, they will lead your sons into adultery after their gods.^j ¹⁷Cast no molten gods for yourself.

¹⁸Observe the feast of unleavened bread; for seven days eat unleavened bread as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib; for in Abib you came out of Egypt. ¹⁹Every first-born^k belongs to Me; including every male firstling of your livestock, of cow or sheep; ²⁰but redeem the firstling of a donkey with a lamb; or, if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem every first-born of your sons. None shall appear before Me empty-handed.

²¹Labor six days and rest on the seventh day; even in plowing and in harvest time have your rest.

²²Observe also the feast of weeks at the first harvesting of wheat, and the feast of ingathering at the end of the year.¹ ²³Thrice a year all your males shall appear before the LORD, the God of Israel; ²⁴for I will dispossess nations before you and will enlarge your frontiers. None shall covet your land while you appear before the LORD your God thrice a year.

²⁵Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to Me together with leavened bread; neither shall the Passover sacrifice be left overnight.

²⁶Bring your earliest first fruits to the house of the LORD your God.

Boil no kid in its mother's milk.

²⁷The LORD said to Moses: Write these words for your use, because the Covenant which I made with you and with Israel is based on these words.

²⁸He remained there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking. And he wrote the words of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments on the tablets.

²⁹As Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand, he was not aware that his facial skin glowed, because he had been speaking with

¹) God's statement about Himself. These words are weighty enough to be memorized.

²) Tree stumps carved after male and female organs. ⁱ) No creature can equal its Creator.

^h) The Hebrew nation was married to Jehovah, so idolatry was adultery.

^k) Every (first) opener of the womb. ¹) Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles or Booths.

Him;^m ³⁰but Aaron and all the Israelites looked at Moses and saw that his facial skin had become shining, and they were afraid to approach him. ³¹So Moses called out to them and Aaron and all the leaders of the gathering came back to him and Moses spoke to them. ³²Afterward all the Israelites came near and he charged them with all that the LORD had said to him on Mount Sinai.

³³When Moses was through speaking to them, he covered his face with a veil; ³⁴but whenever Moses entered the LORD's presence to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out, and he would come out to tell the Israelites the given orders. ³⁵The Israelites would see that the skin of Moses' face shone, so Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

35 MOSES CONVENED THE ENTIRE Israelite congregation and told them, "These are the orders the LORD has commanded you to obey. ²There are six days for work, but the seventh day shall be a sacred day to you, a Sabbath of impressive rest, related to the LORD. Whoever works in it shall be executed. ³Kindle no fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day."ⁿ

⁴Moses said to the assembled Israelites, "This is what the LORD orders: ⁵Lay aside from what is yours a contribution to the LORD. Every one of a mind to volunteer it, may bring it, an offering to the LORD: gold, silver and bronze; ⁶blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen; goats' hair ⁷and red-dyed ram skins, badger skins, acacia wood, ⁸oil for the lights, spices for the anointing oil and for the incense perfumes, ⁹onyx stones and stones to set in the upper garment^o and on the breastplate.

¹⁰"Let every skillful worker come and make everything the LORD has ordered —¹¹the tabernacle, its tent, its coverings, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars and their sockets, ¹²the Ark and its poles, the mercy seat, the veil for a

screen, ¹³the table with its poles and its utensils, the showbread, ¹⁴the lampstand for illuminating, its lamps and the oil for light, ¹⁵the incense altar and its poles, the anointing oil, the perfumed incense, the curtain for the entrance to the tabernacle, ¹⁶the altar for burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils, the wash basin and its base, ¹⁷the hangings of the court, its pillars and their sockets, the screen for the court gate, ¹⁸the pegs and the pins for the court with their cords; ¹⁹the woven garments for service in the sanctuary, the sacred garments for Aaron, the priest, and the garments of his sons to officiate as priests."^p

²⁰The whole assembly of the Israelites then came away from Moses ²¹and those who felt enthused and of good will brought a contribution to the LORD for the construction of the tabernacle for all its equipment and for the sacred garments. ²²Both men and women, all of willing mind, came and brought in clasps, noserings, earrings, necklaces and all sorts of gold jewelry — every donor waving a gold wave offering to the LORD. ²³And everyone who had blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen, goats' hair, red-dyed ram skins, or badger skins, brought them. ²⁴Every one in position to bring silver or bronze presented it as a contribution to the LORD so each one, who had acacia wood suitable for any service, brought it. ²⁵Every skilled woman, too, spun with her hands and delivered the yarn she had spun, blue, purple, scarlet material and fine linen, ²⁶and all the women of superior skill spun goats' hair.

²⁷The rulers brought onyx stones and stones for setting in the ephod and in the breastplate; ²⁸also the spices and the oil for the light and for the anointing oil and the perfumed incense. ²⁹The Israelites brought voluntary offerings to the LORD; every willing-minded man and woman, as their hearts prompted them toward service, brought what the LORD through Moses had ordered.^q

³⁰Moses told the Israelites, "Take

m) Reflection of divine presence which in a measure may be ours.

n) So frequently reiterated, because so vital for spiritual life and growth. o) The ephod.

p) As we owe our skill to divine gifts we are using, He expects us to serve Him with our skill.

q) Tithing was by divine order; these gifts were brought voluntarily upon divine request.

notice! The LORD has called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur of the tribe of Judah ³¹and has filled him with the Spirit of God in skill, intelligence and knowledge to execute all craftwork, ³²to design artistic work in gold, silver and bronze, ³³to cut stones for settings, to do wood-carving, to design workmanship of every kind; ³⁴also to instruct others. Both him and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, ³⁵has He filled with a keen mind to do all sorts of smithing, engraving and designing decorative work in blue, in purple, in scarlet and in fine linen, in weaving, doing artistically whatever is required."^r

36 "BEZALEEL AND AHOIAB ARE to do the work, together with every skilled person to whom the LORD has given dexterity and understanding to know how to accomplish every task for the sanctuary service in agreement with the LORD's orders."

²So Moses summoned Bezaleel, Aholiab and every skilled artisan whom the LORD had granted skill, every one with enough ambition to report for work. They received from Moses all the contributions which the Israelites had brought for the work of putting the sanctuary into operation. Yet the people kept on bringing him voluntary contributions every morning ⁴until the killed artisans, who were working on the sanctuary, all left what they were making ⁵and said to Moses, "The people are bringing far more than is needed for the construction work which he LORD ordered to have done." ⁶So Moses issued an order to be broadcast over the entire camp, "Let neither man nor woman produce any more material to contribute to the sanctuary." Thus were the people restrained from contributing; ⁷for the material on hand sufficed for all the constructive work to be done; in fact, there was too much.

⁸The skilled among the workers on

the construction of the tabernacle made the curtains of fine twined linen, blue, purple and scarlet with designs of cherubs woven in. ⁹The length of each curtain was forty-two feet and the width six feet, all curtains being the same size. ¹⁰The five curtains were joined together and so were the other five. ¹¹They made blue loops on the edge of the end curtain in the one set for coupling and the same on the edge of the end curtain in the other set; ¹²fifty loops to the one curtain and fifty loops to the other curtain at the coupling edge, the loops opposite each other. ¹³So they made fifty gold clasps and joined the curtains into one with the clasps to make the tabernacle a unit.

¹⁴They also made goats'-hair curtains for a covering^a over the tabernacle, eleven of them, ¹⁵each curtain forty-five by six feet, all eleven the same size.^c ¹⁶They coupled five curtains by themselves and six curtains by themselves; ¹⁷they also made fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain for coupling and fifty loops at the edge of the other curtain, ¹⁸and fifty bronze clasps to join the covering so as to form a unit. ¹⁹Then they made for the tent a roof of red-dyed rams' skins and a cover of badger skins over that.

²⁰They made for the tabernacle upright frames of acacia boards, ²¹fifteen feet long by 2¼ feet wide. ²²Each frame had two clutches, connected with each other and all the frames for the tabernacle were fashioned alike. ²³They made twenty frames for the south side of the tabernacle ²⁴with forty silver sockets underneath the twenty boards, two sockets under each board for its two clutches. ²⁵For the other side of the tabernacle, the north side, they also made twenty boards ²⁶and their forty silver sockets, two sockets under each frame.

²⁷For the west side of the tabernacle they made six frames, ²⁸and two frames for the rear corners of the tabernacle.

^a) For working in wood and in metals God filled men with His Spirit. Through the ages inventors of helpful or beautiful devices might trace their inspiration back to the Fountain of all wisdom.

^b) Literally, a tent, since a tent is a covering, and the material was what would be used for a tent; so was the form as it protected the first construction; and it thus formed part of the tabernacle; but it was not in itself a tent as we think of it, or a tabernacle.

^c) The 45 feet stretched along a whole side, the 11 curtains formed part of north, south and west sides.

²⁰They were linked at the bottom and similarly linked on top with one ring; so they arranged them both at both corners. ³⁰There were, then, eight frames and sixteen sockets, two sockets under each frame.

³¹The bars were made of acacia wood, ³²five for the frames on one side and five for the frames on the other side of the tabernacle; also five bars for the west side. ³³The middle bar was made to run along the center of the frames from end to end. ³⁴The frames were overlaid with gold and the rings to hold the bars were made of gold, while the bars, too, were overlaid with gold.

³⁵They made a veil of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, with cherubs artistically designed. ³⁶For it they made four pillars of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold; also golden hooks, and they cast four silver sockets for them.

³⁷For the entrance into the tabernacle they made a veil of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, decorative work, ³⁸and its five pillars with their hooks. Their tops and their bands they overlaid with gold and their sockets they made of bronze.

37 BEZALEEL MADE THE ARK^u OF acacia wood, $3\frac{3}{4}$ feet long, $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide and $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet high. ²He overlaid it with pure gold inside and out and ran a gold molding around it. ³He cast four gold rings for it on its four lower corners, two rings on one side and two on the other ⁴and made poles of acacia wood which he overlaid with gold. ⁵He thrust the poles into the rings on the sides of the Ark for carrying the Ark. ⁶The mercy seat, $3\frac{3}{4}$ feet long and $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet wide, he made of pure gold. ⁷On the two ends of the mercy seat he placed two cherubim made of beaten work, ⁸one cherub at this end and one at that end. He made the cherubs of one piece with the

mercy covering from out its two ends. ⁹The cherubim spread their wings aloft, overshadowing the mercy covering; their faces toward each other and both cherubim's eyes on the mercy seat.

¹⁰The table^v he made of acacia wood, a yard long, half a yard wide and $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet high; ¹¹he overlaid it with pure gold, ran a gold molding around it, ¹²made a four-inch border all around, and ran a gold molding around the border. ¹³He also cast four gold rings for it and fastened the rings to the four lower corners at the four legs ¹⁴close to the border to hold the poles for carrying the table. ¹⁵He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table and overlaid them with gold. ¹⁶The table ware, the plates, the bowls, the cups, the pitchers for pouring libations they made of pure gold.

¹⁷The lampstand he made of pure, beaten gold, base and shaft and cups, each with calyx and petals, all of one piece^w. ¹⁸Six branches came out of its sides, three branches from one side of the lampstand and three from the other side. ¹⁹Each branch bore three cups, shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals; so also the six branches that came out from the lampstand. ²⁰On the lampstand itself there were four almond-like cups, each with calyx and petals; ²¹also a calyx where each pair of branches met; so also the six branches extending from the shaft. ²²Calyx and branch were all of one piece with the lampstand, the whole forming a single piece of beaten gold. ²³Its seven lamps, its snuffers and its ashtrays he made of pure gold, ²⁴using 131 pounds of pure gold for it, including all its fittings.

²⁵The incense altar^x he made of acacia wood, a square 18 inches by 18 inches and a yard high; its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶He overlaid it with pure gold—its top, its sides all around and its horns, and he ran a golden molding around it. ²⁷He further made

u) As Oholiab had worked with many helpers to build the structure, so Bezaleel did not work alone but had assistants. The Ark they built is remembered as the Ark of the Covenant and as the Ark of the Testimony, or simply, thinking of the Law, as the Testimony.

v) The table for showbread in the holy place.

w) No candlesticks, which were not yet invented; neither would they serve, for wicks must draw oil from the central bowl.

x) Placed in the holy place, near the veil but belonging to the Holy of Holies.

two gold rings for it under the molding on the two opposite corners, to hold the poles for carrying it. ²⁸The poles he made of acacia wood, overlaying them with gold. ²⁹He also prepared by the compounder's art the sacred anointing oil and the pure, fragrant incense.

38 THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING he made of acacia wood, an altar 7½ feet square, 4½ feet high; ²its horns, of one piece with it, were constructed on its four corners, and he overlaid it with bronze. ³He made all the utensils of the altar, the ash pans, the shovels, the bowls for sacrifice, the forks and the fire pans, all its utensils, of bronze. ⁴He made a bronze grate of network for the altar underneath the all-around ledge, reaching halfway up. ⁵He cast four rings at the four corners of the bronze grating to hold the poles, ⁶which he made of acacia wood and overlaid with bronze. ⁷The poles he thrust through the rings on the sides of the altar, to carry it. The altar he made concave with boards.

⁸The wash basin and its base he made of bronze, composed of mirrors that were contributed by the women who assembled for service at the entrance of the meeting tent.^y

⁹Then he made the courtyard. For the south side there were hangings for the court of fine twined linen stretching 50 yards, ¹⁰held up by 20 columns on their 20 bronze sockets, the hooks and the bands being of silver. ¹¹On the north side, too, 50 yards of hangings on their 20 columns and their 20 bronze sockets, their hooks and bands of silver. ¹²On the west side 25 yards of hangings held by 10 columns and their sockets, the hooks and the bands of the columns of silver. ¹³For the 25 yards of the east side^z ¹⁴there were 7½ yards of hangings on each side of the entrance on their three columns with sockets; ¹⁶the same on

both sides of the court gate. ¹⁶All the hangings of the court were of fine, twined linen, ¹⁷with the sockets for the columns of bronze, and the hooks and bands for the columns were of silver; their tops were overlaid with silver and all the columns of the court were filleted with silver.

¹⁸For the court gate the hanging was embroidery of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, 30 yards long and 2½ yards high, corresponding to the hangings of the court. ¹⁹Their four columns had four bronze sockets; while their hooks, their platings on top, and their fillets were of silver. ²⁰The pegs for the Dwelling and for the surrounding courtyard were of bronze.

²¹These are the numbered articles for the Dwelling, the tabernacle of Testimony, as they were counted by order of Moses, a service rendered by the Levites under direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest. ²²Bezaleel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made everything that the Lord had commanded Moses, ²³and with him worked Aholiab, son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, a skilful artisan, an embroiderer in blue, in purple, and scarlet material and in fine linen.

²⁴The total amount of gold used for the building and furnishings of the sanctuary was around 3,800 pounds^a in weight by the sanctuary scales, all of it contributed; ²⁵while the weight of silver by sanctuary standards paid by the registered citizens ²⁶was about 12,000 pounds,^b around 65 cents per man for everyone registered from 20 years up, 603,550^c men. ²⁷The casting of the sockets for the sanctuary and the veil required 11,600 pounds of silver, 116 pounds for each socket, ²⁸and from the remaining 400 pounds of silver he made the hooks for the columns, overlaid their tops and joined them.

²⁹The bronze that was donated came

y) "Hoping women" some have it, remembering Hannah, who prayed for a son.

z) As the tabernacle was always placed to face east, there always were the same south, north and west sides. The width of the entrance lessened the lengths of the hangings.

a) \$877,300. b) \$201,000.

c) No money had been coined; it had to be weighed. Actual values of gold and silver can be estimated only approximately. Classically, a talent of gold equaled \$30,000 and a talent of silver \$2,000; a shekel of gold \$10 and a shekel of silver 65 cents. One standard of values remains — a day's wages and what can be bought for it; but monetary wages are not mentioned in our early Scriptures.

to nearly three tons, ³⁰from which he made the sockets for the entrance to the meeting tent, the bronze altar and its bronze grate, all the utensils for the altar, ³¹the sockets for the courtyard all around, the sockets for the court gate, all the pegs for the Dwelling and all the pegs for the surrounding court.

39 OF THE BLUE, PURPLE AND scarlet material they wove garments for ministering in the sanctuary, especially the sacred garments for Aaron, as the LORD had ordered Moses. ²The ephod they made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen. ³They beat the gold into thin plates, then cut those into threads to work it artistically in between the blue, the purple, the scarlet and the fine twined linen. ⁴They made shoulder straps for it to join it; ^d it was coupled at its two ends. ⁵The artistic sash, to hold it around the waist, was similar of gold, blue, purple and scarlet material, and fine twined linen, as the LORD had ordered Moses. ⁶The prepared onyx stones, engraved with the names of Israel's sons, were set in plaited gold-work ⁷and he put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod—stones to remind the Israelites, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

⁸The breastplate, like the ephod, he wrought skilfully of gold; blue, purple, scarlet material and fine twined linen, ⁹nine inches square and doubled over. ¹⁰In it they set four rows of precious stones—the first row sardius, topaz and emerald; ¹¹the next row carbuncle, sapphire and jasper, ¹²the third row amber, agate and amethyst, ¹³and the fourth row chrysolite, onyx and beryl, all set in gold enclosures. ¹⁴In accordance with the names of Israel's sons there were twelve stones with corresponding names of the twelve tribes, engraved as on a seal.

¹⁵To the breastplate they attached

twined chains, cordage work of pure gold; ¹⁶also two gold clasps and two gold rings. The two rings they fastened to the two ends of the breastplate ¹⁷and they passed the two chains of twined gold through the two rings at the ends of the breastplate. ¹⁸The other two ends of the two chains they fastened¹ to the clasps and attached them to the shoulder straps of the ephod, on the front. ¹⁹They made two more rings of gold to fasten to the lower ends of the breastplate on the inner side next to the ephod, ²⁰and two gold rings they fastened to the two shoulder straps of the ephod in front on the inner side and well above the artistic sash. ²¹Then they fastened the breastplate and its rings with a blue ribbon, to stay above the skilfully wrought girdle and to keep the breastplate from swinging loose from the ephod, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²²The robe to go with the ephod² was weaver's work, all blue, ²³with an opening in the top center like the neck of a coat of mail, reinforced all around to keep it from fraying. ²⁴On the hems of the robe they worked pomegranate designs of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen. ²⁵Between the pomegranates they hung bells of pure gold, ²⁶alternating bell and pomegranate all the way around, for use in the service as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²⁷The tunics for Aaron and his sons ²⁸they made of fine woven linen,⁴ the turban and the lovely caps of fine linen, the trunks of fine twined linen, ²⁹the sash of fine twined linen, blue, purple and scarlet embroidery, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

³⁰The plate of the sacred diadem they wrought of pure gold, engraven like a seal with the words: HOLY TO THE LORD. ³¹They tied a blue ribbon to it, to fasten it to the turban above, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

³²So the work on the tabernacle, the

d) One stone on each shoulder, according to divine suggestion [Ex. 28:9,12], large enough to have six names on each. The front and back parts of the ephod were brought together with the aid of these jewels, the shoulder straps being fastened there.

e) The ephod was a garment but hardly a robe; its length and form were more vestlike, but buttoned on the shoulders and not in front. The robe, sleeveless, was under the ephod and came down to the ankles.

f) The tunic is the under-garment usually worn next to the skin and the only remaining garment for the worker, who takes off the robe or mantle for manual labor.

meeting tent, was completed; the Israelites had done everything according to the LORD's directions to Moses. ³³They brought Moses the Dwelling—the tent and all its furnishings—its clasps, its frames, its columns and their sockets, ³⁴the coverings of red-dyed ram skins, badger skins and the covering veil; ³⁵the Ark of the Testimony, its poles and the mercy seat, ³⁶the table with its utensils and the showbread, ³⁷the pure lampstand with its arrangement of lamps and all its utensils, the oil for light, ³⁸the golden altar, the anointing oil and the perfumed incense, the veil for the tabernacle entrance, ³⁹the bronze altar with its bronze grate, its poles and its tools, the wash basin and its base, ⁴⁰the hangings of the courtyard, its columns and sockets, the hangings for the court gate, its cords and pegs and all needed articles for the service of the tabernacle — the meeting tent — ⁴¹the woven garments for ministering in the sanctuary, the sacred garments for Aaron, the priest, and the garments for his sons to serve as priests. ⁴²The children of Israel did everything in full agreement with the LORD's orders to Moses. ⁴³As Moses inspected the work, he saw they had done it just as the LORD had commanded. Then Moses blessed them.

40 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²ON the first day of the first month erect the Dwelling, the meeting tent; ³there deposit the Ark of Testimony and screen the Ark with the veil. ⁴Then bring in the table and arrange what belongs on it; bring in the lampstand, too, and set its lamps aright. ⁵Place the golden altar of incense in front of the Ark of Testimony^h and hang the curtain of the tabernacle door. ⁶Set up the altar of burnt-offering in front of the tabernacle,ⁱ the meeting tent ⁷and place the wash basin between the meeting tent and the altar, putting water in it. ⁸Fence in the

courtyard all around and hang the curtain at the court entrance.

⁹Take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle with everything in it; dedicate^j it with all its furnishings and it shall become holy. ¹⁰Anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils; dedicate the altar and it shall become the supremely holy altar.^k ¹¹Anoint the wash basin, too, with its base and dedicate it. ¹²Then lead Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the meeting tent; wash them with water ¹³and dress Aaron in the sacred garments. Anoint him and consecrate him to serve Me in the priestly office. ¹⁴Then lead his sons near, dress them in tunics ¹⁵and anoint them as you anointed their father to serve Me in the priestly office; their anointing will be for their unending priesthood through their successive generations.

¹⁶So Moses did; he did everything as the LORD had ordered him. ¹⁷On the first day of the first month of the second year^l the tabernacle was erected; ¹⁸Moses raised the Dwelling, put down the sockets, set up the frames, placed the bars in position and erected the columns. ¹⁹He spread the tent cover over the Dwelling and put the roof on top of it, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²⁰He deposited the Testimony^m inside the Ark, put the poles on the Ark, set the mercy seat over the Ark ²¹and brought the Ark inside the tabernacle. He then hung the veil as a curtain to screen off the Ark of Testimony, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²²The table he placed inside the meeting tent on the north side of the Dwelling, outside the veil, ²³arranging upon it the bread of the LORD's presence, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²⁴Moses also set the lampstand inside the meeting tent on the south side of the Dwelling opposite the table ²⁵and arranged the lamps before the LORD as the LORD had ordered Moses.

g) Thus setting apart the Holy of Holies.

h) But not inside the Holy of Holies because it required daily incense, while the high priest must enter the Holy of Holies only once a year.

i) As the sanctuary faced east, the altar stood east of the entrance to the tabernacle and west of the courtyard gate. j) In its secondary meaning — set apart to God; dedicated.

k) Rendering many forms of sacrificial service. The golden altar near the inner veil with its fragrant incense remained most holy.

l) Late March, 1445, B.C. is a probable date. m) The two tablets of the Law.

²⁶The golden altar he established in the meeting tent in front of the veil ²⁷and burned on it fragrant incense, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²⁸He hung the curtain at the tabernacle entrance ²⁹and placed the altar of burnt-offering by the entrance of the Dwelling, the meeting tent, offering on it the burnt offering and the cereal offering, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

³⁰The wash basin he put between the meeting tent and the altar, putting water in it for washing; ³¹there Moses and Aaron as well as his sons regularly washed their hands and their feet. ³²They washed before entering the meeting tent and before they approached the altar, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

³³He fenced the courtyard around the Dwelling and the altar and hung the curtain at the court entrance. Thus Moses completed the work.

³⁴The cloud then covered the meeting tent and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle; ³⁵Moses was unable to enter the meeting tent because the cloud rested upon it and the glory of the LORD filled the Dwelling.

³⁶Whenever the cloud arose from the Dwelling the children of Israel would move ahead on their trek; ³⁷but when the cloud did not lift, they would not move on until the day when it lifted. ³⁸For the cloud of the LORD rested on the tabernacle by day and in it there was fire by night for the whole house of Israel during all their travels.

LEVITICUS^a

IT OF MEETING
oses^b ²and said
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¹⁰If his offering is from the flock,
from sheep or from goats for a burnt
sacrifice, then he shall present a flaw-
less male,^e ¹¹which he shall kill on
the north side of the altar in the pres-
ence of the LORD. Aaron's sons, the
priests, shall sprinkle its blood all
around upon the altar. ¹²He shall then
cut it into portions with its head and
its fat, and the priest shall arrange
them upon the wood that is on the
altar fire; ¹³but he shall wash the in-
testines and the legs with water and
the priest shall bring it all and burn it
as incense upon the altar. It is a burnt
sacrifice, a fire offering, a pleasing
fragrance to the LORD.

¹⁴In case his burnt offering to the
LORD is of birds, then he shall present
his offering of turtle doves or of young
pigeons. ¹⁵The priest shall take it to
the altar, wring off its head and burn
it upon the altar; its blood shall be
squeezed out upon the side of the al-
tar. ¹⁶He shall remove its crop and
feathers and throw them on the ash-
heap just east of the altar. ¹⁷He shall
tear it by its wings without severing
those and the priest shall burn it upon
the altar on top of the wood that is
on the altar fire; it is a burnt sacrifice,
a fire offering, a pleasing fragrance to
the LORD.^f

^apecially priests, at Mt. Sinai, between May, 1446, and May, 1445, B.C.
^bin these 27 chapters of God speaking to Moses. In Exodus God spoke
peaks from the Holy of Holies in the Dwelling from above the mercy
int; for between Jehovah and Israel the Covenant had been made.
ctim that represents him, as Christ represented us on the cross.
blood no remission of sins.
rfect as earthly creatures can be, for they are prophetic of our perfect
ur perfect God.
uch as Mary and Joseph brought to the temple with the Child Jesus
g as the other.

2 WHEN A PERSON PRESENTS A FOOD offering to the LORD, then his offering shall consist of fine flour. He shall pour oil on it, add incense to it ²and present it to the priests, the sons of Aaron, who shall take out a handful of the fine flour and oil, together with all its incense, and the priest shall burn it on the altar as a memorial incense, a fire offering, a fragrance agreeable to the LORD. ³The remainder of the food offering is for Aaron and for his sons, the holiest portion of the fire offerings to the LORD.⁵

⁴When you present a food offering baked in the oven,^h it shall consist of unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or of thin unleavened cakes overspread with oil. ⁵If your gift is a food offering from the griddle, then it shall be composed of unleavenedⁱ bread mixed with oil. ⁶You shall divide it into portions and pour oil on them; it is a food offering. ⁷But if your gift is a food offering from the roaster, then it shall be of fine flour prepared with oil. ⁸Bring the food offering composed of these things for the LORD to the priest, ⁹who shall take up from the food offering a memorial portion and burn it on the altar, a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ¹⁰The remainder of the food offering is for Aaron and for his sons, the most holy of the fire offerings to the LORD.

¹¹No food offering which you present to the LORD shall be prepared with leaven, for you must never burn leaven or honey in any fire offering to the LORD. ¹²You may bring them as an offering from the first fruits for the LORD, but not for a pleasing fragrance upon the altar.^j ¹³Season your every food offering with salt; do not omit the Cove-

nant salt of your God from your food offering. Offer salt with every offering.*

¹⁴If you bring the LORD a food offering of first fruits, present roasted heads of grain, broken to grits from fresh grain, ¹⁵add oil to it and spread incense over it; it is a food offering. ¹⁶The priest shall burn a portion of the broken grain and of the oil with the incense;^l it is a fire offering to the LORD.

3 IF THE GIFT IS A PEACE OFFERING and he offers it from the herd, whether male or female, he must offer a flawless animal before the LORD.^m ²He shall lay his hand on the head of his sacrifice and kill it at the entrance of the meeting tent; Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood all around upon the altar.ⁿ ³Of the peace offering to the LORD with fire he shall offer the fat that covers the intestines and all the fat that lies on the intestines; ⁴also both kidneys and the fat on them at the loins and the lobe of the liver which he shall take away with the kidneys. ⁵The sons of Aaron shall kindle it upon the altar over the burnt offering, a pleasing fragrance to the LORD.^o

⁶If his present is from the flock for a peace offering to the LORD, then he shall bring a flawless animal, either male or female. ⁷If he presents a lamb^p for his offering, ⁸then to offer it before the LORD he shall lay his hand on the head of his sacrifice and kill it in front of the meeting tent and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around upon the altar. ⁹From the peace offering made with fire to the LORD he shall present its fat,^q the whole fat tail which he should cut off close to

g) Fine flour means white flour, which might be offered as unleavened bread or as cakes or as wafers. A food offering might also consist of roasted heads of grain, always with salt, to which sometimes olive oil was added. Often white flour went with animal sacrifices. Only from the poorest was it accepted as a sin offering or as a trespass offering, because of the basic blood requirement.

h) The burnt offering symbolized dedication of life, such as was perfected in our LORD's sacrifice on the Cross. As food is the product of God's earth and man's labor, it is a thank offering, acknowledging God's chief part in the process. i) Leaven, for fermentation, can be symbolic of sin.

j) The burning of leaven or of honey produces no agreeable fragrance.

k) Salt preserves from corruption; it helps edibles to last; it is a token of a lasting Covenant.

l) Incense is symbolic of hearty, voluntary dedication.

m) God is worthy of our best in our service, our gifts and ourselves.

n) Blood for life; altar for dedication; all to the glory of God. Better than Abel's blood [Heb. 12:24], which accused of murder; this speaks forgiveness in view of the coming Redeemer.

o) As through Christ our lives may please God.

p) Usually a yearling; always prophetic of "The Lamb of God."

q) The animal's fat betokens abundant life; lean animals' bodies were not rich enough.

the backbone; also the fat that covers the intestines and all the fat that lies on the intestines; ¹⁰the two kidneys and the fat on them at the loins and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys. ¹¹The priest shall burn this on the altar, a food offering by fire for the LORD.

¹²If his present is a goat, he shall, to offer it before the LORD, ¹³lay his hand on its head and slaughter it in front of the meeting tent and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. ¹⁴From it he shall bring his gift, an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the intestines, all the fat that lies on the intestines, ¹⁵also the two kidneys, the fat on them at the loins and the lobes of the liver which he shall remove with the kidneys. ¹⁶The priest shall burn it as incense on the altar, a burnt offering of food, an agreeable fragrance; all the fat is the LORD's. ¹⁷Let this be an everlasting ordinance for your successive generations wherever you live, to eat no fat or blood whatever.

4 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²TELL the Israelites: When a person sins ignorantly against any of the LORD's commandments and acts contrary to any of them, ³if the anointed priest has sinned and thus involved the people in guilt, then he shall offer for his sin which he has committed a flawless young bull as a sin offering to the LORD. ⁴He shall bring the bullock to the entrance of the meeting tent before the LORD, shall lay his hand on the bullock's head and slaughter the young bull before the LORD. ⁵The anointed priest shall take some of the young bull's blood and bring it to the meeting tent. ⁶The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and shall sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the veil of the holy place. ⁷The priest shall also apply

some of the blood to the horns of the incense altar that stands before the LORD within the meeting tent. All the remaining blood he shall pour at the foot of the altar of burnt offering that stands by the entrance of the meeting tent. ⁸All the fat of the sin offering bullock he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the intestines, ⁹the two kidneys and the fat on them at the loins and the lobe of the liver, to be removed with the kidneys, ¹⁰just as it is removed from the bullock of the peace offering. The priest shall burn them as incense on the altar of burnt offering, ¹¹but the bullock's hide, all its meat with its head and its legs, its intestines and its dung, ¹²the whole bullock he shall convey outside the camp to a clean place where the ashes are poured out, and shall burn it on the wood fire. It shall be burned where the ashes are poured out.

¹³If the whole congregation of Israel sins ignorantly and the affair escapes the notice of the people, if they have trespassed any of the LORD's commandments, doing what should not be done and are guilty, ¹⁴then the congregation, when the sin they have committed has become evident, shall offer for a sin offering a bullock, which they shall bring before the tabernacle of the congregation ¹⁵and the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the bullock's head before the LORD and the young bull shall be slaughtered in the LORD's presence. ¹⁶The anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood to the meeting tent ¹⁷and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the veil. ¹⁸Some of the blood he shall apply to the horns of the altar that is before the LORD in the meeting tent and all the remaining blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering by the entrance to the meeting tent. ¹⁹He shall take away from it all its

2 Usually a bullock and young bull are identical.

3 There was a curtain over the entrance to the tabernacle, of which the first room was the holy place; but this refers to the veil between the holy place and the Holy of Holies, for the golden altar of incense is being used, which stood near the Holy of Holies and formed part of it.

5 The incense altar, of pure gold, served for the burning of pure incense to the LORD; but the fat, burned on the great altar, was incense, too, "a pleasing fragrance for the LORD."

6 The simpler name is meeting tent; another name is Tent of Testimony, for the two tablets of the Decalogue within the Ark of the Covenant; but choicest to us is the Dwelling, for God's unique presence between the cherubim above the mercy seat.

fat and shall burn it as incense on the altar. ²⁰He shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock of the sin offering, which is the proper way. The priest shall make atonement for the people and they shall be forgiven. ²¹He shall carry the bullock outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bullock. It is the sin offering for the congregation.

²²When a ruler has sinned, has ignorantly done something contrary to one of the commandments of the LORD his God, he is guilty. ²³When he grows aware of the sin he has committed he shall present for his sin offering a flawless he-goat; ²⁴he shall lay his hand upon the goat's head^v and butcher it at the place where usually they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering. ²⁵With his finger the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and apply it to the horns of the altar of burnt offering and the remaining blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering. ²⁶But all the fat he shall burn as incense on the altar, similar to the fat of the peace offering. Thus the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin and it shall be forgiven him.

²⁷When one among the people of the land sins ignorantly;^w doing one of the things which God has forbidden and is thus guilty, ²⁸when his sin is brought to his attention, then he shall present as his offering for the sin which he has committed a flawless she-goat. ²⁹He shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering and butcher the sin offering at the burnt offering place. ³⁰The priest shall with his finger take some of the blood and apply it to the horns of the altar of burnt offering and shall pour out all the remaining blood at the base of the altar. ³¹He shall remove all its fat, just as the fat is taken

away from the peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it as incense on the altar, an agreeable fragrance to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him and it shall be forgiven him.

³²If he presents a lamb^x as his sacrifice for a sin offering, then he shall bring a flawless female. ³³He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and shall slaughter it for a sin offering at the place where they lay the burnt offering. ³⁴With his finger the priest shall take some of the blood from the sin offering and apply it to the horns of the altar of burnt offering. All the remaining blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar. ³⁵All its fat he shall remove, just as the fat is removed from the lamb of the peace offering. The priest shall burn it as incense on the altar like the offering to the LORD by fire. In this way the priest shall make atonement for him, for the sin which he committed and it shall be forgiven him.

5 WHEN A PERSON SINS BY BEING adjured to testify and has seen or has learned of the matter, but fails to inform, he assumes his iniquity.^y ²Or when a person contacts an unclean thing, either the carcass of an unclean wild beast or of unclean livestock, or of unclean creeping things, although he is unaware of it, he is unclean and guilty. ³Or if he contacts human uncleanness of whatever sort, that renders him unclean without being aware of it, when he knows, he shall be guilty.^z ⁴Or if a person unthinkingly utters an oath to do something, either evil or good, any rash oath that people swear, and he grows conscious of it, then he shall be guilty in any of these, ⁵and when a person is guilty in any of these instances he shall confess the sin he has committed ⁶and shall present his

v) As each worshiper, from Aaron down, comes with a living sacrifice and puts his hand upon its head, it meant, "This animal represents me; I have forfeited my life by sinning. I do not hold it back, it is Thine, LORD. Grateful that Thou lettest me live, I surrender myself to Thee."

w) All these offerings were brought by those sinning ignorantly; no forgiveness is offered those going knowingly and willfully against God's will.

x) The great majority offered a lamb, which was within their means, thus rendering the name "Lamb of God" so appropriate for our Redeemer.

y) In two ways the silent witness becomes guilty — he fails to warn the transgressor, who needs correction, and he fails to warn society which needs protection from the evildoer — an issue which is still much alive among us in dealing with subversives.

z) Symbolic of personal influence. "Handle pitch and you get black."

trespass offering to the LORD for the sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering, and the priest shall make atonement for his sin.

⁷However, if he cannot afford a lamb, then he shall present to the LORD as his trespass offering for the sin he has committed two turtle doves or two young pigeons, one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering.^a

⁸He shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering and shall nip the head from the neck without severing it. ⁹Some of the blood of the sin offering he shall sprinkle on the side of the altar and what remains he shall drain out on the altar base; it is a sin offering.

¹⁰He shall then prepare the second for a burnt offering according to directions.^b In this way the priest shall make atonement for him and the sin shall be forgiven him. ¹¹If he cannot afford^c two turtle doves or two young pigeons, then he shall present as his offering a tenth of a bushel of white flour for a sin offering. He shall put no oil upon it and no frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. ¹²He shall bring it to the priest and the priest shall take a handful of it, a memorial portion, and shall burn it as incense on the altar like the offerings made by fire to the LORD; it is a sin offering.^d ¹³In this way the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin which he committed and the sin shall be forgiven him. The remainder shall be the priest's as in the food offering.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁵When a person behaves unfaithfully and sins unintentionally in matters that are holy to the LORD, then to make good he shall bring the LORD a flawless ram of the flock, evaluated by you in silver coin according to sanctuary standards; it is a trespass offering. ¹⁶He must also

make amends for whatever harm was done in the sacred thing, adding a fifth of its value, which he shall hand the priest. The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering and his sin shall be forgiven him.^e ¹⁷If a person sins, doing anything that the LORD has forbidden to be done, although he is ignorant of it, yet he is guilty and answerable for his iniquity.^f ¹⁸He shall bring a flawless ram of the flock as a trespass offering to the priest and the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for the mistake he made unknowingly, and it shall be forgiven him. ¹⁹It is a trespass offering; he has unquestionably trespassed against the LORD.

6 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²IF A person sins by unfaithfulness to the LORD, and he lies to his neighbor about storage, or a deposit, or a robbery, or in extortion, ³or he has found what was lost and denies it upon oath;^g in all these actions of a person in which he sins and becomes guilty, ⁴he must restore what he robbed or what he extorted, or what was entrusted to him, or the lost which he found, ⁵or anything about which he swore falsely; he must reimburse it in full and add one fifth of its value to it, giving it to whom it belongs on the day of his trespass offering. ⁶He shall present to the priest as a trespass offering to the LORD a flawless ram from the flock with its value estimated by you. ⁷The priest shall make atonement for whatever he did to render him guilty.

⁸The LORD further said to Moses: ⁹Order Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall remain on the altar's hearth all night until morning and the altar fire shall keep burning upon it. ¹⁰Then the priest shall put on his linen garment with his linen trunks on

a) Rich and poor alike in God's presence.

b) The second bird took the place of the fat in animal offerings, burned as incense to the LORD.

c) Literally, if his hand does not reach.

d) No forgiveness without blood-shedding? But God is gracious and allows exceptions - for His salvation is for the most wretched, too.

e) Trespassing, well illustrated by our signs, "NO TRESPASSING," is invading the rights of others, dealing unfairly with them, which may be done also toward God. When worship is disturbed or God is dishonored, confession and reconciliation are needed; but also among men there must be restoration, repair of damages.

f) Ignorantly we may cause great harm; it is but fair that we make good so far as in us lies.

g) A false oath calls upon God to witness to what is not true.

his loins; he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar and deposit them beside the altar. ¹¹Then stripping off these garments and putting on others, he shall carry out the ashes to a cleared spot outside the camp. ¹²The fire must be kept burning on the altar; it must not die down. The priest shall refuel it with wood every morning, arrange the burnt sacrifice upon it and on top of it the fat of the peace offering. ¹³A fire shall continually burn upon the altar; it must never go out.^h

¹⁴This is the law of the food offering: The sons of Aaron shall present it in the LORD's presence in front of the altar ¹⁵and a priest shall take a handful of it, from the flour of the food offering and of its oil; also all the incense that lies upon the food offering, and he shall burn it on the altar, an agreeable fragrance, a memorial to the LORD. ¹⁶What is left of it Aaron and his sons shall eat.ⁱ With unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a sacred place; in the court of the meeting tent they shall eat it. ¹⁷It shall not be baked with leaven;^j I have given it as their portion of My burnt offerings; it is most holy like the sin offering and the trespass offering. ¹⁸All the males among Aaron's offspring may eat it, an everlasting decree among your generations about the LORD's burnt sacrifices; whoever touches them shall be set apart.

¹⁹The LORD said to Moses: ²⁰This is the offering of Aaron and his sons which they shall offer to the LORD on the day of his anointing,^k the tenth of a bushel of white flour for a daily food offering, half of it each morning and half each evening. ²¹It shall be prepared with oil on a griddle; bring it in well baked and offer the baked pieces of the food offering as an agreeable fragrance to the LORD. ²²The priest who, of his

sons,^l shall be the anointed in his place, shall do this. It is an everlasting statute to the LORD: all of it shall be burned; ²³every food offering of the priest shall be completely burned; it shall not be eaten.

²⁴The LORD said to Moses: ²⁵Tell Aaron and his sons, This is the law of the sin offering: At the place where the burnt offering is killed there too the sin offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD; it is most holy. ²⁶The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it; it shall be eaten in a sacred place, in the court of the meeting tent. ²⁷Whoever touches its flesh shall be holy,^m and if any of its blood has spattered on any garment, the piece on which it spattered shall be washed in a sacred place. ²⁸The earthen pottery in which it was cooked shall be shattered; but if it was boiled in a bronze vessel, that shall be well scoured and rinsed with water. ²⁹All males among the priests may eat of it; it is most holy.ⁿ ³⁰However, no sin offering of which the blood is taken into the meeting tent for atonement in the sanctuary shall be eaten; it shall be burned with fire.^o

7 THIS IS THE LAW OF THE TRESPASS offering; it is most holy. ²At the place where they kill the burnt sacrifice they shall kill the trespass offering and its blood they shall sprinkle all around upon the altar. ³They shall offer all its fat, the fat tail and the fat that covers the entrails; ⁴the two kidneys and the fat on them by the loins,^p also the liver-lobe, which he shall take away with the kidneys. ⁵The priest shall burn them as incense on the altar, an offering by fire to the LORD; it is a trespass offering. ⁶All the males among the priests may eat it at a sacred place; it is most holy. ⁷As with the sin offering so with the trespass offering,^q the

h) Typical of God's constant care and of Christ's undying love.

i) As reflected in I Cor. 9:13 — those who conduct the temple service make their living from the temple, which remains true today.

j) No fermentation in the holy place, for that suggests impurity.

k) Of Aaron's anointing to begin with; later the same for his successors in the high priesthood.

l) Aaron's successor, normally his oldest son, the next high priest and so for successive generations.

m) In this case "set apart," for holiness is contagious.

n) Because it is God's therefore His ministers may have it.

o) Its blood will be sprinkled on the mercy seat within the Holy of Holies; therefore the flesh, also, is too sacred for human food.

p) Fat was highly treasured, for only few could secure it; fat-tailed sheep brought high prices.

q) "Trespass" is a better name for this offering than "guilt," for the selfish, inconsiderate aspect of sin is kept in view.

same law holds for both; the priest who makes atonement through it shall have it. ⁸Besides, the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering, that priest shall have the hide of the burnt offering he has offered.^r ⁹So every food offering that is baked in the oven and everything prepared in a pan or on a griddle is for the priest who offers it; it shall be his. ¹⁰But every other food offering, whether mixed with oil or dry, shall be for all the sons of Aaron for all alike.^s

¹¹This is the law of the peace offering which one may bring to the LORD. ¹²If he presents it as a thank offering, then with the thank offering he shall bring unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and thin unleavened cakes daubed with oil; also cakes of fine flour well mixed with oil. ¹³With the cakes he shall offer leavened bread for his thank offering besides his peace sacrifice.^t ¹⁴Out of each offering he shall present a portion for a heave offering to the LORD; it shall be for the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offering before the LORD. ¹⁵The flesh of the thank offering, presented as a peace offering, shall be eaten on the day it is presented; nothing of it shall be left until morning. ¹⁶If the sacrifice he offers is for a vow or is a free-will offering,^u then the day on which he presents his offering it shall be eaten and whatever is left of it shall be eaten next day. ¹⁷But what still remains of the sacrificial meal on the third day must be consumed by fire.^v ¹⁸Should any meat of the peace offering nevertheless be eaten on the third day, then the one who brought it shall not be acceptable; it will be no credit to him; it will be disgusting and the person who eats it must answer for his sin.

¹⁹The flesh that comes in contact with anything unclean shall not be

eaten; it must be consumed by fire. Every clean person may eat flesh,²⁰ but the person who, while tainted with uncleanness, eats flesh of the peace offering, which belongs to the LORD, that person shall be eliminated from his people. ²¹The person who contacts anything unclean, human uncleanness or an unclean animal or unclean creeping creatures and then eats of the flesh of the peace offering, which belongs to the LORD, that person shall be eliminated from his people.^w

²²The LORD said to Moses, ²³Tell the children of Israel: Eat no fat of bullock, sheep or goat. ²⁴You may make use of the fat of an animal that died naturally or that was torn by beasts for any other purpose, but you certainly must not eat it, ²⁵for whoever eats the fat of the animal of which one offers a portion as a burnt offering to the LORD shall be eliminated from his people. ²⁶Neither shall any kind of blood be eaten whether of fowl or of animal in any of your homes. ²⁷The person who eats any blood,^x that person shall be eliminated from his people.

²⁸The LORD said to Moses: ²⁹Tell the Israelites: Whoever wants to present his peace offering as a sacrifice to the LORD must bring a portion of his peace offering as a donation; ³⁰with his own hands he shall bring to the LORD that sacrifice that is to be burned. He shall bring the fat with the breast for a wave offering to be waved before the LORD.^y ³¹The priest shall burn the fat as incense on the altar, but the breast^z shall be for Aaron and for his sons. ³²The right thigh you will give the priest as a contribution out of the peace offering. ³³Whoever among the sons of Aaron offers the blood and the fat of the peace offering shall have the right thigh for his share; ³⁴because the breast that is waved and the thigh of

r) Hides, of which sandal soles, straps and belts were made, were valuable.

s) Descendants of Aaron, unfitted for the priesthood, were included.

t) When this harmonious relationship with God has been reached, the use of leaven becomes acceptable. u) Like a free will offering so a vow is made voluntarily, hence the similarity of method.

v) In both offerings there is an element of spontaneity that should not be lost.

w) Not executed but removed, excommunicated. The marvel is that a Holy God will commune with any of us; which is made possible by our Redeemer.

x) Because blood is the animal's life and God, not man, is the Life-giver.

y) The offering was lifted toward heaven to acknowledge God as the Giver and to dedicate the offering to Him. It was also waved toward the altar, according to Rabbinical tradition, because the altar stood for God's redeeming grace.

z) Breast and thigh were considered the choicest meats, awarded the priests as the LORD's ministers.

ferred I have taken from the Israelites and given to Aaron, the priest, and to his sons by an everlasting statute from the children of Israel. ³⁵Out of the LORD's burnt offerings this is the remuneration set apart for Aaron and for his sons at their anointing when He anointed them to minister to the LORD in the priest's office. ³⁶The LORD ordered this to be given them at the time when He anointed them from among the Israelites, an everlasting statute throughout their generations. ³⁷This is the law of the burnt offering, of the food offering, of the sin offering, of the trespass offering, of the consecration offering and of the peace offering, ³⁸which the LORD ordered Moses on Mount Sinai on the day when He commanded the children of Israel to bring their offerings to the LORD in the Sinai desert.^a

8 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²TAKE with you Aaron and his sons; also the garments, the anointing oil, the bullock for the sin offering, the two rams and a basket of unleavened bread, ³and convene the whole congregation at the entrance of the meeting tent. ⁴So Moses did as the LORD had ordered him and when the congregation was assembled at the entrance of the meeting tent,^b ⁵Moses told the assembly, "This is what the LORD has commanded to be done." ⁶Moses then had Aaron and his sons come near and he washed them with water.^c ⁷He put on him^d the undergarment, girded him with the sash, dressed him with the upper garment, put on the ephod over it, which he tightened with the artistic girdle of the ephod, ⁸then put on him the breastplate and fastened to it the Urim and Thummin. ⁹He placed the turban on his head and attached the golden plate, the sacred diadem at its front, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

¹⁰Moses then took the anointing oil, anointed the tabernacle and everything it contained and consecrated it. ¹¹He also sprinkled some of the oil on the altar seven times,^e anointing the altar and all its utensils; also the basin and its base, to sanctify them. ¹²He then poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to consecrate him. ¹³Then Moses had Aaron's sons come near. He put tunics on them, girded them with sashes and bound the turbans on them as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁴He then had the bullock for the sin offering led forward and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bullock for the sin offering. ¹⁵Moses killed it, took some of the blood and applied it with his finger to the horns of the altar all around; he purified the altar. The remaining blood he poured on the base of the altar; he sanctified it to make atonement for it.^f ¹⁶Moses also took all the fat that lay upon the intestines, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them and burned them as incense on the altar. ¹⁷But the bullock with its hide, its meat and its dung he cremated outside the camp as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁸He further brought forward the ram of the burnt offering and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the ram's head. ¹⁹Moses killed it and sprinkled the blood all around against the altar. ²⁰Moses divided the ram into sections and the head, the sections and the fat he burned as incense. ²¹The entrails and the legs Moses washed with water and he cremated the entire ram, an offering by fire for the LORD, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²²Next he brought forward the other ram, the ram for the consecration, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. ²³Moses killed it, took some of the blood and applied

a) God wants order and tells His people how to achieve it.

b) During the seven days not only leaders of the people but the rest as well got a chance to be near the tabernacle's entrance. c) Water was typical of purifying from sin.

d) Aaron wore the white linen garments all priests wore and for his special duties the high-priestly garments over them, described fully in Ex. 28 and 39.

e) In the consecration of the altar the number seven is significant for it combines three, the divine number, with four, the human number.

f) Washing with water did not suffice for the removal of sin; the sin offering was required and after it the burnt offering, the complete consecration of the redeemed sinner. Aaron the high priest needed it for himself before he could administer it to the people.

to the tip of Aaron's right ear, to the thumb of his right hand, and to the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴Moses also had Aaron's sons come forward and he applied some of the blood to the tips of their right ears, to the thumbs of their right hands and to the big toes of their right feet. ²⁵And Moses sprinkled the blood all around against the altar.

²⁶He then took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat on the intestines, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys, the fat on the hem and the right thigh, ^{26a}and he took, out of the basket of unleavened bread before the LORD, one unleavened cake, one bread cake with oil and one thin wafer, which he placed upon the fat portions and on the right thigh. ²⁷All these together he laid in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons who waved them as a wave offering before the LORD. ²⁸Moses then took these out of their hands ^{28a}and burned them on the altar on top of the burnt offering; an ordination offering, an agreeable fragrance to the LORD.

²⁹Moses also took the breast and waved it as a wave offering before the LORD, the portion of the ordination ram that was his as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³⁰Moses further took some of the anointing oil and of the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled it upon Aaron and on his clothes, ³¹on his sons and on his sons' clothes to consecrate Aaron and his clothes, also his sons and his sons' clothes together.

³¹Moses told Aaron and his sons, Boil the meat at the entrance of the meeting tent and eat it there with the bread in the basket of consecration offerings, as I ordered, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it. ³²What is left over of the meat and the bread you shall cremate. ³³You shall not leave the entrance of the meeting tent for seven days until your consecration period is completed, or seven days are required for your con-

secration. ³⁴What happened today the LORD has ordered to make atonement for you; ³⁵day and night¹ for seven days you will remain at the entrance of the meeting tent, observing the LORD's instructions, lest you die; for so I am ordered.' ³⁶So Aaron and his sons did everything the LORD commanded through Moses.

9 ON THE EIGHTH DAY MOSES summoned Aaron and his sons; also the elders of Israel, ²and told Aaron, "Select for you a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both flawless, and present them before the LORD. ³You will also tell the Israelites, 'Take a he-goat for a sin offering and a calf and a lamb both a year old and in perfect condition for a burnt offering; ⁴also a bullock and a ram for a peace offering, to offer them before the LORD with a food offering mixed with oil, because today the LORD will appear to you.'"⁵

⁵They brought to the front of the tabernacle what Moses had ordered and the whole congregation approached and stood in the presence of the LORD. ⁶Moses said, "This is what the LORD ordered for you to do so that the glory of the LORD may be manifested to you."

⁷Moses then told Aaron, "Come to the altar; prepare your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and for the people; then prepare the people's sacrifice and make atonement for them in agreement with the LORD's injunction."¹

⁸So Aaron approached the altar and killed the calf that was intended for his sin offering. ⁹The sons of Aaron handed him the blood; he dipped his finger in the blood and applied it to the horns of the altar; then poured the blood at the altar base. ¹⁰The fat, the kidneys and the lobe of the liver from the sin offering he burned on the altar

;) Thought, activity and purpose are offered to God in their sacred ministry.

;) Moses had filled the hands of Aaron and of his sons with the offerings which they waved before the LORD. i) Their being set apart included their clothes.

;) Their holy office required disciplinary preparation. The Eli-Samuel incidents of I Samuel 3 show here were conveniences for lodging in or near the tabernacle.

;) Aaron, typical of Christ as high priest, could not perfectly typify Him, because he was not sinless; he had to find atonement for his own sins first.

;) To sense the presence of God both priest and people must themselves be fully consecrated, as Rom. 12:1 has it, "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable."

as incense, as the LORD had ordered Moses, ¹¹but the meat and the hide he cremated outside the camp.

¹²He then slaughtered the burnt offering and Aaron's sons conveyed to him the blood, which he sprinkled all around on the altar. ¹³They also handed him in sections the burnt offering including the head and he burned them on the altar. ¹⁴But he washed the intestines and the legs and burned them upon the burnt offering on the altar. ¹⁵He then presented the people's sacrifice; he took the he-goat of the sin offering on the people's behalf, killed it and prepared it for a sin offering like the first one. ¹⁶He presented the burnt offering according to directions, ¹⁷then had the food offering brought, took a handful of it and burned it on the altar alongside the morning's burnt sacrifice. ¹⁸He also slaughtered the bullock and the ram as a peace offering for the people.^m The sons of Aaron handed him the blood which he sprinkled all around on the altar; ¹⁹but the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the fat tail, the fat on the intestines, the kidneys and the lobe of the liver, ²⁰these fat pieces they laid upon the breast pieces and they burned the fat pieces as incense on the altar, ²¹while Aaron waved the breast and the right thigh as a wave offering before the LORD, as Moses had ordered.

²²Aaron then raised his hands toward the people and blessed them.ⁿ After sacrificing the sin offering, the burnt offering and the peace offering he came down.^o ²³Moses and Aaron entered the meeting tent and as they came out and blessed the people, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. ²⁴Fire went out from the presence of the LORD and consumed on the altar the burnt offering and the fat portions. All the people saw it; they rejoiced and fell on their faces.

10 BUT NADAB AND ABIHU, SONS of Aaron, took each his censers, put fire in it, laid incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, such as He had not ordered them. ²The fire issued forth from the presence of the LORD and consumed them; they died before the LORD. ³Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD meant when He said, 'Among those in My presence I will be hallowed and in the sight of all the people I will be honored.'"

⁴Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Uzziel, Aaron's uncle and told them, "Come, carry you brothers away from the sanctuary outside the camp." ⁵They came and carried them out dressed in their tunics as Moses had mentioned. ⁶Moses told Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Neither let your hair hang loose nor tear your clothes^p lest you die and indignation come upon the whole congregation; but your brothers, the whole house of Israel, shall bemoan the flame which the LORD has kindled. ⁷Do not leave the entrance of the meeting tent lest you die; for the LORD's anointing oil is upon you." And they did as Moses told them.

⁸The LORD said to Aaron: ⁹Neither you nor your descendants shall drink wine or liquor as you are about to enter the tabernacle, lest you die;^q it shall be an ordinance throughout your generations, ¹⁰so you may distinguish between holy and secular, between clean and unclean, ¹¹and that you may teach the Israelites all the ordinances which the LORD has conveyed^r to them through Moses.

¹²Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his surviving sons, "Take the food offering that is left over from the offerings to the LORD by fire and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy. ¹³Eat it at the holy

m) The sin offering always first, typical of our atonement wrought for us by Christ; then the burnt offering as Christ offered Himself for our purifying; then the food offering, acknowledging His gift of salvation; finally the peace offering, which is also a thank offering, for by His life and death we enjoy fellowship with God and with one another.

n) The blessing written Num. 6:24-26. o) The altar was built on an elevation.

p) A sign of deep distress and mourning, such as the people may observe, but not the priests, because their relationship was supremely with God.

q) This injunction suggests that Nadab and Abihu had disobeyed under alcoholic influence.

r) Divine instructions were clear and for the welfare of the worshipers. We cannot break His laws; disobedience breaks us.

place because it is legally yours and legally your sons' from the LORD's burnt offerings, for so I ordered. ¹⁴But he wave breast and the thigh you may eat at any clean place, you with your sons and your daughters, for they are designated for you and for your sons, granted out of the peace offerings of the Israelites. ¹⁵They shall bring the thigh for the heave offering and the breast for a wave offering along with the offerings by fire of the fat, to wave them in the presence of the LORD for a wave offering. It shall be yours and your sons' by an everlasting statute, as the LORD has commanded."

¹⁶Moses searched and searched for the goat of the sin offering, to find that it had been burned up. He felt angry toward Eleazar and Ithamar, the surviving sons of Aaron, and said, ¹⁷"For what reason did you not eat the sin offering^a at the sanctuary? For it is most holy and He gave it to you to take away the iniquity of the people, to make atonement for them in the LORD's presence. ¹⁸See here! Its blood has not been brought inside the sanctuary. You should without fail have eaten the meat in the sanctuary as I ordered."

¹⁹Aaron answered Moses, "Observe that today they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD and yet these are my experiences. If I had eaten the sin offering, would it have been pleasing in the sight of the LORD?" ²⁰Moses listened and fully agreed.

11 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND to Aaron: ²Tell the Israelites, these are the creatures you may eat among all the earth's animal life¹: ³All that have cloven hoofs cleft through, and chew the cud, these among the animals you may eat. ⁴But of those that chew the cud or part the hoof you

must not eat the camel because while it chews the cud it has no cleft hoofs; for you it is unclean. ⁵So the rock badger, for though it chews the cud it has no cloven hoof; it is for you unclean. ⁶The hare, too, that chews the cud but has no cleft hoof, is unclean for you. ⁷The hog, while it splits hoofs cloven through, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you; ⁸you must neither eat their meat, nor touch their carcass; they are unclean to you.¹¹

⁹Of all that are in the waters you may eat whatever has fins and scales in any waters—seas or streams; you may eat them. ¹⁰But all that have no fins or scales in seas or streams among all that move in the waters, of all creatures in the waters they shall be offensive to you. ¹¹They shall in fact be abhorrent to you; you must not eat their meat, and their dead bodies you shall loathe. ¹²Everything in the waters without fins or scales shall be repulsive to you.^v

¹³Among the birds these you shall loathe, they shall not be eaten, they are detestable—the eagle, the fish hawk, the black eagle, ¹⁴the vulture, every species of buzzard, every kind ¹⁵of crow, the ostrich, ¹⁶the owl, the sea-gull, every kind of hawk, ¹⁷the white owl, the cormorant, the horned owl, ¹⁸the marsh hen, the pelican, the carrion eagle, ¹⁹the stork, every kind of heron, the lapwing and the bat.^w

²⁰All winged insects going on all fours shall be repulsive to you. ²¹You may, however, among the winged insects that go on all fours, eat those that have thighs above their feet with which to leap upon the ground. ²²Of these you may eat every kind of locust, every kind of traveling locust, every kind of cricket and every kind of grasshopper; ²³but all other winged, four-footed insects shall be repulsive to you;^x ²⁴in contact with them you become un-

) Neither Aaron nor his sons could bring themselves under those grievous circumstances to eat anything, not even what had been divinely assigned to them and He "knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust."

) The regulations that follow have religious and sanitary aims; they are prescriptions for physical and spiritual health.

1) As man is soul and body, the one influencing the other, what we eat and drink affects our whole being. An abundance of wholesome food was allowed the Hebrews.

2) The forbidden fish was mostly of the snake-like type — conger, moray, lamprey and other eels.

v) The forbidden birds are birds of prey and of carrion, which we, too, would not care to eat.

w) The insects mentioned were never intended for human food.

clean. Whoever touches their dead bodies shall be unclean until evening ²⁵and he who picks up any part of their body must wash his clothes and is unclean till evening.

²⁶Every animal with parted hoof, not split through, and those not chewing the cud are unclean to you; whoever touches them shall be unclean. ²⁷All of the quadrupeds, that walk on their paws,^y are unclean to you; whoever touches their carcass shall remain unclean until evening. ²⁸Whoever carries their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean till evening; they are unclean to you.

²⁹These are unclean to you among the roving creatures that ramble on the ground—the weasel, the mouse, every species of turtle, ³⁰the ferret, the chameleon, the lizard, the snail and the mole. ³¹These are unclean among all that rove; whoever touches their dead bodies shall be unclean until evening ³²and anything upon which one of these falls when dead shall be unclean. Each wooden vessel, each piece of clothing or skin or sack, each utensil in use shall be placed in water; it remains unclean till evening; then it will be clean. ³³But an earthen vessel into which one of them falls—all its contents are unclean; it must be broken into fragments. ³⁴All edible food which its water contacts shall be unclean and all drinkable liquid in every such vessel shall be unclean. ³⁵Everything on which part of their carcass falls shall be unclean, whether an oven or a baking pan, it must be broken to pieces; they are unclean; to you they are unclean. ³⁶But a fountain, a cistern or a water reservoir shall be clean, while whatever (in it) touches their dead body shall be unclean. ³⁷If such a dead body falls on seed grain that is to be sown, that remains clean; ³⁸but if any part of their dead body falls on

it after water has been put on it, then to you it is unclean.^a

³⁹When one of the animals of which you may eat dies, then the one who contacts the carcass shall be unclean till evening. ⁴⁰He who eats of the dead body shall wash his clothes and remain unclean until evening; he also who carries the carcass shall wash his clothes and remain unclean till evening.^b

⁴¹Every creeping thing that creeps on the ground is repulsive; it shall not be eaten. ⁴²All that move on their belly; all that move on all fours; all many-legged among creepers, all that creep on the ground you must not eat; for you they are loathsome. ⁴³Do not defile yourselves through any creeping creature so as to become unclean ⁴⁴for I am the LORD your God. Set yourselves apart; be holy, for I am holy. Never defile yourselves through any creeping creature that crawls on the ground, ⁴⁵for I am the LORD who have you leave the land of Egypt to be your God. Be holy because I am holy.

⁴⁶This is the law regarding the animal, the bird, everything that moves in the waters and every living creature that moves upon the ground, ⁴⁷to discriminate between the unclean and the clean, between the creatures that may be eaten and the creatures that must not be eaten.^c

12 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES ²Tell the Israelites: When a woman has conceived and has given birth to a boy, she shall be unclean seven days, unclean as at the time of her menstruation. ³On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. ⁴She shall then continue for 33 days in the blood of purification. She shall contact nothing holy and shall not attend the sanctuary till the days of her purification are completed. ⁵If

y) Lacking hoofs altogether — cats, dogs and the like.

a) No fruits or vegetables of any kind are forbidden. The virility of the Hebrew race witnesses to the hygienic value of these regulations. Through opposition, poverty and epidemics they have come such as made "Gentiles" die like flies.

b) Death and sin are closely related. Jesus was deeply indignant, John 11:33, 38, as He approached the tomb of Lazarus; He came to conquer and destroy death. Dead bodies we put out of sight; dead animals are repulsive.

c) With Christ's coming these Mosaic regulations became obsolete. What enters the mouth does not pollute the person, says Jesus, Matt. 15:11, and Paul, Col. 2:16, reaffirms it.

she gives birth to a girl, then she shall be unclean for two weeks as in her monthly separation and for yet 66 days, while bleeding, she shall stay at home, the purification period.^d ⁶At the completion of the purifying she shall bring to the priest at the door of the meeting tent for a son or for a daughter a yearling lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering. ⁷The priest shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her; she shall be cleansed from her blood issue. This is the law for her who has given birth, whether to a boy or to a girl. ⁸But if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons, the one for a burnt offering, the other for a sin offering. The priest shall make atonement for her and she shall be clean.^e

13 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND Aaron: ²When a person has a swelling or an eruption or a white spot on the skin of his body and it suggests the plague of leprosy in his skin, then he shall be taken to Aaron or to one of his sons, the priests. ³The priest shall examine the affected spot in the skin of his body and if the hair on the affected spot has turned white and it shows that the disorder goes deeper than his skin, then it is the leprosy plague; the priest who inspects it shall pronounce him unclean. ⁴But if the white spot in the skin of his flesh is evidently no deeper than the skin and the hair has not turned white, then the priest shall quarantine the patient for seven days. ⁵On the seventh day the priest shall take a second look and if he finds that the disorder seems arrested and has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall quarantine him for another seven days. ⁶On the seventh day the priest shall examine him again and if the spot has faded and

has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only an eruption; he shall wash his clothes and be clean. ⁷But in case the eruption keeps on spreading in the skin after he has shown himself to the priest to be pronounced clean, then he must show himself to the priest again; ⁸the priest shall examine him and if he sees that the eruption has been spreading, then the priest must pronounce him unclean; it is leprosy.^f

⁹When the plague of leprosy attacks any person he must be taken to the priest. ¹⁰The priest shall examine him and if it develops that there is a white swelling in the skin which turns the hair white, or that white flesh is growing in the swelling, ¹¹then it is chronic leprosy in the skin of the body; the priest shall pronounce him unclean; he shall not quarantine him, for he is unclean.^g ¹²But if the leprosy breaks out all over the skin so that the leprosy covers the afflicted person's skin from head to foot as the priest looks at it, ¹³then the priest shall investigate and if the leprosy has covered the entire body,^h he shall declare the afflicted person clean; it has all turned white; he is clean. ¹⁴But the moment raw flesh shows on him he is unclean; ¹⁵when the priest observes the raw flesh he shall pronounce him unclean; it is leprosy. ¹⁶But if the raw flesh changes again and turns white, then he shall go to the priest; ¹⁷the priest shall look him over, and see if the patient has turned white, the priest shall declare him cleansed of the plague; he is clean.

¹⁸When in the skin of the body there has been inflammation which has healed, ¹⁹and instead of the sore there comes a white swelling, or a pale reddish spot, then it must be shown the priest. ²⁰The priest shall examine it and if it is evidently beneath the skin and its hair has turned white, the priest must pronounce him unclean; it

d) As loss of blood was involved in giving birth to a child, the laws of purity applied.

e) The purification of the mother became the occasion for the dedication of the son, Luke 2:23, who had already been entered into God's gracious Covenant with the rite of circumcision administered by the father on the eighth day.

f) Leprosy may be in the body without appearing until maturity; but it is progressive.

g) There were then and there are now diseases that bear similarity to but are not leprosy, such as scrofula, eczema and ringworm, so that the priest needed to identify each particular case.

h) Whiteness over the whole body without that body being fatally corrupted, indicated trouble different from leprosy.

is a leprosy attack, broken out in the boil. ²¹But if the priest, observing it, detects no white hairs on it, neither is it beneath the skin and it is fading, then the priest shall quarantine him for seven days ²²and if it has spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is the disease. ²³If, however, the affected spot remains where it is without spreading, then it is a scar from the eruption; the priest shall declare him clean.¹

²⁴Or when the skin of the body has been scorched and the raw flesh has become a light spot, reddish and white, ²⁵the priest shall examine it and, see, if the hair on the bright spot has turned white and it shows to be deeper than the skin, it is leprosy broken out in the burn. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a leprosy affliction. ²⁶But in case the priest examines him and the hair on the spot is not white, neither does the spot go deeper than the skin, but is fading, then the priest shall quarantine him for seven days. ²⁷On the seventh day the priest shall look him over and if it has spread further in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is leprosy. ²⁸But if the bright spot has stayed in its place, has not spread in the skin and has faded, then it is a scar from the burn. The priest shall pronounce him clean; for it is a scar from the burn.¹

²⁹When a man or a woman has a sore on the head or in the beard, ³⁰the priest shall examine the sore and if it looks deeper than the skin and there is on it yellowish, thin hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is an eruption, a leprosy of the head or beard. ³¹But if the priest notices that the spot, attacked by the eruption, does not show deeper than the skin and there is no dark hair on it, then he shall quarantine the patient for seven days. ³²On the seventh day the priest shall examine the affected spot and when there is evidence that the erup-

tion has not spread, neither is there yellow hair on it, nor does the sore go deeper than the skin, ³³then he shall shave himself — not shaving the eruption — and the priest shall quarantine the affected patient another seven days. ³⁴On the seventh day the priest shall examine the eruption and if evidently the eruption has not spread in the skin and it shows that it does not go beneath the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; then he shall wash his clothes; he is clean. ³⁵But if the disease keeps spreading in the skin after he has been pronounced clean, ³⁶then the priest must look him over and if the disease has spread in the skin, the priest does not look for yellow hair; he is unclean. ³⁷But if the eruption, so far as he can see, is inactive and no dark hair is growing on it, then the eruption has healed; the priest shall pronounce him clean.²

³⁸In case a man or a woman has spots on the skin of the body, white spots, ³⁹the priest shall make an examination. If the spots on the skin are a faint white, it is ordinary eruption broken out in the skin; he is clean. ⁴⁰When a man's head is hairless, he is just bald, but he is clean. ⁴¹When a man's hair falls out in front, he has baldness of the forehead and he is clean. ⁴²But if on the bald head or on the bald forehead there is a white-reddish spot, then there is leprosy broken out on his bald head or on his bald forehead. ⁴³The priest shall examine him and if the affected swelling on the bald head or on the forehead is reddish-white in appearance, like leprosy in the skin of the body, ⁴⁴then he is a leprosy man; he is unclean. The priest must pronounce him unclean; the disease is on his head. ⁴⁵The clothes of the leper who has been attacked by the plague shall be torn; he shall let the hair of his head hang loose; he shall cover his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean."³ ⁴⁶So long as he has the plague he re-

i) When the activity of the disease is visible, the priest can determine its virulence by its depth, color and spread.

j) Every precaution is taken to guard against mistakes; repeated examinations will prevent the ostracizing of any but the real leper.

k) The fatal nature of leprosy mentioned here and elsewhere in the Bible has been doubted and denied, but when, Num. 12, Miriam was struck with leprosy, Aaron pleaded, "Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed." He certainly thought of leprosy in a horrible form.

mains defiled; he is unclean. He shall be isolated; His abode shall be outside the camp.¹

⁴⁷The garment, too, that has in it the plague of leprosy, whether a woolen or a linen garment, ⁴⁸whether in the warp or in the woof of linen or wool, whether in leather or in anything made of skin, ⁴⁹if the plague shows up greenish or reddish in the garment in either warp or woof, or in any leather or in anything made of leather, this is the plague of leprosy, and it must be shown to the priest. ⁵⁰The priest shall examine the affected spot and shall isolate the affected part for seven days. ⁵¹On the seventh day he shall examine the affected part. If the affected part in the garment has spread in warp or woof or in leather or in any product made of leather, then the plague is malignant leprosy; it is unclean. ⁵²He shall burn the spotted garment, warp or woof, wool or linen, or anything of leather in which the plague is; for it is malignant leprosy; it must be burned in the fire. ⁵³But if the priest looks and sees that the plague is not spreading in the garment, or in the warp or in the woof, or in anything of hide, ⁵⁴then the priest shall order that they wash the affected object, and he shall isolate it for another seven days. ⁵⁵The priest shall examine the affected object after it is washed and if to him the affected spot looks unchanged, even if it has not spread, it is unclean. You shall burn it up; it is eating inward on the inner or the outer side. ⁵⁶But if, on examination, the priest finds that the affected spot is pale after its washing, then he shall tear the portion out of the garment or the leather, the warp or the woof.^m ⁵⁷If it reappears in the garment, in warp or woof, or in any of the leather, then it is a spreading leprosy;

burn up what has the plague in it. ⁵⁸But the garment, the warp or woof, or anything of leather, which you wash, you shall wash the second time when the plague has gone out of it, and it shall be clean. ⁵⁹This is the law of the leprosy plague in a woolen or a linen garment, or in anything of leather; pronounce it clean or unclean.

14 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES ²THIS shall be the law for the leper on the day of his cleansing.ⁿ He shall be taken to the priest, ³and the priest shall go out beyond the camp.^o As the priest examines him and it shows that the leprosy attack is cured, has left the leper, ⁴then the priest shall order to get for him who is to be cleansed two living, clean birds, cedar wood, a scarlet string, and hyssop. ⁵The priest shall give orders to kill one bird over an earthen pot with running water. ⁶The living bird he shall take with the cedar wood and the scarlet string with hyssop and dip these with the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed above the living water. ⁷Seven times he shall sprinkle the one to be cleansed of leprosy and he shall pronounce him clean. The living bird he shall let fly in the open country. ⁸The one to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, have a close hair cut, and take a water bath; then he shall be clean. After that he shall come into the camp but stay outside his tent for seven days. ⁹On the seventh day he shall cut off all the hair on his head, his beard, his eyebrows, all his hair he must cut off. He shall then wash his clothes and bathe his body in water and he shall be clean.

¹⁰On the eighth day he shall take two flawless he-lambs and one flawless yearling ewe-lamb, also a food offering of six quarts white fine flour mixed

1) Every person on reaching maturity begins physically to die; but this fatal course is fearfully accelerated in the leper; he is definitely dying. But death involves uncleanness. Leprosy puts the patient outside the camp as sinners are excluded from heaven. Rev. 21:27.

m) As the garment is not an organism but a fabric, the removal of the affected spot was likely to end the trouble. There was a resemblance to leprosy in the change of color to greenish or reddish, due probably to attacking fungi. Cleanliness and hygiene demanded arrest and removal.

n) To be cleansed meant to start life anew, symbolic of the new birth in the Spirit.
o) The leper could neither heal himself nor pronounce himself clean. He could not even go to God's minister; the priest had to meet him outside the camp. The killed bird typifies the need of a life to heal him and the freed bird pictures his own new life after cleansing, but not until it has been dipped in the killed bird's blood. The cut and shaven hair suggest thorough riddance of the old, so as to enter the new unhindered. And the anointing is the dedication of this new life to the Great Physician.

with oil and a pint of oil. ¹¹The priest who attends to the cleansing shall present the man to be cleansed together with all this before the LORD at the entrance of the tabernacle. ¹²The priest shall take one he-lamb and offer it with the pint of oil as a trespass offering and wave it as a wave offering before the LORD. ¹³He shall kill the he-lamb at the place where they kill the sin offering and the burnt offering in the holy place, because as the sin offering is the priest's so is the trespass offering; it is most holy. ¹⁴The priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering and the priest shall apply it to the tip of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, to the thumb of his right hand and to the big toe of his right foot. ¹⁵The priest shall also take some of the pint of oil and drip it into the palm of his own left hand. ¹⁶The priest shall then dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left palm and sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times in the presence of the LORD. ¹⁷From the remaining oil in his palm the priest shall apply some to the tip of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, to the thumb of his right hand, to the big toe of his right foot and upon the blood of the trespass offering. ¹⁸The priest shall apply the rest of the oil that is in the palm of his hand to the head of the one to be cleansed; so shall the priest make atonement for him before the LORD. ¹⁹The priest shall then offer the sin offering and atone for the one to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall slaughter the burnt offering. ²⁰The priest shall offer the burnt offering and the food offering on the altar; so shall the priest make atonement for him and he shall be clean.

²¹But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, then he shall take one he-lamb for a trespass offering, to be waved, to make atonement for him before the LORD; also three quarts of fine

flour mixed with oil^p for a food offering; and a pint of oil; ²²besides two turtle doves or two young pigeons, according to his ability, the one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering. ²³On the eighth day he shall bring them to the priest for his purification, to the entrance of the meeting tent in the LORD's presence. ²⁴The priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering and the pint of oil and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD. ²⁵He shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering and apply it to the tip of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, to the thumb of his right hand and the big toe of his right foot. ²⁶The priest shall pour some of the oil into his own left palm and ²⁷the priest shall sprinkle with his right forefinger some of the oil seven times before the LORD. ²⁸The priest shall also put some of the oil that is in his left palm on the tip of the ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot,^q where the blood of the trespass offering had been put. ²⁹What is left of the oil in the priest's palm he shall apply to the head of the one to be cleansed to make atonement for him before the LORD. ³⁰One of the turtle doves or young pigeons, ³¹such as he is able to secure and can afford, he shall offer, the one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering with a food offering.^r So the priest shall make atonement for the one to be cleansed in the presence of the LORD. ³²This is the law for one who suffered from leprosy, who cannot afford the regular cleansing process.

³³The LORD said to Moses and to Aaron: ³⁴When you enter the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put leprosy infection in a house in the land you possess, ³⁵then the owner of the house must come

p) Not the sacred priestly oil but olive oil dedicated for this service was being used, to dedicate this renewed life.

q) Both oil and blood were applied at this juncture. The healed man must not readily forget this blessed experience. Impressive ministrations have their place in our Christian fellowship, if performed reverently with God in view.

r) The food offering resembles to some degree our Communion Service. The LORD is the real Host, and ties of friendship are felt if he who offers is sincere and understands the meaning. Often a peace offering, which always implies gratitude, follows it; but the food offerings also indicate peace.

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priest shall pronounce the house clean,
because the plague is healed. ⁴⁹For the
purifying of the house he shall take
two birds, cedar wood, a scarlet string
with hyssop, ⁵⁰and kill one bird in an
earthen vessel over running water. ⁵¹He
shall then take the cedar wood, the
hyssop with the scarlet string and the
living bird and dip them in the blood
of the killed bird—also in the living
water and sprinkle the house seven
times. ⁵²He shall purify the house with
the bird's blood, with the living water
and with the living bird, the cedar
wood, the scarlet string and the hyssop.
⁵³He shall release the living bird in the
open field and shall make atonement
for the house; it shall be clean.

⁵⁴This is the law for all sorts of lep-
rous infection, for eruptions ⁵⁵and for
leprosy of garment and house, for a
swelling, ⁵⁶for an eruption and for a
pale spot, ⁵⁷to indicate when it is un-
clean and when it is clean. This is the
law of leprosy.

15 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND
to Aaron: ²Speak to the children
of Israel; tell them: When any person
has a discharge from his body, his dis-
charge is unclean.^a ³This is the situa-
tion regarding his uncleanness from the
discharge; whether his body lets the
issue flow or whether his body stops
the flowing, it is his uncleanness. ⁴Every
couch on which the person with the
discharge reclines shall be unclean and
every object on which he sits shall be
unclean. ⁵Everyone who contacts his
couch shall wash his clothes, take a
water bath and be unclean till evening.
⁶So he, who sits on an object on which
he sat who has the issue, shall wash
his clothes, take a water bath and be
unclean till evening. ⁷Whoever con-
tacts the body of the one with the flow-
ing shall wash his clothes, take a water

diseases are due to bacteria. This was, of course, known to God, who
liminate infection through clothes and dwellings. Slums are not in
ng.
ed house seems even more odd than that of infected clothes; but what
tenements? Are they wholesome breeding places? No patching suffices;
and building afresh. So are used clothes, uncleaned, dangerous for
asis for the adage, "Cleanliness is next to godliness."
rs one unclean seems to concern the reproductive organs. Pus may
from a festering wound, but that does not come under the unclean
re concerned. Adam and Eve covered those organs with fig leaves after
ad turned to shame.

bath and be unclean until evening. ⁸In case the one with the flowing spits upon a clean person, that one must wash his clothes, take a water bath and be unclean till evening. ⁹Any saddle too on which he sits who has the issue is unclean. ¹⁰So every one who touches what was under him shall be unclean until evening and he who picks it up shall wash his clothes, take a water bath and be unclean till evening. ¹¹Anyone whom the one with the discharge touches without having his hands rinsed in water must wash his clothes, take a bath and be unclean till evening. ¹²The pottery that he with the issue touches must be broken and every wooden vessel rinsed with water.

¹³When he who has the flowing is cleansed from his discharge, then he shall count seven days for his purification. He shall wash his clothes, bathe his body in running water and shall be clean. ¹⁴On the eighth day he shall get two turtle doves or two young pigeons, bring them to the entrance of the tabernacle before the LORD and present them to the priest. ¹⁵The priest shall offer them, the one for a sin offering, the other as a burnt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for him in the presence of the LORD on account of his discharge.

¹⁶When a man has an emission of sperm, he shall take a complete bodily water bath and be unclean until evening. ¹⁷Every garment and all leather on which sperm settled shall be washed in water and be unclean until evening. ¹⁸The woman and the man who has lain with her, if sperm is spilled, shall both take a water bath and be unclean until evening.^v

¹⁹When a woman has a discharge, a flowing of blood of the body, then she shall be in separation for seven days. Whoever touches her shall be unclean till evening. ²⁰Everything on which she lies during her uncleanness shall be un-

clean and everything on which she sits is unclean. ²¹Whoever contacts her couch shall wash his clothes, take a water bath and be unclean till evening. ²²Whoever touches any article on which she sat shall be unclean till evening. ²³If he touches anything on her bed or on the seat she occupied he shall be unclean till evening. ²⁴If a man lies beside her so that her menstruation comes on him, then for seven days he shall be unclean and so shall every couch on which he lies be unclean.

²⁵If a woman has a flowing of her blood not connected with her menstrual period, or if she has bloody discharge beyond her menstruation, then during all the time of her discharge she shall remain as in her period of uncleanness; she is unclean. ²⁶Every couch on which she lies during all the days of her flux shall be to her as the couch of her menstruation and every object on which she sits shall be unclean like the uncleanness of her separation. ²⁷All who touch those things that are unclean shall take a water bath and be unclean until evening.^w

²⁸When she is cleansed of her issue then she shall count seven more days and after that she is clean. ²⁹She shall get two turtle doves or two young pigeons and shall bring them to the priest at the entrance of the meeting tent. ³⁰The priest shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering; thus the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD on account of the unclean issue. ³¹In this way you will purify the Israelites from their impurities so they may not die in their uncleanness by defiling My Dwelling which is among them. ³²This is the law for him who has a discharge and for him who has an emission of sperm that renders him unclean; ³³also for her who suffers from her menstruation and for anyone.

v) These rules entered vitally into the ways and plans of men and even more into those of women: The incident of Mark 5:25-34, where Jesus healed a woman who for twelve years had been isolated, remains impressive. The normal woman, however, enjoyed through these regulations periodic rest: w) The Hebrews were blessed with distinct revelations from God, the Holy One, whom alone they were to worship. Moral impurity separates the worshiper from the LORD. Physical impurity is not sin, but neither does it come in the category of holiness; it is typical of sin. The worshiper must never forget with whom he has to do; therefore the required sacrifices for purification.

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to make atone-
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shall fill his

hands with finely ground, fragrant in-
cense, take it inside the veil 13and
place the incense on the fire before the
LORD² so that the incense cloud covers
the mercy seat on the Ark, lest he die.
14He shall take of the blood of the
bullock and sprinkle it with his finger
on the east part of the mercy seat and
seven times he shall sprinkle the blood
with his finger in front of the mercy
seat. 15He shall then slaughter the he-
goat of the sin offering on behalf of
the people, bring the blood inside
the veil and do with the blood as he
did with the blood of the bullock; he
shall sprinkle it upon the mercy seat
and in front of the mercy seat. 16Thus
he shall make the atonement for the holy
place because of the uncleanness of the
Israelites, all their sinful transgressions.
He shall do the same for the Dwelling,
which stays with them in the midst of
their impurities. 17Not a person shall
be in the Dwelling, when he enters to
make atonement in the holy place, un-
til he comes out and has made atone-
ment for himself, for his own house-
hold and for the whole congregation of
Israel. 18He shall then go out to the
altar that stands before the LORD, shall
make atonement for it and take of the
bullock's blood, also of the goat's blood
and apply it to the horns of the altar all
around. 19He shall also sprinkle upon
it of the blood with his finger seven
times to cleanse and sanctify it for the
uncleanness of the Israelites.^a

20When he has completed the aton-
ing of the holy place and of the taber-
nacle then he shall bring the living
goat 21and Aaron shall lay both his
hands on the head of the live goat and
confess over it all the iniquities of the
Israelites, all their transgressions and all
their sins; he shall lay them upon the
head of the goat and send it away into
the desert by a man at hand. 22The
goat shall carry away upon itself all

sons of the high priest assist him, but on Atonement Day he alone
ing care of atonement for himself. As high priest he typifies Christ,
ress alone.¹¹

From Azazel (dismissed one) thus properly thought of as the scapegoat.
outside the veil, belonged to the Holy of Holies, but could not stand
offered on it daily. On the Atonement Day the high priest took the
behind the veil into the Holy of Holies.

ly celebrated by Orthodox and Reformed Jews as Yom Kippur, and
ed from the congregation. It is a three-hour service, every moment of

their iniquities to a desolate region and in the desert he shall let the he-goat go free.^b

²³Aaron shall then enter the meeting tent, take off his linen garments which he had put on when he went to the Holy Place^c and shall leave them there. ²⁴He shall wash his body with water in the sanctuary, put on his clothes, come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people; he shall make atonement for himself and for the people. ²⁵The fat of the sin offering he shall burn as incense on the altar. ²⁶The one who let the goat go as scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, after which he may enter the camp. ²⁷The bullock of the sin offering and the he-goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought into the holy place to make atonement, they shall carry outside the camp; they shall consume with fire their hides, their flesh and their dung. ²⁸Whoever cremates them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, after which he may enter the camp.

²⁹This shall be an everlasting ordinance to you, that in the seventh month on the tenth of the month you shall humble yourselves, do no work whatever, neither the native nor the foreigner who lives among you, ³⁰because on that day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you. You will be cleansed from all your sins in the presence of the LORD. ³¹It shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for you; you shall humble your souls. This is an everlasting ordinance. ³²The anointed priest, who has been consecrated priest to succeed his father, shall make atonement. He shall put on the linen garments, the sacred garments. ³³He shall make atonement for the Holy of Holies, for the tabernacle and for the altar; he shall make atonement for the priests

and for all the people of the congregation. ³⁴This shall be an everlasting ordinance for you so that atonement will be made for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And what the LORD commanded Moses did.^d

17 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell Aaron, his sons and all the Israelites; say to them: This is what the LORD commanded: ³Every man of the house of Israel who butchers a bullock, a sheep, or a goat in the camp, or who butchers it outside the camp, ⁴who does not bring it to the entrance of the meeting tent to offer it as a gift to the LORD, that man shall be counted guilty of bloodshed; he has spilled blood. The man shall be eliminated from among his people, ⁵in order that Israelites may bring their sacrifices which they butcher in the open field to the LORD at the entrance of the meeting tent, to the priest to offer them to the LORD as peace offerings. ⁶The priest shall sprinkle the blood on the LORD's altar at the entrance of the meeting tent and burn the fat for a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ⁷They shall no longer present their offerings to field spirits whom they are adulterously courting.^e

⁸Tell them: Every man of the house of Israel or any stranger who lives among you, who offers a burnt offering or a sacrifice ⁹and does not come to the entrance of the meeting tent to present it to the LORD, that man shall be eliminated from his people. ¹⁰And every man of the house of Israel and every immigrant who stays among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against the person who eats the blood and will eliminate him from among My people, ¹¹because the life of a living creature is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for the blood

b) The slain goat typified our Savior as suffering for us; the dismissed goat typified Him as bearing away our sins, which was made possible by His dying for us.

c) Usually, "the holy place" means the first and larger room or the whole tabernacle; but here it means the Holy of Holies which, behind the veil contained the Ark of the Covenant.

d) Many Hebrews fancied that the animal they brought so took their place that they needed not to surrender themselves to God; but God did want them, and their sacrificed animals should be the tokens of their self-surrender.

e) The whole Hebrew nation had been married to Jehovah [Deut. 4:13,23] at Sinai, and again: [Deut. 29:1], a new generation on the plains of Moab.

through the life in it serves for expiation. ¹²I have therefore said to the Israelites, None of you shall eat blood, neither shall any alien who stays among you eat blood. ¹³Every man of the Israelites or of strangers who settle among you, who catches any game or fowl that may be eaten, shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth, ¹⁴for blood is the life of every creature. I therefore told the Israelites, eat no blood of any living thing; the life of every creature is its blood.^f Whoever eats it shall be eliminated. ¹⁵And every person who eats what died of itself or what was torn to death, be he a native or a foreigner, shall wash his clothes, take a water bath and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean. ¹⁶If he neither washes (his clothes) nor bathes his body, he shall be burdened with his iniquity.

18 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell the Israelites, say to them: I am the LORD your God.^g ³You shall not behave as they behaved in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor as they do in the land of Canaan where I am asking you; you will not follow their rules. ⁴You will practice My regulations and observe My statutes and live hem; I am the LORD your God. ⁵Therefore keep My law and My ordinances; whoever practices them enjoys life through them. I am the LORD.

⁶None of you shall get close to any of his near of kin to expose her nakedness.

I am the LORD. ⁷The nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother, you shall not expose. ⁸The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not expose; it is your father's nakedness. ⁹The nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter, or your mother's daughter, whether she is born at home or born elsewhere, her nakedness you shall not expose. ¹⁰You must not expose the nakedness of your son's

daughter or of your daughter's daughter; for it is your nakedness. ¹¹Do not expose the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, born to your father; she is your sister; do not expose her. ¹²Do not expose the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's near kin. ¹³Do not expose the nakedness of your mother's sister; she is your mother's near kin. ¹⁴Do not expose the nakedness of your father's brother; do not lie with his wife; she is your aunt. ¹⁵Do not expose the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife; do not expose her. ¹⁶Do not expose the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. ¹⁷Do not expose the nakedness of both a woman and her daughter; neither take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to expose her; they are blood relatives. It is incest.^h

¹⁸While your wife is still living do not take her sister for a rival to expose her nakedness. ¹⁹Do not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during her separation for uncleanness. ²⁰You shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife to defile yourself with her.

²¹Do not have your offspring pass through the fire to Molech; neither profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

²²Do not lie with a male as with a woman; it is detestable. ²³You shall lie with no animal whatever and defile yourself with it; neither shall a woman stand before an animal to commit lewdness with it; it is perversion. ²⁴Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for by all these practices the nations whom I am driving out before you are defiled. ²⁵The land became unclean and I brought down its iniquities upon it so that the land threw up its inhabitants. ²⁶But you shall observe My laws and My regulations; you must not practice those abominations, neither the

^f The command to Noah for his family and for all future generations, Gen. 9:4, includes abstaining from eating of blood, which the Christian Council in Jerusalem enjoined, Acts 15:20,29, upon all Christians. The use of blood in the sacrifices strengthened its meaning.

^g Thrice in these five verses and often later God reminds them of His sovereign lordship and of His holiness, of which Israel had grown aware at Mt. Sinai.

^h Sexual purity is essential for health of body and soul. The Canaanites had by their sexual sins forfeited their rights to their country, and their excuse for living. The sins just enumerated were common to them.

native nor the foreigner who resides among you, ²⁷because all these abominations the men of the land practiced before you and they rendered the country unclean, ²⁸lest the land throw you out, too, when you defile it, as it disgorged the nation that preceded you. ²⁹For whoever commits any of these offenses, the persons who commit them shall be eliminated from among their people.¹ ³⁰You therefore observe My instructions so as to avoid what was practiced before you. Do not defile yourselves by them; I am the LORD, your God.

19 ¹THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Address the whole congregation of Israel and tell them: You must be holy because I the LORD your God am holy.¹ ³Every one of you must have respect for his mother and his father and keep My Sabbaths; I am the LORD your God. ⁴You must not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molten gods. I am the LORD, your God.

⁵When you offer the LORD a peace offering, so offer it that you will be pleasing Him. ⁶It shall be eaten on the day you offer it and on the next day. If anything remains till the third day, it must be burned with fire. ⁷If nevertheless it is eaten on the third day, it is offensive, not acceptable. ⁸The one who eats it shall be burdened with his sin, for he has rendered unclean what had been dedicated to the LORD. That person shall be eliminated from among his people.

⁹When you harvest the produce of your field, do not completely mow the edge of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰Do not glean your vineyard bare or gather scattered grapes; leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God.¹¹

¹¹Neither steal, nor cheat, nor lie to

one another. ¹²Do not deceitfully swear by My name and thus dishonor the name of God; I am the LORD. ¹³Neither use extortion toward your neighbor, nor rob him. Do not retain the hired man's wages with you till morning. ¹⁴Do not curse the deaf or put obstruction before the blind; but revere your God; I am the LORD.

¹⁵Practice no unfairness in a court decision; you shall neither favor the poor nor show deference to the influential; judge your neighbor with fairness.^m ¹⁶You must not go around among your people as a gossip or take your stand against your neighbor's life. I am the LORD. ¹⁷Do not in your heart hate your brother; yet correct your fellow man lest you incur sin on his account. ¹⁸Do not avenge yourself or bear a grudge against the children of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself.ⁿ I am the LORD.

¹⁹Observe My laws. Do not have your cattle breed with a different kind. Do not sow seed of two kinds in the same field, nor wear a garment made of two kinds of material.

²⁰If a man cohabits with a slave girl who is betrothed to a husband, but neither ransomed nor redeemed, a court inquiry shall be conducted. They shall not be executed, because she was not free; ²¹and he shall bring his trespass offering before the LORD at the entrance of the meeting tent, a trespass offering ram.^o ²²The priest shall make atonement for him with the trespass offering ram before the LORD for the sin which he has committed, and the sin he has committed will be forgiven him.

²³When you come into the land and have planted all kinds of fruit trees, then you must consider their fruit inedible for you. For three years it shall be inedible for you; you shall not eat

i) As a malignant tumor must be removed to save the body, so must the habitually unchaste be eliminated from the community. Joshua and his warriors were to free the land from iniquity for servants of the holy God.

j) The holiness of God is the basis and the goal of all lofty endeavor. Jesus put it [Matt. 5:48], "You are to be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect."

k) God never forgets the poor and the foreigner; widow and orphan, too, are remembered.

l) Practice of deceit thwarts personality; it is a kind of suicide.

m) Addressed to the court and judges of the people. n) As Jesus puts it [Matt. 22:39].

o) The slave girl, too, had rights, but her position made exercise of them difficult. The man had to seek atonement.

it.²⁴ In the fourth year all the fruit shall be dedicated, a praise offering to the LORD. ²⁵ But in the fifth year you may eat of its fruit, so that its produce may enrich you. I am the LORD your God.

²⁶ Eat nothing that contains the blood. Make use of neither fortune telling nor witchcraft practice. ²⁷ Do not clip the corners of the hair on your head, nor cut the edge of your beard.²⁸ There must be no cutting into your flesh for the dead, or tattoo marks on you. I am the LORD.²⁹

³⁰ Do not defile your daughter by making her a prostitute, lest the land be licentious and the country thoroughly wicked.³¹ Observe My Sabbaths and revere My sanctuary.³² I am the LORD. ³³ Do not turn to mediums and seek no wizards to defile yourselves by them. I am the LORD your God.³⁴ Stand up before the gray-haired person; honor the face of the aged and revere your God. I am the LORD.

³⁵ When a stranger lives among you in your land, do not maltreat him; the foreigner who lives among you shall be like a native among you. You shall love him as your own, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.³⁶

³⁷ You shall practice no injustice in court, in measurements, in weights or in quantity; ³⁸ you shall use honest scales, honest weights, an honest bushel and an honest gallon.³⁹ I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. ⁴⁰ Observe all My laws and all My ordinances and do them. I am the LORD.

20 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES:

¹ Tell the children of Israel: Every Israelite and every foreigner who resides in Israel, who presents any of

his offspring to Molech,² shall certainly be executed; the people of the land shall stone him. ³ I Myself will set My face against that man; I will eliminate him from among his people because he presented of his offspring to Molech, to the defilement of My sanctuary and the dishonor of My holy name. ⁴ If the people of the land close their eyes for the man who presents his offspring to Molech, without putting him to death, ⁵ then I will set My face against that man and against his family and I will eliminate both them and all who followed them in their harlotry after Molech; I will eliminate them from among their people.

⁶ The person who turns to spirits and to wizards, harloting after them, against that person I will set My face and I will eliminate him from his people. ⁷ Set yourselves apart, therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. ⁸ Observe all My laws and practice them. I am the LORD who sets you apart.

⁹ If there is anyone who curses his father or his mother,⁷ he shall surely be executed; he has cursed his father or his mother; his bloodguilt rests upon him.

¹⁰ If a man commits adultery with another's wife, adulterating with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. ¹¹ When a man cohabits with his father's wife, he exposes his father's nakedness; they shall both be executed; their bloodguilt is upon them. ¹² When a man cohabits with his daughter-in-law, both shall be executed; they committed incest; their bloodguilt rests upon them.¹³ When a man lies with a male as with a woman, both have committed something perverse; they will certainly be put to death; their

) For three years newly planted trees bear no well developed fruit. In the original Hebrew it is termed uncircumcised. The fourth crop is used to acknowledge God as the Owner.

) Pagans cut hair of head and beard certain ways to honor their idols.

) Pagans cut into their bodies to show grief.

) Pagans placed daughters in temples to serve the lusts of men.

) LORD's Day observance is essential for true worship. u) God's revelation suffices.

) Respect for age goes with reverence for God. w) Worship of God and dishonesty do not mix.

) Molech, also named Moloch or Milcom or Malcom, meaning king or lord, was worshiped by the ammonites, descendants of Lot. The acme of their worship was to throw children into the fire for Molech.

) God pays more attention to words than we do, for words are expressive of the speaker, "The Word was God." The curser of father or mother was essentially their murderer.

) Incest, here mentioned in various forms, is destructive to family life.

bloodguilt rests upon them.^a ¹⁴When a man takes a wife and her mother, too, it is incest; they shall be burned with fire, he and they so that no incest remains among you. ¹⁵If a man lies with an animal, he shall unquestionably be executed and you shall kill the animal. ¹⁶If a woman moves up to a beast to lie with it, you shall kill the woman and the beast; they must without fail be put to death; their bloodguilt rests upon them.^b ¹⁷If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or the daughter of his mother and they cohabit, it is shameful; they shall be eliminated in the presence of their people. He has exposed his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his guilt. ¹⁸If a man lies with a woman during her menstruation and cohabits with her, he has exposed her fountain and she has exposed the fountain of her blood; both shall be eliminated from among the people. ¹⁹You shall not expose the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that exposes a near relative; they shall bear their iniquity. ²⁰If a man cohabits with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall suffer for their sins; they shall die childless. ²¹If a man takes his brother's wife, it is incest; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall die childless.

²²Observe well all My laws and all My ordinances and practice them, so that the land to which I bring you to live may not throw you up. ²³You must not behave in agreement with the customs of the nation which I expel ahead of you, for they have done all these things and I abhor them. ²⁴But to you in particular I have said: You shall inherit their soil and I will give it you to possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey. I am the LORD your God who has separated you from the other peoples.^c ²⁵You therefore must distinguish between clean and unclean

animals and between unclean and clean birds. Do not render yourselves offensive through beast or bird or whatever crawls on the ground, which I have separated as unclean to you. ²⁶You shall be holy to Me because I the LORD am holy and I separate you from the peoples to belong to Me. ²⁷A man or a woman who is a medium or a fortune teller shall certainly be put to death; they shall stone them; the bloodguilt rests upon them.

21 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND AARON and tell them: None of them must incur uncleanness on behalf of the dead among his people, ²except for his nearest kin, for his mother, for his father, for his son, for his daughter, for his brother ³and for his virgin sister who without a husband is close to him for her he may render himself unclean.^d ⁴As a family man he shall not render himself unclean among the people so as to profane himself. ⁵They must by no means shave their heads or shave the edges of their beards or make cuttings in their bodies. ⁶They shall be holy to the LORD their God and not desecrate the name of the God; for they bring the fire offering of the LORD, their God's bread; they therefore shall be holy.

⁷They shall marry neither a prostitute nor a woman who has been violated, nor a woman put away by her husband, for the priest is set apart for his God.^e ⁸Set him apart, for he offers God's food. He is holy to you, for I the LORD am holy, who sanctifies you. ⁹In case the daughter of a priest defiles herself by playing the harlot, she defiles her father; she shall be burned with fire.

¹⁰The high priest among his brothers, upon whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been consecrated so as to wear the garments

a) Homosexuality was Sodom's fatal sin [Gen. 19:5] and was practiced also in Israel [Judg. 19:22] by Benjamites; but punished by all other tribes of Israel.

b) No incident is related of such sin in Israel, but verse 23 of this chapter gives it as a chief reason for the expulsion and extermination of the Canaanites.

c) God has in store for His people a more wholesome and joyous life.

d) An ordained minister of God has many privileges and duties peculiar to his sacred office; he does well to refrain from doing certain things a Christian layman may do. Our Lord did not rub ripe ears of wheat on the Sabbath as His disciples did [Matt. 12:1-8].

e) The minister's wife is the making or breaking of him. Fortunately the majority possess qualities at least equal to those of their husband.

shall not let his hair hang loose, nor tear his clothes. ¹¹He shall not get near a corpse or defile himself even for his father or for his mother. ¹²He shall not leave the sanctuary or desecrate the holy place of his God; for upon him is the consecration of the anointing oil of his God. I am the LORD. ¹³He shall take a virgin for wife; ¹⁴he shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman, or one violated, or a prostitute, but he shall take to wife a virgin of his own people ¹⁵so that he may not dishonor his offspring among the people,^f for I am the LORD who sanctifies him.

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁷Tell Aaron: Whoever among your offspring in successive generations has a physical blemish shall not come near to offer the food of his God; ¹⁸for no one with a blemish shall draw near — no blind person, or lame, or of facial deformity, or with limbs too long ¹⁹or with broken foot or hand, ²⁰or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or with defective eyesight, or with itch or skin trouble or with imperfect testicles. ²¹No descendant of Aaron the priest with physical infirmity shall come near to offer the LORD's offerings with fire. He has a blemish, he shall not approach to offer the food of his God; ²²but he may eat both the holy and the most holy food.^g ²³Only, he shall neither get near the veil nor approach the altar, for he has a blemish, so he may not profane My sanctuaries; for I am the LORD who sanctifies them.^h ²⁴Thus Moses spoke to Aaron, to his sons and to all the children of Israel.

22 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell Aaron and his sons: In order not to desecrate My holy name, behave guardedly about the sacred gifts of the Israelites, which they dedicate to Me; I am the LORD. ³Tell them,

Whoever of all your offspring in your generations takes care of the sacred gifts which the Israelites dedicate to the LORD, while uncleanness is upon him, that person shall be removed from My presence. I am the LORD. ⁴Not a single one of Aaron's offspring, who is a leper, or has a discharge shall eat of the sacred things till he is clean. Similarly one who contacts what is rendered unclean by a corpse; or one who has an emission; ⁵or one who touches a creeping creature that renders him unclean, or contacts a person who defiles him because he has some kind of uncleanness; ⁶or who contacts something of this kind shall remain unclean until evening; he shall not eat of the sacred gifts unless he washes his body with water. ⁷At sunset he shall be clean and afterward he may eat of the sacred gifts because it is his nourishment. ⁸What naturally dies or is torn, he must not eat to his defilement; I am the LORD. ⁹They shall observe My ordinance, lest they load themselves with sin by profaning it and die from desecrating it. I am the LORD who sets them apart.

¹⁰No one unqualified shall eat of anything sacred.ⁱ One living with the priest, or his hired man, shall not eat what is holy; ¹¹but a person whom the priest buys for his money may eat of it. Also those born in his house may eat of his food. ¹²But a priest's daughter who is married to a layman shall not eat of what is set apart as a 'sacred offering. ¹³However, when a priest's daughter has become a widow or has been divorced and is childless and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food; but no outsider shall eat of it. ¹⁴If ignorantly anyone eats something sacred, then he must repay it to the priest, adding one fifth of the amount of the holy food. ¹⁵They^j must not

f) Certainly an Israelite; preferably of Aaronic ancestry. Elizabeth was "of Aaron's daughters"; she also was a cousin of Mary, Luke 1:5,36.

g) Anything like complete performance of the priestly functions, required as does the ministry today, a healthy body, a clear mind, a sympathetic heart and a consecrated will — an extraordinary person spiritually endowed.

h) Forever the marvel remains that God, the HOLY ONE was and is willing to make use of humans for His service. Only the Holy Spirit can bring about the requisite ability and the humble inclination.

i) This guarding of holy edibles is carried over in the celebration of The Lord's Supper, of which only those who humbly seek cleansing from sin and whose desire is to serve the LORD may partake.

j) The priests. Only our best, coming from a grateful, willing heart, is acceptable to God; it made the widow's mite [Mk. 12:42-44] so worthy of attention.

desecrate the holy gifts of the Israelites, which they shall set apart to the LORD, ¹⁶lest they burden those who eat their holy things with the sin of their transgression, for I the LORD sanctify them.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁸Speak to Aaron, to his sons and to all the children of Israel and tell them: Whoever of the house of Israel and of the foreigners in Israel brings any offering in agreement with all their vows and free will offerings, which they offer to the LORD as a burnt offering, ¹⁹shall offer it of his own free will, a sound male of the cattle, of the sheep or of the goats. ²⁰Whatever has a blemish you shall not offer; it would not render you acceptable. ²¹Whoever offers a peace offering sacrifice to the LORD to fulfil a vow or for a freewill offering from herd or flock, it must be flawless to be pleasing; there must be no blemish in it. ²²Never offer the LORD what is blind, or fractured or maimed or with infected sores or itch or skin disease; of them make no offering by fire on the altar to the LORD. ²³For a freewill offering you may present a bullock or a lamb with members overgrown or shrunk, but for a vow it will not be satisfactory. ²⁴Nor shall you offer the LORD what has been damaged by bruising, by crushing, by fracturing or by cutting; make of them no sacrifice within your borders. ²⁵Neither shall you offer as food to your God any such as came from a foreigner's hand, for they are defective; they are mutilated; they will not render you pleasing.

²⁶The LORD said to Moses: ²⁷When a bullock or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall remain with its dam for seven days, but from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as a burnt offering to the LORD, ²⁸But do not slaughter a cow or a ewe and her young on the same day. ²⁹When you offer the LORD

a sacrifice of thanksgiving, let it be pleasing. ³⁰It shall be eaten on that same day; leave nothing of it until morning. I am the LORD.

³¹Heartily accept My commandments and practice them; I am the LORD. ³²Do not desecrate My holy name; I will be revered in the midst of the children of Israel. I am the LORD who makes you holy; ³³who had you leave the land of Egypt to be God to you. I am the LORD.

23 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell the Israelites: The appointed feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations — my appointed feasts — are these: ³For six days labor may be performed, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation when you do no work at all. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings. ⁴These are the LORD's appointed feasts, the sacred convocations which you shall broadcast at their appointed times. ⁵On the fourteenth of the first month in the evening begins the LORD's Passover. ⁶On the fifteenth of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. ⁷On the first day you shall have a sacred gathering. Perform no strenuous labor, ⁸but for seven days present fire offerings to the LORD. On the seventh day hold a holy convocation; do no hard work.

⁹The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁰Tell the Israelites: When you have come into the land which I give you and you harvest its crop, bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest, ¹¹who shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to render you acceptable. On the morning after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it ¹²and on the day of waving the sheaf you shall offer a flawless yearling he-lamb for a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³The accompanying food offer-

k) To do so would tend toward cruelty, not so much to the animals concerned as within the heart of the owner. God would train His sons and daughters in gentleness.

l) The seventh day stands first among God's appointments. Rich and poor alike shall enjoy rest, with none to rule them but God, not merely thrice a year but every week.

m) Each of the three feasts was related to their crops, even the Passover that had been established to commemorate their exodus from Egypt, for it also was their feast of unleavened bread. At the first feast the first sheaf of grain was waved before the LORD. At Pentecost, fifty days later, loaves baked from the harvests were waved before the LORD. The feast of tabernacles was a week of thanksgiving, with all harvests gathered in, and it commemorated the desert years of their fathers.

ing shall be a fifth of a bushel of fine flour mixed with oil — a fire offering, a pleasing fragrance to the LORD; also with it a drink offering, three pints of wine. ¹⁴Until the very day when you have brought an offering to your God, you shall eat neither bread, nor parched nor fresh grain. This shall be an ordinance for your successive generations in all your dwellings.

¹⁵Count for yourselves from the morning after the Sabbath, from the day when you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven full weeks; ¹⁶until the morning after the seventh Sabbath you will count fifty days and bring a new cereal offering to the LORD. ¹⁷Bring along from your homes two loaves to be waved, made from a fifth bushel of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven, the firstfruits to the LORD. ¹⁸With the bread offer seven flawless yearling lambs, one young bull and two rams to be a burnt offering to the LORD with their food offering and their drink offering — a fire offering, a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ¹⁹You shall then sacrifice one he-goat for a sin offering and two yearling lambs for a peace offering. ²⁰The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs; they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. ²¹On that same day you shall broadcast a call; you will conduct a holy gathering; you shall do no strenuous work whatever. ²²It is an everlasting ordinance in all your dwellings through your successive generations.

²²When you harvest the crop of your land neither mow to the very edges of your field nor glean what has been dropped in harvesting; leave it for the poor and for the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.^o

²³The LORD said to Moses, ²⁴Tell the Israelites: In the seventh month,^p on the first day of the month enjoy a

day of complete rest, a memorial day, announced by the blowing of trumpets, a sacred convocation. ²⁵You will do no hard work and will offer a fire offering to the LORD.

²⁶The LORD said to Moses: ²⁷The tenth day of the seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement; you will hold a holy meeting. You will humble yourselves and present a fire offering to the LORD.^q ²⁸On the same day you shall do no work of any kind, because it is Atonement Day, to make atonement for you in the presence of the LORD your God; ²⁹for whoever does not humble himself on this particular day, that person shall be eliminated from among his people. ³⁰Anyone who does work of any kind on this same day, that person I shall destroy from the midst of his people. ³¹You shall do no work whatever; it is an everlasting ordinance throughout your generations in all your dwellings.^r ³²It shall be for you a perfect Sabbath. You will humble your souls on the ninth of the month at eventide; from one evening to the next you will celebrate your Sabbath.

³³The LORD said to Moses: ³⁴Tell the Israelites: On the fifteenth of this seventh month, the feast of booths to the LORD begins, lasting seven days, ³⁵with a holy convocation on the first day; you will do no strenuous work. ³⁶For seven days you will present your offerings by fire to the LORD and on the eighth day you shall have a sacred gathering and bring the LORD a fire offering. It is a festive gathering; you shall do no hard work. ³⁷These are the LORD's appointed festivals, which you shall publish as holy gatherings to present sacrifices by fire to the LORD — burnt offerings, food offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each according to the day's program ³⁸in addition to the LORD's Sabbaths and your gifts, all your votive offerings and your free-

^o Throughout sacred history the LORD has practiced and has ordered making known; the prophets published His messages; Christ commissioned His disciples to be witnesses. We call it advertising, a vital element in evangelization.

^p In the midst of worship suggestions God remembers the poor and the immigrant.

^q Named Ethaniam (Incessant Rains). It corresponds to our late September and much of October.

^r Humility is indispensable in devotions, as our LORD points out [Luke 18:9-14] in the Pharisee and tax collector parable.

^s One reason for resting, bodily relaxation; another, time for worship; a third, centering of thought on God as Redeemer, Friend and Sovereign, as they could not so concentrate while working.

will offerings which you will give the LORD.

³⁹On the fifteenth of the seventh month, when you are bringing in the produce of your field, you shall celebrate a feast to the LORD lasting seven days, a Sabbath on the first day and a Sabbath on the eighth day. ⁴⁰On the first day bring the produce of splendid trees, palm branches, twigs of leafy trees and water willows.^s You will be glad in the presence of the LORD your God for seven days. ⁴¹You will observe it as a festival to the LORD your God annually for seven days; it is an ordinance forever through all your generations; observe it in the seventh month. ⁴²For seven days you shall live in booths; all native Israelites shall live in booths ⁴³in order that your generation may know that I made the children of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God. ⁴⁴In this way Moses acquainted the Israelites with the appointed festivals of the LORD.

24 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²Order the Israelites to bring you pure oil from crushed olives for the lamp to keep the light continually burning. ³Outside the veil of the Testimony in the meeting tent Aaron shall keep it continually supplied from evening till morning before the LORD; it shall be an everlasting regulation throughout your generations. ⁴He shall continually supply the lamps upon the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD.^t

⁵You will take fine flour and bake it into twelve loaves, each loaf prepared from the fifth of a bushel. ⁶You will place them in two rows, six in each row on the table of pure gold before the LORD. ⁷You will lay pure frankincense on each row to go with the bread^u as a memorial, as an offering to

the LORD by fire. ⁸Regularly each Sabbath day he^v shall arrange it anew before the LORD, an everlasting covenant on the part of the Israelites. ⁹It shall be for Aaron and his sons; they shall eat it in a holy place, because to him it is most holy of the LORD's offerings made by fire, due to Him forever.

¹⁰Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian: among the Israelites, went out and this son of an Israelite woman and an Israelite quarreled in the camp. ¹¹The son of the Israelitish woman blasphemed the Name and cursed; so they brought him to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith, daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan. ¹²They put him in custody awaiting revelation of the LORD's will. ¹³The LORD then said to Moses: ¹⁴Take the blasphemer out of the camp; have all who heard him lay their hands upon his head and the whole congregation shall stone him. ¹⁵To the Israelites you shall say, Whoever curses his God shall be burdened by his load of sin ¹⁶and whoever blasphemes the Name shall certainly be put to death. The whole congregation shall stone him, the stranger as well as the native, in case he blasphemes the Name.^w

¹⁷Whoever wounds a person fatally shall be executed; ¹⁸but he who wounds livestock shall compensate, a life for a life. ¹⁹When a man hurts his neighbor physically, then as he has done so shall it be done to him, ²⁰fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; with the hurt that he has done to a man he shall be hurt. ²¹Whoever kills an animal shall refund it and whoever kills a man shall be executed. ²²Have an identical law for foreigner and native, for I am the LORD your God.^x ²³Moses so spoke to the Israelites; they took the blasphemer outside the camp and stoned him. The chil-

s) Of such branches booths were constructed and to a measure the desert journeys were relived, as our national and religious holidays may, with God in view, become holy days.

t) The lamps were typical of God's revelation through the ages and prophetic of Christ, the Light of the world.

u) The showbread stood for man's acknowledgment of God's care and of communion with Him, made perfect in Christ, the Bread of Life. v) The officiating priest.

w) The man, half Egyptian and half Hebrew, obviously not well trained in Hebrew lore and worship, had spoken the Name insultingly. The Rabbis, when copying the Sacred Writings, put Adonai instead of Jehovah to guard against further abuse of the Name, and so read it in the Services.

x) This law is still in force in our courts and justly; but should not be applied to private relationships.

dren of Israel did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

25 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES on Mount Sinai: ²Speak to the Israelites, and tell them: When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall have a Sabbath rest to the LORD. ³Six years you will sow your acreage; six years you will prune your vineyard and gather in the produce, ⁴but in the seventh year there shall be a restful Sabbath for the land, a rest toward the LORD: you shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.^y ⁵The volunteer growth of your crop you shall not harvest; the grapes of your unpruned vines you must not gather; it will be a year of rest for the land. ⁶The Sabbath produce of the land shall be your nourishment, for you, for your male and female servants, for your hired hands and for the stranger with you. ⁷For your livestock and for the wild beasts in your land all the produce shall be food.^z

⁸You shall count seven weeks of years for you, seven times seven years; the seven weeks of years period shall be 49 years. ⁹On the tenth of the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement you will have the trumpet sounded to broadcast throughout the whole country. ¹⁰You shall consecrate the fiftieth year and PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND UNTO ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF.^a It shall be a jubilee to you. Every one of you shall go back to his own property and each to his family. ¹¹That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you. During it you shall neither sow, nor harvest the volunteer crop, nor gather the grapes from the unpruned vines, ¹²for this is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you; you shall eat from what the field yields.

¹³In this jubilee year every one of you shall return to his property. ¹⁴In case you sell to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor; do not exploit one another. ¹⁵You shall buy from your neighbor according to the number of years after the jubilee and he shall sell to you according to the number of years and crops. ¹⁶The greater the number of years the higher the price and the fewer the number of years the lower the price,^b for the number of crops is being sold. ¹⁷Do not exploit one another but revere God, for I am the LORD your God.^c

¹⁸You shall practice My laws, carefully observe My ordinances and apply them, then you will live securely in the land. ¹⁹The land shall yield its produce; you will eat your fill and dwell in safety. ²⁰If you say, "What shall we eat during the seventh year? See, we may neither sow nor harvest our crop," ²¹I will order My blessing upon you in the sixth year so that it will yield produce for three years. ²²You will sow in the eighth year, but still eat of the old crop. Until the ninth year, till its harvest comes in you will eat of the old.^d

²³No land shall be sold in perpetuity, because the land belongs to Me and you are lodgers and tenants with Me.^e ²⁴For all the land you have, for that land you must allow redemption. ²⁵When your brother is impoverished and sells some of his property, then his nearest relative shall come and buy back what he has sold. ²⁶But if a man is without a redeemer and he himself gains ability to buy it back, ²⁷then let him count the years since its sale and pay back the remaining value to the man to whom he had sold it. ²⁸But if he has not gained enough to buy it back, then what he sold remains in the hands of the one who bought it until the year of jubilee and in the jubilee

y) Land not so rested loses its fertility. Crop rotation helps, pasturing helps more; but Sabbatical rest has proven best, especially when cultivated [Jer. 4:3; Hosea 10:12].

z) Every seventh day recuperation; every seventh year a vacation with food provided for all; every fiftieth year a return of the ancestral estate. Not much chance for fabulous riches or extreme poverty.

a) The capitalized clause is cast around the rim of our Liberty Bell.

b) The number of crops till the next jubilee decided the cash value.

c) God remained the Owner; the Hebrew leased the land from Him. Had the Israelites observed these divine orders, the captivity would never have occurred.

d) It required faith to act on these assurances and few seem to have practised the ordinances completely. e) A theocratic government of the people, with God as Sovereign and as Landowner.

it will be released; he will get his property back.^f

²⁹If a man sells a residence in a walled city, then its redemption right continues for a full year after the sale; the right of redemption shall last a year. ³⁰If it is not redeemed within a full year, then title to a house in a walled city shall go in perpetuity to the buyer and to his descendants; it shall not be released in the jubilee.^g

³¹But houses in unwalled villages shall be considered in the category of country farms; they may be redeemed and shall be redeemed at the jubilee. ³²As for the cities of the Levites, the houses of the cities which they possess the Levites may redeem at any time, ³³and if anyone buys a house from a Levite, the sold house in the city they possess shall be released in the year of jubilee, for the city houses of the Levites are their property among the Israelites.

³⁴The pasture lands that belong to their cities shall not be sold forever.^h

³⁵If your brother becomes poor and unable to meet his obligations to you, then you shall sustain him, foreigner or neighbor, so he may keep alive with you. ³⁶Charge no interest or gain from him, but revere your God so that your brother may keep alive with you. ³⁷Neither lend him money at interest nor give him food for profit. ³⁸I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.ⁱ

³⁹If your brother near you^j gets so poor, he sells himself to you, then do not make him serve you as a slave; ⁴⁰but he shall be with you as a hired hand, as a temporary resident until the year of jubilee. ⁴¹Then he shall leave you, he with his children and go back to his relatives and to his ancestral property. ⁴²Because they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt, they shall not be sold as

slaves, ⁴³neither shall you lord it over him with severity. You shall revere God.^k ⁴⁴Your slaves, male and female whom you shall own, shall be from the nations around you; of them you shall buy male and female slaves. ⁴⁵You may also buy from among the children of the strangers who live among you and from their relatives in your environs who were born in your country; those you may own, ⁴⁶and you may leave them as a legacy to your children after you, so that they become their property, for you will retain them in perpetual servitude. But over your brothers, the children of Israel, you must not lord it with severity.

⁴⁷When a foreigner or a temporary dweller among you grows rich and your brother near him becomes poor and sells himself to the foreigner or to the sojourner or to offspring of a foreign race, ⁴⁸then the one who has sold himself shall retain the right of redemption.^l One of his brothers may buy him free, ⁴⁹or his uncle or his cousin may redeem him, or anyone close kin to him in the family may redeem him, or if his income suffices he may redeem himself. ⁵⁰With his buy he shall count from the year when he was sold to him until the coming year of jubilee and the price of his release shall be according to the number of years, rating his time as that of a hired hand. ⁵¹If many years are still required the price shall be adjusted accordingly in refunding his original cost. ⁵²If but a few years are left till the year of jubilee, then they must come to terms and he shall pay back a corresponding redemption price. ⁵³He shall treat him as a wage earner; make sure he shall not severely lord it over him. ⁵⁴If in these ways he is not redeemed, then he shall go free in the year of jubilee, he and his children with him; ⁵⁵because the children of Israel are servants to

f) Ruth 4:1:12 shows the law of redemption in operation, with Boaz, ancestor of Jesus, as redeemer.
g) As sales transactions were adjusted in view of the number of crops before the next jubilee, the values of city property were not affected by jubilee arrangements.

h) Levites inherited no tribal territory; they were distributed among the eleven tribes to be their teachers; his house was the Levite's only property. To remain in the family it must be returned at jubilee.

i) Christians might well observe these injunctions, specially those related to interest on borrowed money and on sales without profit, known scripturally as usury.

j) Brother, not because of the same father or mother, but of the same Hebrew nation.

k) To be an Israelite and to be a slave were incompatible terms; for Israel was God's people.

l) No jubilee availed for their non-Hebrew slaves and such slavery was allowed.

Me; My servants they are whom I led out of the land of Egypt.^m I am the LORD your God.

26 YOU SHALL NEITHER MAKE idols for yourselves nor set up a carved image or a devoted pillar, nor erect for yourselves a sculptured stone for worship in your land, for I am the LORD your God. ²You shall observe My Sabbaths and revere My sanctuary; I am the LORD. ³If you walk by My laws and obey My orders so as to practice them, ⁴then I will grant you your rains in their season; the land shall yield its produce and the trees shall bear their fruit. ⁵Your threshing shall last until vintage time and your vintage until sowing time; you shall eat your food to the full and live in your land safely. ⁶I will grant peace in the land so that you will lie down without anyone to frighten you. I will clear the land of ferocious beasts and no sword shall move through your country. ⁷I will chase your enemies who shall fall before you by the sword; ⁸five of you shall chase a hundred and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword. ⁹I shall be leaning toward you, rendering you fruitful and numerous and My covenant with you I will confirm.ⁿ ¹⁰You shall eat what had long been stored, then clear it out for the new. ¹¹I will set My dwelling among you and My soul will not reject you; ¹²I will be walking in your midst;^o I will be your God and you will be My people. ¹³I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, so that you should be slaves no longer; I have burst the thongs of your yoke and made you walk erect.^p

¹⁴But if you will not listen to Me

and will not practice all these commandments; ¹⁵if you despise My laws; if your soul abhors My injunctions, so that you fail to put all My orders into practice and break My covenant, ¹⁶then I will do this to you — I will visit you with terror, with tuberculosis and burning fever that destroys the eye and saps the life. You will sow vainly, for your enemies will eat it. ¹⁷I will set My face against you and you will be beaten when facing your enemies. Your haters will lord it over you.^q You will flee when no one pursues you. ¹⁸If nevertheless you will not listen to Me, I will go on disciplining you sevenfold on account of your sins. ¹⁹I will break down the pride of your might; I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as brass. ²⁰You will then apply your strength uselessly, for neither will your land produce a crop nor will the trees of the land bear fruit.^r

²¹If you behave contrary to Me, unwilling to listen to Me, then I will plague you according to your sins seven times worse. ²²I will unleash among you the wild beasts, which shall bereave you of your children, destroy your livestock and decimate your number so that your roads shall be deserted. ²³And if by this discipline you do not turn to Me, but still walk adversely to Me, ²⁴then I will personally walk adversely to you and I Myself shall punish you sevenfold for your sins. ²⁵I will bring a sword upon you that shall administer retribution for the Covenant.^s When you have concentrated within your cities I will send pestilence among you and you will be delivered into the power of the enemy. ²⁶When I have broken your staff of bread^t then ten women shall bake your loaves in a single oven and they will return you

m) Hebrews who within their country became slaves to non-Hebrews, were released at the jubilee. Redeeming and buying back were the same; always redemption prefigured our LORD's redemptive work.

n) Confirmation of His promise to Abraham [Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:5,6; 18:18; 22:17,18.]

o) Particularly by His Presence, the Shekinah, between the cherubim above the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies.

p) As slaves in Egypt their backs had been bent; like oxen in the yoke they had pulled and carried burdens. God made them walk erect, as He had man walk from the start.

q) Which has been true wherever God has been forsaken.

r) The purpose of discipline is improved behavior, usually upon some measure of repentance. Forgiveness on God's part follows repentance on our part.

s) A covenant always involves more than one. God and Israel had pledged mutual loyalty.

t) Usually bread means any food, but here it means oven-baked flour as with us, of which there would not be enough.

loaves weighed out; you will eat and not be satisfied.

²⁷If in spite of all this you do not listen to Me, but behave in opposition to Me, ²⁸then I will with indignation take measures against you; I will personally punish you sevenfold for your sins. ²⁹You shall eat the flesh of your sons; you shall also eat the flesh of your daughters.^u ³⁰I will ruin your high places and tear up your incense altars. I will pile your corpses on the breakage of your idols and My soul shall loathe you. ³¹Your cities I will turn into ruins; your chapels I will lay waste and I will no longer smell your pleasant odors. ³²I will personally so thoroughly lay waste the land, that your enemies who settle in it shall be astonished at it. ³³But you I will disperse among the nations, unsheathing the sword after you. Your land shall be desert and your cities ruins.

³⁴Then shall the land enjoy its Sabbaths, during the period while the land lies waste and you live in the enemies' land. Then the land shall rest and enjoy its Sabbaths.^v ³⁵During the whole period of its desolation it shall rest, a rest which it did not get on your Sabbaths when you lived in it. ³⁶Into the hearts of your survivors I will send faintness, so that the sound of a shaken leaf will startle them and they will flee as when they take flight from the sword; they shall fall when none is after them. ³⁷They shall stumble over each other as if facing a sword when none is pursuing and you will not be able to stand up to your enemies. ³⁸You shall perish among the nations and the land of your enemies shall absorb you. ³⁹Those of you who survive shall pine away in the land of your enemies because of their guilt, and because of the guilt of their fathers,^w too, they shall like them, pine away.

⁴⁰But if they acknowledge their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, the treason they perpetrated against Me; ⁴¹also that they set themselves

against Me so that I opposed them and brought them into their enemies' country — if now their uncircumcised heart is humbled; if they accept the punishment for their sins, ⁴²then I will remember My covenant with Jacob; My covenant also with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. ⁴³However, the land shall be left behind by them and shall enjoy its Sabbaths while in their absence it lies desolate, and they must accept the penalty for their sins, because they despised My ordinances and their souls abhorred My laws. ⁴⁴Yet even when they are in the land of their enemies I will not cast them off, neither will I abhor them so as to annihilate them completely and to break My covenant with them, for I am the LORD your God. ⁴⁵On their behalf I will remember^x My covenant with their forefathers; whom in sight of the nations I brought out of the land of Egypt to be their God. I am the LORD.

⁴⁶These are the statutes, the ordinances and the laws which the LORD established between Him and the children of Israel on Mount Sinai by the ministry of Moses.

27 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES:

²Speak to the Israelites; say to them: When one sets apart a vowed offering to the LORD that involves the evaluating of a person, ³then your estimate of a male from 20 to 60 years of age shall be 50 dollars by sanctuary standards ⁴and the evaluation of a female, 30 dollars. ⁵From 5 to 20 the evaluation of a male shall be 20 dollars and of a female, 10. ⁶From a month to 5 years the estimate shall be 5 dollars for the male and 3 dollars for the female. ⁷From 60 years up the estimate shall be 15 dollars for the male and 10 for the female. ⁸But if he is too poor to pay the evaluation, then he shall present himself to the priest and the priest shall evaluate him in propor-

u) This plumbs the depths of misery; it could not be worse.

v) In spite of their disobedience God provided sabbatical rest for the land.

w) As early as the days of the Judges divine punishments came; they repented, were forgiven and delivered; but the next generation backslid again.

x) God never goes back on covenant or promise and He requires the same from us.

tion to the ability of him who vowed.⁷

⁹If it is cattle of which they bring the LORD a sacrifice, then all of it that they give to the LORD shall be holy. ¹⁰They shall not replace it or exchange it, good for bad or bad for good, and if one animal is exchanged for another then this one as well as the other shall be dedicated. ¹¹If it is an unclean animal, such as is not brought to the LORD for an offering, then they shall present that animal to the priest. ¹²The priest shall estimate its value, whether good or bad, and according as you, the priest,² value it, so shall it be. ¹³If the man wants to buy it back, he shall add one fifth to its value.^a

¹⁴When a man dedicates his house to be set apart for the LORD, the priest shall evaluate it, whether good or bad, and as the priest values it, so shall it stand. ¹⁵If he who set it apart, wants to buy back his house, then he shall add one fifth to your estimate and it shall be his.

¹⁶When a man sets apart to the LORD a field he owns, then your estimate of it shall be according to the amount of seed required,^b ten bushels of barley means fifty silver dollars. ¹⁷If he dedicated his field from the year of jubilee on, then it shall start at your full estimate, ¹⁸but if he dedicates his field after the jubilee, then the priest shall compute the value in proportion to the years remaining till the next jubilee and so deduct from the evaluation. ¹⁹If the owner of the field wants to buy it back, then he shall add one fifth of the value in money to redeem it and it remains his. ²⁰If he does not wish to buy back the field, or has sold the field to another man, then it cannot be redeemed anymore ²¹and the field shall in the jubilee year, when it comes free, be holy to the LORD as a field set apart to Him. It shall be the priest's property.

²²If he dedicates to the LORD a field he bought, a field that is not his property by inheritance, ²³then the priest shall compute to him its value in view of the year of jubilee and on that day he shall give the estimated value as holy to the LORD. ²⁴In the year of jubilee the field returns from him who bought it to the original owner. ²⁵All estimates shall be by sanctuary silver standards; the dollar shall equal ten dimes.^c

²⁶The first-born of livestock, whether cattle or sheep, belongs to the LORD; it shall not be dedicated.^d ²⁷But if it is an unclean animal, then he shall redeem it at the estimated price and add a fifth to it, or if it is not bought back then it shall be sold at your estimate.

²⁸However, nothing devoted, nothing that a man has set apart to the LORD of everything he has, be it man or animal or inherited land, shall be sold or redeemed. Everything devoted is most holy to the LORD.

²⁹Among people no one who is under human doom can be bought off; he must certainly be executed.

³⁰All the tithe of the land, of the grain of the field and of the fruit of the trees is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD. ³¹If a man wants to buy any of his tithes, he must add its fifth to it. ³²The whole tithe of cattle and flocks, every tenth animal that passes under the rod shall be holy to the LORD.^e ³³He shall not investigate whether it is good or bad; he shall make no exchanges. If he exchanges one for another then both animals shall be dedicated; it shall not be redeemed.

³⁴These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses at Mt. Sinai for the children of Israel.

^y) Previous regulations do not cover or touch these voluntary vows, yet, once made, they should be fully and heartily carried out. But children, vowed by their parents or any other persons not of the tribe of Levi, were not acceptable for sacred service, hence the need of evaluation.

^z) Instructions are directed to the priests, for they must handle all offerings.

^b) The fifth added served to keep worshipers from vowing hastily.

^c) The acreage that required 10 bushels of barley to be sown on it would be worth 50 silver dollars. ^d) It is risky to compare our money values with those of the Hebrews, but as modern Bible readers we need these items also translated into our own terms.

^e) What has already been divinely appointed as being the LORD'S cannot be vowed to Him.

^f) Sheep were counted one by one as they passed under the shepherd's staff on entering the fold.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS^a

April/May, 1445 B.C.

1 ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE SECOND month, in the second year after Israel's migration from Egypt, the LORD spoke with Moses in the wilderness of Sinai as he was in the meeting tent^b saying: ²Take a census^c of the entire assembly of the people of Israel, according to their families and clans, name by name; and get a record of every male ³from 20 years of age and upward, all who are subject to military service in the nation. You and Aaron conscript them according to their respective armies. ⁴Moreover there shall be a man, the leader of his clan, from each tribe to assist you. ⁵The names of these assistants are: from Reuben, Elizur the son of Shedeur; ⁶from Simeon, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; ⁷from Judah, Nahshon the son of Amminadab; ⁸from Issachar, Nethaneel the son of Zuar; ⁹from Zebulun, Eliab the son of Helon; ¹⁰from the people of Joseph, first from Ephraim, Elishama the son of Ammihud; then from Manasseh, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; ¹¹from Benjamin, Abidan the son of Gideoni; ¹²from Dan, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; ¹³from Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochran; ¹⁴from Gad, Eliasaph the son of Deuel; ¹⁵and from Naphtali, Ahira the son of Enan. ¹⁶These are the national representatives, princes of their fathers' tribes

and chiefs of the family divisions of Israel.

¹⁷So Moses and Aaron took these men who were designated by name, ¹⁸and when they had summoned the entire congregation on the first day of the second month, they registered them by ancestry according to their clans, name by name, from 20 years of age and upward ¹⁹in the way the LORD had directed Moses. In this manner Moses conscripted them in the wilderness of Sinai.

²⁰As for the descendants of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward, who were subject to military service; ²¹those who were conscripted of the tribe of Reuben totaled 46,500.

²²Of the descendants of Simeon, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward who were subject to military service, ²³those who were conscripted of the tribe of Simeon totaled 59,300. ²⁴Of the descendants of Gad, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old and upward, who were subject to military service; ²⁵those who

^a) This Book is called "Numbers" because of the two censuses it records. The Hebrew name is "in the wilderness," a key phrase in the opening verse. Numbers records the history of Israel from their stay at Mount Sinai to their arrival at the east bank of the Jordan. Chapters 1-10:10 continue the Sinaitic legislation and the rest takes up the journeyings. Instructions appear in this latter portion of the book, the last few chapters containing directions for the conquest and settlement of Canaan. ^b) The meeting place of God and man. ^c) A military census.

were conscripted of Gad totaled 45,650.

²⁰Of the descendants of Judah, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward, who were subject to military service; ²⁷those who were conscripted of Judah totaled 74,600.

²⁸Of the descendants of Issachar, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old and upward, who were subject to military service; ²⁹those who were conscripted of the tribe of Issachar totaled 54,400.

³⁰Of the descendants of Zebulun their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward, who were subject to military service; ³¹those who were conscripted of the tribe of Zebulun totaled 57,400.

³²Of the descendants of Joseph, of the sons of Ephraim, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward, who were subject to military service; ³³those who were conscripted of the tribe of Ephraim totaled 40,500.

³⁴Of the sons of Manasseh, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years old upward, who were subject to military service; ³⁵those who were conscripted of the tribe of Manasseh totaled 32,200.

³⁶Of the descendants of Benjamin their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years upward, who were subject to military service; ³⁷those who were conscripted of the tribe of Benjamin totaled 35,400.

³⁸Of the descendants of Dan their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name

by name, all the males from 20 years upward who were subject to military training; ³⁹those who were conscripted of the tribe of Dan totaled 62,700.

⁴⁰Of the descendants of Asher, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years upward who were subject to military training; ⁴¹those who were conscripted of the tribe of Asher totaled 41,500.

⁴²Of the descendants of Naphtali, their genealogical registration went according to their families and clans, name by name, all the males from 20 years of age and upward who were subject to military service. ⁴³Those who were conscripted of the tribe of Naphtali totaled 53,400.

⁴⁴These are the people who were conscripted by Moses and Aaron and the princes of Israel, those twelve men who came each from his respective family. ⁴⁵The grand total of those who were conscripted of the people of Israel by their families, from twenty years of age and upward who were subject to military service in the nation, ⁴⁶was 603,550.

⁴⁷The Levites, however, in their tribal lineage, were not included in this census, ⁴⁸because the LORD had instructed Moses: ⁴⁹As for the tribe of Levi, do not conscript them^d or take their census with the other people in Israel. ⁵⁰Rather, see that you put them in charge of the Dwelling that contains the Testimony, its furniture and all its belongings; they shall carry it with all its equipment, take care of it, and camp around it. ⁵¹When it is time for the Dwelling to be moved, the Levites shall dismantle it, and when it encamps they shall set it up; but any layman^e who approaches it shall be executed.^f ⁵²The people of Israel shall camp in their assigned positions under their standards, according to their armies; ⁵³but the Levites shall camp around the Dwelling that contains the Testimony to avert any indignation against the assembly of the people.

d) They were to be the spiritual warriors of the LORD, a more important position.

e) Any unauthorized persons, for even the Levites were restricted in their association with the tabernacle. See ch. 16, esp. vs. 40.

f) This is the first mention of the majestic sacredness of the LORD's Dwelling.

Moreover, the Levites shall take complete charge of this structure. ⁵⁴So the people of Israel acted in accordance with all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

1445 B.C.

2 THE LORD ALSO DIRECTED MOSES and Aaron: ²The people of Israel are to camp around the tent of meeting^g though at a distance,^h each under his respective standard and by their clans' ensigns. ³Those under the standard of the division of Judah are to camp according to their armies on the east side toward the sunrise. The prince of Judah's descendants is Nahshonⁱ the son of Amminadab, ⁴and his army made up of their conscriptees totals 74,600. ⁵Camping beside him shall be the tribe of Issachar, whose prince is Nethaneel the son of Zuar, ⁶whose conscript army totals 54,400. ⁷Next is the tribe of Zebulun, their prince being Eliab the son of Helon; ⁸his army, 57,400. ⁹The total number that were conscripted of Judah's divisions is 186,400 by their respective armies; they are to be the first to break camp and march.^j ¹⁰In like manner, on the south side shall be the standard of the division of Reuben according to their armies. The prince of Reuben's descendants is Elizur the son of She-deur; ¹¹his army, 46,500. ¹²Camping beside him shall be the tribe of Simeon, their prince, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai; ¹³his army, 59,300; ¹⁴then the tribe of Gad; their prince, Eliasaph the son of Reuel; ¹⁵his army, 45,650. ¹⁶The total number that were conscripted of Reuben's divisions is 151,450 by their respective armies; they are to break camp and march second. ¹⁷Then the tent of meeting with the ranks of the Levites is to move forward in the central position. As they camp, so shall they march, each in his own position, under the standards.

¹⁸To the west shall be the standard of the division of Ephraim according to

their armies. The prince of Ephraim's descendants is Elishama the son of Ammihud, ¹⁹and his army made up of their conscriptees totals 40,500. ²⁰Camping beside him shall be the tribe of Manasseh, their prince being Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur; ²¹his army, 32,200; ²²then the tribe of Benjamin; their prince, Abidan the son of Gideoni; ²³his army, 35,400. ²⁴The total number that were conscripted of Ephraim's divisions is 108,100 according to their respective armies. They are to break camp and march third.

²⁵In like manner on the north side shall be the standard of the division of Dan according to their armies. The prince of Dan's descendants is Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai; ²⁶his army 62,700. ²⁷Camping beside him shall be the tribe of Asher; their prince, Pagie; the son of Ocran; ²⁸his army, 41,500; ²⁹Then the tribe of Naphtali; their prince, Ahira the son of Enan; ³⁰his army, 53,400. ³¹The total number of those conscripted of Dan's divisions is 157,600. Under their standards they are to break camp and bring up the rear.^k

³²The foregoing is a list of those who were conscripted of the divisions of Israel according to their respective armies, the grand total being 603,550.

³³The Levites, however, were not conscripted with the rest of the people of Israel since the LORD had commanded Moses otherwise.^l ³⁴So the people of Israel complied with all the LORD's directions to Moses; as they encamped under their standards, so they broke camp and marched, each with his respective family and clan.

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3 THIS IS THE GENEALOGICAL REGISTER of Aaron and Moses at the time when the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. ²The names of Aaron's sons are Nadab the oldest, then Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, ³all of them the sons of Aaron and anointed priests.

g) The Dwelling was always to occupy the central position, whether they were camping or trekking [See Ps. 46:5]. h) See Josh. 3:4.

i) He is listed with Christ's genealogy in Matt. 1:4, and appears to have been the most responsible division commander. j) This began the national fulfilment of the prophecy in Gen. 49:8-12.

k) The ancestors of these tribes were Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Jacob by his concubine, Bilhah. Asher was Jacob's son by Zilpah. This seems the main reason they were kept in the rear.

l) See ch. 1:47ff.

whom he installed in priestly office. ⁴Nadab and Abihu, however, died in the LORD's presence when they offered improper fire^m before Him in the wilderness of Sinai. They had no children; consequently, Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during the lifetime of Aaron their father.

⁵Summon the tribe of Levi, the LORD instructed Moses, ⁶and assign them to Aaron the priest that they may assist him; ⁷they shall discharge the obligations imposed by him and the duties connected with the entire assembly before the meeting tent as attendants upon the Dwelling. ⁸They shall be in charge of all the furnishings of the meeting tent and attend to Israel's service of maintaining the work of the Dwelling. ⁹Therefore, assign the men of Levi, yes, everyone of them as dedicated from among the people of Israel, ¹⁰to Aaron and his sons. As for the latter, ordain them that they may attend to their priestly duties, because anyone else who makes such attempts shall be executed. ¹¹For I, continued the LORD to Moses, ¹²even I, have adopted the men of Levi from among the people of Israel as a substitute for all those who are the first to be born of their mothers throughout the nation.ⁿ The men of Levi shall be Mine ¹³on the basis that all the first-born belong to Me; you remember it was when I killed all the first-born in the land of Egypt that I set apart for Myself this similar group in Israel, both man and beast;^o therefore, they belong to Me. I am Jehovah.

¹⁴The LORD further directed Moses in the wilderness of Sinai: ¹⁵Take a census of the descendants of Levi according to their clans and families, including every male a month or more old. ¹⁶Moses therefore numbered them at the LORD's command as he was directed. ¹⁷These are Levi's sons by name: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; ¹⁸and these are the names of Gershon's

sons by families: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹Those of Kohath by families were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, ²⁰and those of Merari by families: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their clans.

²¹The clan of Gershon is comprised of the families of Libni and Shimei, these two making up the clan; ²²their number, all the males a month or more old, totaled 7,500. ²³These families of Gershon were to camp behind the tabernacle on the west side, ²⁴with Eliasaph the son of Lael as their clan leader. ²⁵The men were responsible for the following articles in connection with the meeting tent: the Dwelling and the tent, particularly its covering and the curtain at its entrance, ²⁶the hangings and the door curtain of the court which is around the Dwelling, the altar and the ropes for all the work connected with the tent.

²⁷The clan of Kohath consists of the families of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, these four making up the clan; their enrollment, ²⁸likewise reckoned from all the males a month or more old, amounted to 8,600. They were the custodians for the sanctuary. ²⁹These families of Kohath were to camp by the south side of the tabernacle ³⁰with Elizaphan the son of Uzziel as the clan leader of their families.

³¹Specifically, they were in charge of the Ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary used in the service, ³²the veil,^p and all the work entailed with them. Eleazar the son of Aaron, who was the chief leader of the Levites, had the oversight of these sanctuary attendants.

³³The clan of Merari consists of the families of Mahli and Mushi, these two making up the Merari clan; ³⁴their number, all the males a month or more old, totaled 6,200. ³⁵The leader of this clan with its families was Zuriel the

m) An offering of incense which had not been made in the prescribed manner [Lev. 10:1,2]. The Lord's warning [Lev. 10:8-11] against wine or strong drink suggests that their lack of reverence had been due to drinking.

n) By this arrangement, through which the care of the service at the sanctuary became the full-time occupation of one tribe, a more orderly and efficient performance of this service was obtained than could have been rendered by the first-born from all the tribes.

o) See Ex. 13:1,2. p) Between the Holy of Holies and the holy place.

son of Abihail; they were to camp by the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶The men of Merari had charge of the frames of the Dwelling, its bars, pillars, sockets, all the accessories, and the work connected with them; ³⁷also the pillars of the surrounding court with their sockets, pegs and ropes.

³⁸Finally, those who were to camp in front of the tabernacle — that is, to the east of the meeting tent^q — were Moses and Aaron and his sons, who had complete charge of the sanctuary for the service of the people of Israel, and any layman who approached too near was to be executed. ³⁹The grand total of those who were enrolled by families from Levi by Moses and Aaron in accord with the LORD's command — namely, all the males a month or more old — was 22,000.

⁴⁰The LORD further directed Moses: Take a census of all the first-born males a month or more old in the nation of Israel to determine how many there are. ⁴¹Then as a substitute for these first-born, take the men of Levi for Me — I am the LORD — and Levi's cattle in place of all the first-born cattle belonging to the people. ⁴²Moses therefore took the number of all the first-born in the nation of Israel as the LORD had directed, ⁴³and this prescribed group totaled 22,273.^r ⁴⁴The LORD then said to Moses: ⁴⁵Take now the men of Levi in place of all the first-born in the nation of Israel, likewise Levi's cattle for their cattle so that the men of Levi may be Mine. I am Jehovah. ⁴⁶The ransoms which you are to require from the 273 — that is, from the first-born in Israel over and above the men of Levi — ⁴⁷shall be five dollars^s a head, the standard being the dollar of the sanctuary where twenty

nickels^t make a dollar. ⁴⁸Then give the ransom silver from this excess group to Aaron and his sons. ⁴⁹Accordingly, Moses collected the silver for the redemption from those whose number exceeded the total redeemed by the Levites, ⁵⁰and the precious metal which he received from these firstborn in Israel amounted to 1,365 sanctuary dollars. ⁵¹Then at the LORD's command, he gave this ransom payment from the ransomed to Aaron and his sons as the LORD had ordered him.

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4 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND AARON: ²Take a census of the men of Kohath from among the descendants of Levi according to their families and clans, ³including those from the age of 30 up to those who are 50, all who qualify to enter the service^u to do the work in the meeting tent. ⁴Their responsibilities in this tent shall be in connection with the most holy things. ⁵When it is time to break camp, Aaron and his sons shall enter, take down the covering veil,^v and with it cover the Ark that contains the testimonial evidence. ⁶Over this they shall place a covering of treated leather,^w spread an all-violet cloth on top of that,^x and then adjust^y the carrying poles. ⁷They shall also cover the table of the Presence with a violet cloth upon which shall be placed the dishes, the spoons, the bowls, and the jars for the libation, and the perpetual bread shall also be on it. ⁸Next, they shall spread over them a crimson cloth, wrap it all with a covering of treated leather and insert the carrying poles. ⁹They shall then take a violet cloth and cover the lampstand of light, its lamps, snuffers, and trays, and all the oil containers from which they service it. ¹⁰Afterwards

q) This was the most important side, as it guarded the entrance to the Dwelling.

r) All the first-born prior to the exodus had already been redeemed by the paschal lamb [Ex. 12:22,23]; therefore, the command for consecration of the first-born in Ex. 13:2 must refer to the first-born from that time forward. Vss. 11-13 substantiate this conclusion.

s) Heb. — "shekel" — a weight, not a coin. It was made of silver, weighed about two-fifths of an ounce, and would be worth about one dollar today. t) Heb. — "gerah" — equal to our nickel.

u) This word in the Hebrew means military service. The spiritual battle in which the men of Levi were engaged was of great consequence.

v) Which separated the holy place from the most holy place, see Ex. 26:31-35.

w) Which served as a waterproof covering for the articles in the tabernacle.

x) This special outer covering was to distinguish the Ark from the remainder of the equipment, as it was the LORD's glory throne.

y) The carrying poles of the Ark were not to be removed [Ex. 25:15].

they shall put it and all its accessories in a wrapping of treated leather and place it on a carrying frame. ¹¹They shall spread a violet cloth over the golden altar, wrap this with a covering of treated leather, and insert its carrying poles. ¹²They shall then take all the ministering utensils used in the service of the sanctuary, wrap them first in a violet cloth and next with a covering of treated leather, and place them on the carrying frame.

¹³After cleaning the ashes out of the altar, they shall spread a reddish-purple cloth over it ¹⁴and place on this all the utensils that are used in connection with it; namely, the fire pans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the utensils of the altar. Over this they shall place a wrapping of treated leather and then insert the carrying poles. ¹⁵Finally, after Aaron and his sons have finished packing the sanctuary and all its contents, and the camp is starting to move on, the men of Kohath shall come to carry them; they must not, however, touch the holy things, else they die.² The foregoing constitute the load of the meeting tent for the men of Kohath. ¹⁶Now Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, shall attend to the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the continual meal offering, and the anointing oil; moreover, he shall be in charge of the entire Dwelling and everything that is in it, both the sanctuary and its equipment.

¹⁷The LORD further cautioned Moses and Aaron: ¹⁸Do not destroy the branch of the Kohath families from among Levi; ¹⁹but do this for them in order that they may live and not die when they approach the most holy things: Let Aaron and his sons enter and assign each individual his task and his particular load. ²⁰They are not, however, to come in to look at the sanctuary, even for a moment, else they will be killed.

²¹The LORD further said to Moses: ²²Take a census, too, of the men of Gershon, according to their clans and families, ²³and enroll those between the ages of 30 and 50, that is, all who

qualify to enter the service for work in the meeting tent. ²⁴The following shall be the duties of the families of Gershon in serving and carrying: ²⁵They shall carry the curtains of the Dwelling; the meeting tent with its covering; the covering of treated leather which goes over that, and the curtain for its entrance; ²⁶the hangings of the court, and the door curtain for the gate of the court which surrounds the tabernacle and the altar; their ropes, and all the accessories for their use. In addition, they are to do everything that has to be done in connection with these articles. ²⁷All these duties of the men of Gershon, both in total transport and labor, shall be under the supervision of Aaron and his sons; you shall assign to them everything that they are to carry. ²⁸This is the work of the families of Gershon in connection with the tent of meeting; their tasks shall be under the immediate supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest.

²⁹As for the men of Merari, you are to enroll them according to their families and clans, ³⁰those who are between the ages of 30 and 50, all who qualify to enter the service for work in the tent of meeting. ³¹Specifically, these are the things which they must carry as all their work in this tent: The Boards of the tabernacle and its bars, pillars and pedestals; ³²the pillars of the surrounding court and their pedestals, pegs and ropes, with all their accessories and servicing. Moreover, you leaders point out to each the articles which he is to carry. ³³This is the work of the families of Merari with regard to all their tasks in the meeting tent; all this is under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest.

³⁴So Moses, Aaron and the leaders of the congregation enrolled the men of Kohath according to their families and clans, ³⁵all those between the ages of 30 and 50 who were qualified to enter the service for work in the meeting tent. ³⁶The total number of their appointees according to their families was 2,750. ³⁷These were enrolled from the families of Kohath, everyone who

² This was later exemplified in the case of Uzzah, killed for touching the Ark [II Sam. 6:6,7].

worked in the meeting tent, whom Moses and Aaron appointed at the LORD's command through Moses.

³⁸Those enrolled from the men of Gershon in the same manner — by family and clan and from those ³⁹between the ages of 30 and 50 — for similar service in the meeting tent ⁴⁰numbered, according to their families, 2,630. ⁴¹These are the appointees from the families of Gershon: everyone who was to work in the meeting tent, those whom Moses and Aaron commissioned under the LORD's direction.

⁴²Those who were likewise enrolled from the men of Merari — by family and clan and ⁴³from those between the ages of 30 and 50 for similar service in the meeting tent numbered, ⁴⁴according to their families, 3,200. ⁴⁵These appointees from the families of Merari were likewise commissioned by Moses and Aaron at the LORD's command through Moses. ⁴⁶The whole enrollment of the men of Levi obtained by Moses, Aaron and the leaders of Israel, when they numbered them by their families and clans, ⁴⁸totaled 8,580. ⁴⁷This group was made up of all those between the ages of 30 and 50 who were appointed to enter the service for work and burden bearing in the tent of meeting. ⁴⁹At the LORD's command they were each assigned their respective duties and burdens; and their enrollment was accomplished after the manner in which the LORD had instructed Moses.

5 FURTHERMORE THE LORD TOLD Moses: ²Order the people of Israel to remove from the camp every leper and everyone who has an emission or is defiled by touching a corpse;^a ³whether male or female, they shall be expelled from and sent outside the camp, because they are not to defile their camp where I dwell among them. ⁴The people of Israel did so and

evicted them from the camp, doing it as the LORD had directed Moses.

⁵The LORD also said to Moses: ⁶Tell the people of Israel, If a man or a woman commits any of the crimes of mankind,^b thus dealing unfaithfully with the LORD, then that person is guilty. ⁷He must then confess the crime which he has committed, make full restitution for his wrongdoing with one fifth added, and restore it to the person wronged.^c ⁸But if the man has no next of kin to whom restitution can be made,^d this reparation, now due to the LORD, shall go for the priest; though it is not to be confused with the ram for atonement with which complete satisfaction is to be made in his behalf. ⁹Moreover, every offering of all the sacred gifts presented by the people of Israel^e shall belong to the priest. ¹⁰The sacred gifts of every man shall belong to him; whatever any man gives to the priest shall be his.

¹¹The LORD also said to Moses: ¹²Speak to the Israelites and tell them, Any man whose wife shall turn aside and be unfaithful to him ¹³so that another man has intercourse with her, even though the affair be concealed from the eyes of her husband and she be undetected though defiled, there being no witness against her since she was not caught in the act; ¹⁴still, if he becomes suspicious and is jealous of his wife because she really is defiled, or if the same doubts come to his mind even though she has not defiled herself, either way, ¹⁵the man shall bring his wife to the priest along with an offering for her — three and one-half quarts of barley flour. He is not, however, to pour oil on it or place incense on it, since it is an offering of suspicion, one for remembering, intended to bring sin to mind.

¹⁶The priest shall then bring her and present her before the LORD. ¹⁷In addition, he shall take holy water in a clay jar, pick up some dust from off

a) The period and conditions of their eviction varied; for leprosy see Lev. 13; for emission, Lev. 15:2ff., and for defilement, Num. 19:11ff.

b) Crimes involving another man's property [Lev. 6:2,3]. c) For details, see Lev. 6:4,5.

d) In case the person wronged is dead.

e) Not sacrifices but offerings of dedication, first fruits, etc.

the floor of the tabernacle, and put it in the water. ¹⁸Then after placing the woman before the LORD^f he shall let her hair down, place in her hands the offering for remembering — the one of suspicion — and hold in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse. ¹⁹Next, the priest shall make her take an oath saying to her, "If a man has not had intercourse with you and you have not had sexual relations with other than your husband, then be free from the effects of this bitter water which brings a curse. ²⁰But if you have turned to another in place of your husband, if you have defiled yourself, and some man besides your husband has lain with you" — ²¹the priest shall make the woman swear with an oath of adjuration and continue — "then may the LORD make you a curse and an oath^g among your people by making your thighs shrivel and your abdomen swell: ²²this curse-bringing water shall enter your stomach, making your abdomen swell and your thighs shrivel." "Let it be so," she shall acknowledge; "Let it be so."

²³The priest shall then write these curses in the book and wash them off in the bitter water,^h ²⁴and when he gives the woman this water, bitter with curses, to drink, it shall cause bitter pain upon entering her system. ²⁵Meanwhile, the priest shall take the meal offering of suspicion from her hand and move it back and forth before the LORD bringing it to the altar. ²⁶Moreover, he shall take a handful of it as a memorial portion and burn it on the altar,ⁱ after which he shall make the woman drink the water. ²⁷Once he has given her the water to drink, it shall be that if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, the bitter water which brings the curse, having entered her system, will cause her abdomen to swell and her thighs to shrivel; she shall become

a curse among her people. ²⁸If, however, she has not defiled herself, but is pure, she will remain unharmed and bear children. ²⁹This is the law of jealous suspicion in case a wife is unfaithful to her husband and is defiled. ³⁰When a man gets doubts in his mind and becomes jealous of his wife, then he shall similarly present her before the LORD and the priest shall deal with her according to this entire law. ³¹Thus the husband shall be innocent of any sin and the wife shall pay for her crime.

6 THE LORD FURTHER SAID TO MOSES: ²Tell the people of Israel, If a man or woman shall do the signal act of making the vow of a Nazarite—namely, to live in consecration to the LORD — ³he must abstain from wine and intoxicating drink.^j He must not drink the vinegar of wine nor strong drink, nor any kind of grape juice; neither may he eat fresh or dried grapes. ⁴During the entire period of his consecration, he must not eat anything which is prepared from the grapevine, not even the seeds and skins.^k ⁵Furthermore, during the entire period of his consecration vow, no razor must be used on his head; he is to be holy, allowing the locks of hair on his head to grow until the period during which he lives as a Nazarite to the LORD is completed.^l ⁶During this same period he must not come near a dead body; ⁷he may not even render himself unclean by his father, mother, brother, or sister when they die, because his consecration to God is upon his head. ⁸During his entire period as a Nazarite he must be holy to the LORD.

⁹If someone should die suddenly in his presence and he defile his consecrated head, then he must shave it on his purification day; the seventh day he shall shave it completely. ¹⁰On the eighth day he must bring either two

f) In front of the altar. g) For an example of a person becoming an oath or curse, see Jer. 29:22. h) In doing this, the curse was symbolically imparted to the water; moreover, God gave it the power to act injuriously upon a guilty person, an innocent party suffering no ill effects, the awareness of innocence or of guilt cooperating to make this an effective lie detector.

i) Upon the Lord's acceptance of this offering He brought to remembrance the sin of a guilty party, thus imparting the curse to the water. j) Consecration and self-denial cannot be separated.

k) The fruit of the vine stood for all sensual enjoyments.

l) The long hair symbolized dedication of all the forces of his nature, undiminished, to the LORD.

turtle doves or two young pigeons to the priest at the door of the meeting tent, ¹¹whereupon the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt-offering, that he might make atonement for him, since he sinned in the matter of the corpse. ¹²He shall anew dedicate his head on that day, that he might live as a Nazarite to the LORD during the period of his consecration. He must also bring a year-old lamb for a guilt-offering, for the previous days cannot be counted because his consecration was rendered unclean.

¹³Now this is the procedure of the Nazarite for the day on which his consecration period is completed: After he has been brought to the door of the meeting tent, ¹⁴he is to present his offering to the LORD; namely, a flawless year-old male lamb for a burnt-offering, a flawless year-old lamb for a sin-offering, a spotless ram for a peace offering, ¹⁵and a basket of unleavened bread — cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers daubed with oil — together with their meal offering and libations.^m ¹⁶The priest shall present these before the LORD and offer his sin-offering and burnt-offering. ¹⁷The ram he shall offer as a sacrifice of peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; he shall also offer its meal-offering and libation.

¹⁸The Nazarite shall then shave his dedicated head at the door of the meeting tent, take this hair and put it in the fire which is under the peace-offering sacrifice. ¹⁹The priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram along with an unleavened cake and wafer from the basket and put them in the hands of the Nazarite after he has shaved himself of the hair of his consecration. ²⁰The priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD; they are to be a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast of the wave-offering and the shoulder of the heave-offering.ⁿ After that, the Nazarite may drink wine. ²¹This is the law of the Nazarite, who shall vow to give his

offering to the LORD in accordance with his consecration, not including what extra he may be able to do; according to the vow which he has taken, so must he conform to the law of his consecration.

²²The LORD further said to Moses: ²³tell Aaron and his sons: This is the way you are to bless the people of Israel. Say to them, ²⁴"The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace." ²⁷In this manner they shall invoke My name upon the people of Israel and I Myself will bless them.

7 NOW IT WAS ON THE DAY WHEN Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle and had anointed and sanctified it with all its equipment, including the altar and its utensils which he likewise anointed and sanctified, ²that the princes of Israel, the leaders of their tribal houses — these are the tribal princes in charge of those who were enrolled — made a presentation. ³They brought their gifts before the LORD — six covered wagons and twelve bullocks, a wagon for two princes and a bullock for each, and presented them in front of the Dwelling. ⁴The LORD then told Moses: ⁵Accept these things from them, that they may be used in effecting the work^o of the meeting tent and give them to the men of Levi, to each as his work requires. ⁶Accordingly, Moses took the wagons and the bullocks and gave them to the Levites. ⁷Two wagons and four bullocks he gave to the men of Gershon as their work required; ⁸likewise, four wagons and eight bullocks to the men of Merari as their work required, under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. ⁹To the men of Kohath, however, he gave nothing, because it was their responsibility to attend to the work of the holy things which they had to carry on their shoulders.^p ¹⁰Now the princes presented the dedicatory gift for the altar

^m) See Num. 15:3ff. ⁿ) See Lev. 7:32-34.

^o) Transporting the Dwelling and all its equipment. ^p) See ch. 4:15.

on the day it was anointed, offering it before the altar. ¹¹Consequently, the LORD instructed Moses: Have them, each prince on his day,^a present the dedicatory gift for the altar.

¹²The one who presented his gift on the first day in behalf of the tribe of Judah was Nahshon the son of Amminadab. ¹³His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds^r and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds,^s in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ¹⁴one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ¹⁵one young bull from the cattle, one ram and one year-old lamb for a burnt-offering; ¹⁶One male goat for a sin-offering; ¹⁷and for the peace offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

¹⁸On the second day Nethaneel, the son of Zuar, the prince of Issachar made his offering. ¹⁹The gift which he presented was likewise one silver dish which weighed about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ²⁰one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ²¹one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one year-old male lamb for a burnt-offering; ²²one male goat for a sin-offering; ²³and for the peace offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Nethaneel the son of Zuar.

²⁴On the third day, the prince of Zebulun's descendants, Eliab the son of Helon, made his offering: ²⁵His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary—both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ²⁶one gold pan of about

four ounces full of incense; ²⁷one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ²⁸one male goat for a sin-offering; ²⁹and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Eliab, the son of Helon.

³⁰On the fourth day, the prince of Reuben's descendants, Elizur the son of Shedeur, made his offering: ³¹His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary—both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ³²one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ³³one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ³⁴one male goat for a sin-offering; ³⁵and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

³⁶On the fifth day, the prince of Simeon's descendants, Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, made his offering: ³⁷His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ³⁸one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ³⁹one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁴⁰one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁴¹and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

⁴²On the sixth day, the prince of Gad's descendants, Eliasaph the son of Reuel,^t made his offering: ⁴³His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the

q) Presumably, because of the nature of the gifts. The limited space in the court would not have allowed the receiving, slaughtering, and preparing for sacrifice of 252 animals all in one day, let alone the burning of 36 whole animals and the fat portions of 216 animals on the altar.

r) 130 shekels. One shekel about one dollar today. s) Seventy shekels.

t) The Samaritan text has Deuel each time the name occurs, while the Septuagint and the Syrian have Reuel. In Hebrew the R and the D may be written much alike.

standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁴⁴one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁴⁵one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁴⁶one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁴⁷and for the peace-offering, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Eliasaph the son of Reuel.

⁴⁸On the seventh day, the prince of Ephraim's descendants, Elishama the son of Ammihud, made his offering: ⁴⁹His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁵⁰one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁵¹one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁵²one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁵³and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴On the eighth day, the prince of Manasseh's descendants, Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, made his offering: ⁵⁵His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁵⁶one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁵⁷one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁵⁸one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁵⁹and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰On the ninth day, the prince of Benjamin's descendants, Abidan the son of Gideoni, made his offering: ⁶¹His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanc-

tuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁶²one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁶³one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb for a burnt-offering; ⁶⁴one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁶⁵and for a peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

⁶⁶On the tenth day, the prince of Dan's descendants, Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, made his offering: ⁶⁷His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁶⁸one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁶⁹one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb for a burnt-offering; ⁷⁰one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁷¹and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

⁷²On the eleventh day, the prince of Asher's descendants, Pagiel the son of Ochran, made his offering: ⁷³His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain-offering; ⁷⁴one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁷⁵one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁷⁶one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁷⁷and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Pagiel the son of Ochran.

⁷⁸Finally on the twelfth day, the prince of Naphtali's descendants, Ahinai the son of Enan, made his offering: ⁷⁹His gift was one silver dish weighing about $3\frac{1}{4}$ pounds, and one silver basin of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary — both full of fine flour mixed

with oil for a grain-offering; ⁸⁰one gold pan of about four ounces full of incense; ⁸¹one young bull from the cattle, one ram, and one male year-old lamb, for a burnt-offering; ⁸²one male goat for a sin-offering; ⁸³and for the peace-offering sacrifice, two bullocks, five rams, five he-goats, and five male year-old lambs. This was the gift of Ahira the son of Enan.

⁸⁴The foregoing was the dedicatory gift from the princes of Israel for the altar on the day it was anointed; it included twelve silver dishes, twelve silver basins, twelve gold pans, ⁸⁵each silver dish weighed about 3¼ pounds and each silver basin, about 1¾ pounds. The total weight of the silver utensils was about sixty pounds,^u in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary. ⁸⁶The twelve gold pans full of incense weighed about four ounces apiece, in accordance with the standard weight of the sanctuary; all the gold of the pans amounted to four pounds.^v ⁸⁷The total number of animals for the burnt-offering was twelve young bulls from the cattle, twelve rams, and twelve male year-old lambs with their grain-offerings; for the sin-offering, twelve male goats; ⁸⁸and the total number of animals for the peace offering sacrifice was twenty-four young bulls from the cattle, sixty rams, sixty he-goats, and sixty year-old lambs. This was the dedicatory gift for the altar after it had been anointed. ⁸⁹When Moses entered the meeting tent to talk with Him, he heard the Voice speaking to him from between the two cherubim and above the mercy seat^w which was on the Ark of the Testimony; in this manner He spoke to him.

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8 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²SPEAK with Aaron and tell him, When you place the lamps, let the seven lamps shine frontward from the lampstand. ³Aaron acted accordingly; he

placed the lamps so that they faced outward from the lampstand, just as the LORD had directed Moses. ⁴As for the fashioning of the lampstand,^x it was hammered work of gold; it was of hammered work from the base to the flowers. Thus he fashioned the lampstand according to the pattern which the LORD had shown Moses.

⁵The LORD further told Moses: ⁶Take the men of Levi from among the people of Israel and cleanse^y them. ⁷To accomplish this cleansing, do this to them: sprinkle the purifying water^z over them and have them shave their entire bodies with a razor, and have them wash their clothes and cleanse themselves. ⁸Then have them procure a young bull from the cattle with its grain-offering — fine flour mixed with oil.^a Moreover, take another young bull from the cattle for a sin-offering. ⁹Next bring the men of Levi to the front of the meeting tent and assemble the entire congregation of the people of Israel. ¹⁰Present the men of Levi before the LORD and let the people of Israel place their hands on them.^b ¹¹Aaron shall then offer^c the Levites as a wave offering before the LORD from the people of Israel so that the Levites may be in position to execute the LORD's service.^d ¹²As for the Levites, have them lay their hands on the heads of the bulls; then offer one as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt-offering to the LORD to atone for the men of Levi. ¹³Moreover, place the men of Levi before Aaron and his sons and offer them as a wave offering to the LORD.

¹⁴In this way you are to separate the Levites from the people of Israel, so they will belong to Me. ¹⁵Thereafter the men of Levi shall enter to perform duties connected with the meeting tent. Cleanse them and offer them as a wave offering, ¹⁶for they must definitely be given to Me from among the people of Israel as a substitute for all who open the womb; the first born of

u) 2400 dollars. v) 120 dollars. w) See Ex. 25:22. x) See Ex. 25:31-37.

y) The word sanctify is used for the priest's cleansing in Ex. 29:1. The Levitical service, in comparison with the priestly service, was of a less solemn and sacred nature.

z) Used symbolically of purification, possibly with water from the laver.

a) For a burnt offering.

b) Presumably representatives of both groups took part in this ceremony. c) Symbolically.

d) The laborious service connected with the Dwelling, see 3:25-26.

all the people of Israel, for I have chosen them for Myself. ¹⁷This is because all the first-born in the nation of Israel are rightfully Mine, both among man and beast, for at the time that I slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I set them apart for Myself.^e ¹⁸I have, however, chosen the Levites as a substitute for all Israel's first-born. In addition, ¹⁹I have given the men of Levi as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the nation of Israel to perform the service^f of her people in the meeting tent and to atone for them, so that there may not be a plague in the nation of Israel when her people approach the Holy Place.^g

²⁰Therefore Moses, Aaron, and the entire assembly^h of the men of Israel dealt with the Levites in accordance with everything that the LORD had commanded Moses concerning them; thus the people of Israel dealt with them. ²¹The men of Levi cleansed themselves from sin and washed their clothes; then Aaron offered them as a wave offering in the presence of the LORD and made atonement for them for their purification. ²²From that time on the men of Levi came in to do their work in the meeting tent in the presence of Aaron and his sons. In short, they took the proper steps with the Levites, even as the LORD had directed Moses concerning them.

²³In addition, the LORD said to Moses: ²⁴This applies to the men of Levi: Starting at the age of 25, they shall commence to engage in active duty in the service of the meeting tent. ²⁵At the age of 50, however, they shall retire from active duty in the service and shall not be employed anymore. ²⁶Thereafter they shall assistⁱ their fellow workers in the meeting tent in

keeping with the office, but shall not discharge the regular duties. So shall you deal with the men of Levi in connection with their office.

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9 IN THE FIRST MONTH OF THE SECOND year after their departure from the land of Egypt, the LORD had instructed^j Moses in the wilderness of Sinai: ²The people of Israel are to observe the Passover^k at its designated time. ³The fourteenth of this month at dusk^l is the assigned date for you to keep it, and be sure to observe it according to all its rules and regulations.^m ⁴So Moses directed the nation of Israel to keep the Passover. ⁵They observed the Passover in the wilderness of Sinai on the fourteenth day of the first month at dusk; the people of Israel did exactly as the LORD had instructed Moses.

⁶Certain men, however, were not able to observe the Passover that day, because they had been defiled, contacting a person's corpse. Those men, therefore, came to Moses and Aaron the same day ⁷and told himⁿ their predicament. "We have been defiled by a man's corpse, but why should we be prohibited from presenting among the people of Israel the sacrificial gift^o of the LORD at its designated time?" ⁸Moses replied to them, "Wait while I see what the LORD prescribes in your case."^p

⁹Then the LORD said to Moses: ¹⁰Speak to the nation of Israel in this manner: If anyone of you or of your descendants is defiled by a corpse or is on a long trip, he too must keep the Passover. ¹¹Let them, however, observe it on the fourteenth day of the second month^q at dusk, eating both unleavened bread and bitter herbs with it.

e) See Ex. 13:1,2.

f) Both the work connected with the Dwelling and the service due to the LORD from the first born. g) God's holiness must be revered. h) The main representatives of the people.

i) Doing less exacting, less important work. j) It seems that these instructions were given the same day that the tabernacle was erected, one month prior to the events of chapter one, see 9:15 and Ex. 40:2,17.

k) This was a command. The observance was to remind the people how God had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, typifying their deliverance through the Redeemer Christ from the bondage of sin [I Cor. 5:7]. l) Heb. — "between the two evenings," probably between sunset and dark. See Ex. 12.

m) An unclean person could not participate in a sacrificial meal [Lev. 7:20,21. Compare II Cor. 11:28,29]. n) Moses. o) The Passover lamb.

p) God always has the right answer to every problem [see James 1:5].

q) The entire nation observed it after the revival under Hezekiah [II Chron. 30:15].

¹²They are not to keep any of it over until morning or break one of its bones;^r they are to observe carefully every regulation of the Passover. ¹³On the other hand, if any individual who is clean and not traveling fails to observe the Passover, that person is to be cut off from his fellowmen because the sacrificial gift for the LORD was not presented at its proper time; that individual must pay for his sin.^s ¹⁴If a foreigner resides among you and wishes to keep the LORD's Passover, he also must observe it according to its rules and regulations;^t all must abide by the same rule, both the foreigner and the native.^u

¹⁵On the day when the tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the Dwelling, the tent containing the testimonial evidence,^v and from evening until morning over the tabernacle it had the appearance of fire. ¹⁶Thus it was continually; the cloud would cover it by day and the form of fire at night. ¹⁷The people of Israel, moreover, would break camp and depart whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tent; and at the place where it stationed itself, there the people would camp. ¹⁸At the LORD's command the people of Israel pulled up stakes, and at His command they halted, remaining encamped as long as the cloud was stationed above the tabernacle.^w ¹⁹Whenever the cloud remained in this position for some time, the men of Israel would not break camp but would perform the service of the LORD.^x ²⁰If the cloud was over the tabernacle for only a few days, still at the LORD's command they would encamp and at His command they would decamp. ²¹Sometimes the cloud would remain only from evening until morning; in this case in the morning after the cloud was taken up, they would break camp. Whether it was during

the day or at night, whenever the cloud was removed they would pull up stakes. ²²If the cloud continued to remain over the tabernacle for a day or two, or a month, or even for a longer period, the Israelites would remain in camp and not leave; but when it was taken up, they moved on. ²³At the LORD's command they camped, and again at His command they would leave.^y They performed the LORD's service as He had directed through Moses.

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10 THE LORD FURTHER SAID TO Moses: ²Make you two silver trumpets; fashion them of hammered work; they are for you to use for summoning the assembly and for breaking camp. ³When they sound both of them, the entire assembly^z is to gather at the door of the tent of meeting. ⁴If, however, they blow only one, then just the princes, the leaders of Israel's thousands, are to assemble before you. ⁵When you sound a blast, the camp situated on the east side shall start to break camp and to leave, ⁶and at the sound of a second blast, those situated on the south side shall break camp; a blast is given for their departure. ⁷If you merely want to summon the assembly, however, then blow,^a but without giving a blast. ⁸Aaron's sons, the priests, are to blow the trumpets, and the use of them shall be continually binding upon you throughout your future generations. ⁹When you go to war in your own country against the enemy who oppresses you, then sound an alarm with the trumpets. The LORD your God will take note of your situation and you will be delivered from your enemies.^b ¹⁰On any celebration day, also on your appointed feasts^c and on the first day of your months, you are to blow the trumpets over your burnt-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings, for they^d serve

r) See Ex. 12:8,10,46, so with Christ, our Passover Lamb, John 19:33,36.

s) Indifference to God's specific command meant excommunication. Does such indifference today go unnoticed and unpunished? [See Prov. 24:11,12].

t) The foreigner must be circumcised to enjoy those privileges [Ex. 12:48,49]. u) The Hebrew.

v) See Ex. 40:34ff, for similar statement, but including mention of divine glory.

w) Today the church is led by the Spirit through faith more than by sight.

x) The service connected with the tabernacle.

y) The instructions for our daily walk are as definite and binding [see Deut. 30:11-14].

z) The nation's representatives. a) Blowing in short, sharp tones rather than in a steady blast.

b) Any true victory must be gained through God's strength [Ps. 44:5-7].

c) The three annual feasts [see Chap. 28,29]. d) The trumpets.

for your remembrance before your God; I am the LORD.

¹¹On the twentieth day of the second month in the second year, the cloud ascended from above the Dwelling containing the testimonial evidence, ¹²and the Israelites broke camp and departed in prescribed groups^e from the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud came to a halt in the wilderness of Paran.^f

¹³This was the first time they broke camp at the LORD's command under Moses' ministry. ¹⁴The first to start out, in accord with the LORD's command through Moses, was the camp standard of Judah's descendants. They traveled in the lead position with their divisions,^g Nahshon the son of Amminadab being in command of this army.^h

¹⁵Nethaneel the son of Zuar commanded the division comprised of the tribe of Issachar's descendants, ¹⁶and Eliab the son of Helon, commanded the division comprised of the tribe of Zebulun's descendants. ¹⁷The tabernacle was then dismantled and the men of Gershon and Merari, the bearers of the Dwelling set out.

¹⁸Next came the camp standard of Reuben according to its divisions; Elizur the son of Shedeur being in command of this army. ¹⁹Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai commanded the division comprised of the tribe of Simeon's descendants, ²⁰and Eliasaph the son of Reuel commanded the division comprised of the tribe of Gad's descendants. ²¹Then the Kohathites, who were the bearers of the sanctuary,ⁱ departed — but before they arrived at their destination the tabernacle was to be already erected.^j

²²Next followed the camp standard of Ephraim's descendants according to its divisions, Elishama the son of Am-

mihud was in command of this army.

²³Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur commanded the division made up of the tribe of Manasseh's descendants. ²⁴and Abidan the son of Gideon commanded the division consisting of the tribe of Benjamin's descendants. ²⁵Bringing up the rear for all the camps was the camp standard of Dan's descendants according to its divisions; Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai being in command of this army. ²⁶Pagiel the son of Ochrán commanded the division comprised of the tribe of Asher's descendants, ²⁷and Ahira the son of Enan commanded the division composed of the tribe of Naphtali's descendants. ²⁸These were the arrangements in which the nation of Israel traveled with its armies.

²⁹Before they left, however, Moses had told Hobab,^k the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are on our way to the place about which the LORD has promised. 'I will give it to you.' Come along with us and we shall make it worth your while, because the LORD has mentioned good things about Israel." ³⁰But he replied to him, "I cannot go; I must return to my native land and to my family." ³¹Then he begged him, "Please do not leave us, for you know about our camping here in the wilderness, and you shall be for us as eyes. ³²Moreover, if you will go with us, we shall promote your welfare with whatever good the LORD shall prosper us."^m

³³After breaking camp, they left the mountain of the LORDⁿ and traveled^o for three days, with the Ark of the LORD's Testimony preceding them the three days in order to choose a place for them to rest.^o ³⁴The LORD's cloud was over them daily as they traveled

e) In the order prescribed in the following verses; see also ch. 2.

f) This is a general heading for the next few chapters, since many events and a few minor stops occurred before their arrival at Paran, recorded in ch. 12:16.

g) According to the order of march established in ch. 2.

h) In addition to the tribe of Judah, he had the general supervision of the following two tribes.

i) And all the sacred things; see ch. 4:4ff.

j) This provided immediate shelter and a worship center.

k) Moses' brother-in-law may have come to Sinai with his father, Reuel (Jethro), Ex. 18:1-5, to remain after his father went home, Ex. 18:27.

m) Although his decision is not recorded, he must have complied with Moses' request, since his descendants are mentioned later as living in Canaan [Judges 1:16; I Sam. 15:6].

n) Mt. Sinai, or Horeb, as called in Deuteronomy.

o) The LORD always looks out for the best for His children [Deut. 31:8].

from camp, ³⁶and whenever the Ark started out, Moses prayed, "O LORD, arise and let Thy^p enemies be dispersed; make those who hate Thee flee from Thy presence." ³⁶When it came to a halt he would pray, "Return,^q O LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel."

11 NOW THE PEOPLE COMPLAINED of misfortune in the LORD's hearing and when the LORD heard it, His anger flamed up, whereupon the fire of the LORD burned among them; it devoured those at the far end of the camp. ²The people then came wailing to Moses, who supplicated the LORD and the fire died down. ³That place came to be called Taberah,^r because the fire of the LORD had burned among them.

⁴Moreover, the alien rabble^a among them began to have cravings; likewise, the people of Israel turned again to weeping and cried, "Who is giving us meat to eat? ⁵We still remember the fish we used to eat gratis in Egypt, not to mention the cucumbers, water-melons, leeks, onions and garlic. ⁶But now our souls are famished; there is nothing at all upon which to look except this manna."^t ⁷The manna was like coriander seed^u and had the appearance of resinous gum.^v ⁸After the people had gone out and gathered it, they would grind it with millstones or beat it in a mortar. It was then boiled in a pot and made into cakes. It tasted something like a cake baked with oil.^w ⁹When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna fell with it.

¹⁰When Moses heard the people whining throughout their families, each man at the door of his tent, it not only greatly inflamed the LORD's indignation, but Moses too felt chagrined. ¹¹Moses, therefore, asked the LORD,

"Why hast Thou afflicted Thy servant so, and why have I not found favor in Thy eyes, that Thou hast placed the responsibility of all these people upon me? ¹²Was it I who conceived all these people, or am I the one who gave birth to them that Thou shouldst say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse lifts up the nursing child,' to the land Thou hast promised to their forefathers? ¹³Where can I get enough meat to give to all these people when they whine to me, saying, 'Give us some meat to eat'? ¹⁴I am unable to bear the responsibility of all these people alone; they are too much for me! ¹⁵If this is the way Thou art going to deal with me, please kill me now, if I have found favor in Thy eyes; do not make me face my misfortune!"

¹⁶The LORD then directed Moses: Assemble Me 70 men from the elders of Israel whom you know to be elders and officials^x of the people. Bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them stand there with you. ¹⁷I shall come down and talk with you there and shall take of the Spirit who rests upon you and place Him upon them in order that they may share the responsibility of the people with you, and you will not have to continue bearing it alone. ¹⁸Moreover, give the following instructions to the people: "Cleanse yourselves^y for tomorrow, because you are going to eat meat. You have cried in the LORD's ears, 'If only we were given meat to eat! Surely we were well off in Egypt!' Therefore, the LORD will give you meat to eat. ¹⁹You will not eat it for one day only, nor two, nor five, nor ten, nor twenty, ²⁰but for an entire month until it comes out of your nose and becomes nauseating to you. This is the result of your having spurned the LORD, who is among you, and of your having grumbled to His face,"^z

p) His enemies are our enemies.

q) Essentially, "Return and dwell among us after defeating Thy enemies." r) Heb. - "Burning."

s) The foreign element that came out of Egypt with Israel [see Ex. 12:38].

t) Contrast Phil. 4:11.

u) A small round seed about the size of a black pepper-corn used for seasoning.

v) A fragrant and transparent resin resembling wax. w) See Ex. 16:14,31.

x) Men who were respected and held in esteem by the people.

y) They were to be physically and spiritually fit to witness the LORD's glory in the coming miraculous provision of meat [Comp. Isa. 59:1,2].

z) God notices the actions, words and thoughts of every person in every place [Prov. 5:21; Matt. 12:36,37; Heb. 4:13].

saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?' "

²¹But Moses queried, "The people I am with are six hundred thousand infantrymen; but Thou hast said, 'I will give them so much meat that they shall gorge for an entire month.' ²²Can one find enough flocks and herds to slay for them; or if all the fish in the sea were caught, would enough be found for them?" ²³The LORD replied to Moses: May the LORD's hand be too short? You will see presently whether I keep My word with you or not.

²⁴Moses went outdoors and repeated to the people what the LORD had said; furthermore, he assembled seventy men from the elders of the people and stationed them around the tent.^a ²⁵The LORD then came down in the cloud and spoke to him, took of the Spirit who was upon him, and had Him rest upon seventy of the elders.^b After the Spirit had come upon them, they prophesied once, but not again.

²⁶Two men, however, stayed in the camp;^c the one's name was Eldad, the other's Medad. They were among those who had been listed, but they had failed to go out to the tent; nevertheless, the Spirit came upon them, too, and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷Then a young man ran and reported to Moses: "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!" ²⁸Joshua, the son of Nun, who had been Moses' attendant since he was a youth, spoke up and said, "My master Moses, make them stop!" ²⁹Moses answered him, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets; that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them too." ³⁰And Moses, accompanied by the elders of Israel, returned to the camp.

³¹The LORD caused a wind to arise which brought quail from the sea,

scattering them in the neighborhood of the camp about as far as one could walk in a day in either direction from the camp and lowering them to about three feet above the ground.^d ³²The people went out and spent all that day, all that night, and all the next day gathering the quail; even the one gathering the least obtained more than a hundred bushels which they spread out all around the camp.^e ³³But while the meat was still unchewed between their teeth, the LORD's anger flared up against the people, and the LORD struck them with a terrible plague. ³⁴Henceforth that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah,^f because it was there they buried the people who had been so greedy. ³⁵From Kibroth-hattaavah the people traveled to Hazeroth, and there they remained.

June, 1445 B.C.

12 MIRIAM CONVERSED WITH AARON about Moses regarding the Cushite woman he had married;^g for he had married a woman of Cush.^h ²They said, "Has the LORD spoken exclusively through Moses? Has He not also communed through us?" And the LORD heard it. ³Now this man Moses was very gentle, more than any other person on earth.ⁱ ⁴At once the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: You three come out to the tent of meeting; so the three came out. ⁵Then the LORD came down in the cloudy pillar, stood at the door of the tent, and summoned Aaron and Miriam. As the two stepped forward, He said: ⁶Pay attention to My words. If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known to him in a vision; I will speak with him in a dream. ⁷Not so with My servant Moses, who is trusted in all My house.^j ⁸With him I speak in person, plainly, not obscurely. He shall view the very form of the

a) In half circle in front of the tent.

b) Anything done in the LORD's behalf demands supernatural power [Acts 1:8]. The Spirit was in no way diminished by this extension. c) The tent was pitched outside the camp [Ex. 33:7].

d) Making it easy for the Hebrews to catch or kill them. e) To cure them by drying.

f) Heb. — "Graves of the greedy."

g) Descendant of Ham, [Gen. 10:6,7] which group settled in Ethiopia.

h) Miriam must have seen her influence on Moses dwindling under this new relationship.

i) This was not self glory on the part of Moses but the stating of a fact, necessary for the full understanding of this incident.

j) Found worthy of God's confidence in everything pertaining to the guidance of the house of Israel.

LORD.^k Why then are you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses? ⁹Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and He departed. ¹⁰But when the cloud withdrew from above the tent, there was Miriam leprous, white as snow.^l

Aaron turned to Miriam, and when he saw that she was leprous, ¹¹he begged Moses, "Oh, please, my master, do not count this offense against us in which we have acted so foolishly, in which we have sinned. ¹²Please do not let her be as a dead person, as one who is stillborn with half his flesh decomposed." ¹³So Moses cried out to the LORD, "O God, I beseech Thee, heal her!" ¹⁴The LORD answered Moses: If her father had publicly spit in her face, would she not be humiliated for seven days? She must be excluded from the camp for seven days; then she may come back. ¹⁵Therefore, Miriam was excluded from the camp for seven days, but the people did not leave until Miriam had been reinstated. ¹⁶Afterwards the people left Hazeroth and made camp in the wilderness of Paran.

August, 1445 B.C.

13 THE LORD NOW TOLD MOSES: ²Send out men, so they may spy out the land of Canaan which I am giving to the Israelites.ⁿ Send one man as representative from each of their father's tribes, each a ruler among them. ³Moses, therefore, sent them from the wilderness of Paran^o as the LORD had directed, and all the men were leaders among the people of Israel. ⁴These are their names: From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur; ⁵from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori; ⁶from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; ⁷from the tribe of Issachar,

Igal the son of Joseph; ⁸from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; ⁹from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu; ¹⁰from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi; ¹¹from Joseph—that is, from the tribe of Manasseh—Gaddi the son of Susi; ¹²from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli; ¹³from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael; ¹⁴from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi; ¹⁵and from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi. ¹⁶These are the names of the men whom Moses dispatched to spy out the land; and Moses called Hoshea, the son of Nun, Joshua.

¹⁷When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he gave them these instructions, "Go up this way into the Negeb^p— and on up through the highlands. ¹⁸Find out what the land is like, and whether the people who are living in it are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹Notice whether the nature of the land is good or bad, and whether the cities in which they live are mere camps or fortified cities. ²⁰See what the land is like, whether it is fertile or barren, and whether it is covered with trees or not. Moreover, do your best to bring back some fruit from the land," for this was at the season when the grapes first ripened.^q

²¹So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, which is on the way to Hamath. ²²They went up through the Negeb and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the sons of Anak,^r were. Hebron was built seven years prior to Zoan in Egypt.^s ²³When they came to the valley of Eshcol, they cut a branch having a single cluster of grapes, which two of them carried on a pole between them;

k) Some real manifestations, Ex. 33:18 ff. 1) She had taken the lead in this insurrection, vs. 1. Aaron again showed his lack of will power, as in making the golden calf.

n) Notice the parallel account in Deut. 1:19-46.

o) The particular place in this region was Kadesh-barnea, vs. 26; Deut. 1:19.

p) The south country. It was a dry, parched district, the least fertile of Canaan, extending northward from Kadesh to within a few miles of Hebron, and from the Dead Sea westward to the Mediterranean. q) Late July or August.

r) The Anakim were a race of giants [Deut. 1:28; 9:2], of whom the Nephilim were a division [Num. 13:33].

s) The exact date is not known, but Hebron was known in Abraham's time, 2000 B.C., Gen. 13:18. It may, however, refer to a rebuilding of Hebron, 7 years before the founding of Avaris-Tanis-Zoan.

they also brought some pomegranates and figs. ²⁴That place was called the valley of Eshcol^t because of the cluster of grapes which the men of Israel cut there.

²⁵After forty days they returned from spying out the land, ²⁶traveling until they arrived at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran where Moses, Aaron and the entire assembly of the people were. Showing them the fruit of the land, ²⁷they gave their report to them and to the entire assembly. They reported to him, "We came to the country to which you sent us, and it certainly is flowing with milk and honey; this is its fruit. ²⁸But the people who live in the land are strong and the cities are fortified and very large. Besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. ²⁹Amalek lives in the Negeb territory; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the highlands and the Canaanites live along the sea-coast and along the edge of the Jordan."

³⁰Then Caleb calmed^u the people in Moses' presence and urged, "Let us confidently go up and conquer it, for we are well able to do it." ³¹But the men who went up with him said, "We are not able to go up against these people; they are too strong for us." ³²And they brought to the people of Israel this discouraging report of the land which they had spied out, "The land through which we passed as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants,^v and all the people we saw in it are men of great stature. ³³We saw there the Nephilim, the descendants of Anak, who are of the giants." Even to ourselves we looked like grasshoppers, and so we looked to them!" Sept., 1445 B.C.

14 THEN THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION raised their voices, and the people wept throughout that night.

²The entire nation of Israel began to complain against Moses and Aaron to such a degree that the whole course said to them, "Oh, that we had perished in the land of Egypt or even had died in this wilderness. ³Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to slay us with the sword and to have our wives and children taken? Would it not be preferable for us to return to Egypt?" ⁴They said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and go back to Egypt."

⁵Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire congregation of the people of Israel which had assembled.^r ⁶But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, two of those who had gone to find out what the land was like, tore their clothes ⁷and told the whole gathering of Israel, "The land through which we passed as spies is an extremely fertile land. ⁸If the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us in and give us this land which is flowing with milk and honey. ⁹Above all, neither rebel against the LORD nor have fear of the native population; they shall be as bread to us." Their defense is as a vanishing shadow, for the LORD is with us; do not fear them." ¹⁰At these words the whole crowd was on the verge of hurling stones at them when suddenly the glory of the LORD^z appeared to the entire nation of Israel in the tent of meeting.

¹¹How long are these people going to spurn Me? the LORD said to Moses. How long will they mistrust Me, not heeding all the miracles which I have performed among them?^a ¹²I will destroy them with a plague, and thus having disinherited them I will propagate through you a greater and more powerful nation than they. ¹³But Moses replied^b to the LORD, "When Egypt, from whose presence Thou didst bring this nation in Thy strength, hears of

t) Heb. - "Cluster." u) The majority report had greatly excited the people.

v) Perhaps referring to the Negeb, see footnote to vs. 17.

w) The Nephilim, who cannot be the offspring of the "sons of God," Gen. 6:2,4, are known to have been mighty men, renowned.

x) They realized from experience that the LORD would not tolerate such rebellion, ch. 11; Ex. 32.

y) That is, we shall consume them. z) A manifestation of the LORD in a cloud.

a) The world is still despising His riches (Rom. 2:4).

b) This man of meekness, who conversed with the LORD face to face, could thus debate with the LORD. He did this once before and won [Ex. 32:10-14]. See also Ps. 106:23. His prime argument is that the LORD's reputation is at stake.

this, ¹⁴they will inform those who live in this land. They have heard that Thou, LORD, art among these people, even to the extent that Thou, LORD, art seen with the naked eye; that Thy cloud watches over them constantly, and that Thou takest the lead before them in a cloudy pillar by day and in a fiery pillar by night. ¹⁵If Thou destroyest this people down to the last man, Thou knowest what the nations, who have heard of Thy reputation, will say: ¹⁶'The LORD was not able to bring this nation to the land which He promised them, so He destroyed them in the wilderness.' ¹⁷But now verify my LORD's great power, that it be as outstanding as Thou hast affirmed, saying: ¹⁸'The LORD is patient and exceedingly merciful, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He is One who will on no occasion leave the guilty unpunished; One who requires of the children down to the third and fourth generations to pay for the iniquity of their parents.' ¹⁹Forgive, I beseech Thee, the sin of these people in keeping with the greatness of Thy mercy, as Thou hast forgiven them ever since they left Egypt."

²⁰The LORD said: I have forgiven them at your request; ²¹nevertheless, as surely as I live and as the earth is full of the LORD's glory — ²²seeing that all these men, who have constantly witnessed My glory and My miracles which I have performed in both Egypt and in the wilderness, have nonetheless tried Me these ten times^e and disregarded My word — ²³they shall never see the land which I promised by oath to their fathers; not one of those who have despised Me shall see it. ²⁴But because My servant Caleb has a different attitude and has wholeheartedly followed Me, I shall allow him to re-enter the land on which he once set foot, and it shall always belong to his descendants.^f ²⁵The Amalekites and the Canaanites are living in the valley;

therefore, tomorrow you must turn back^g and travel through the wilderness by way of the Red Sea.

²⁶How long must I put up with this sinful assembly which is constantly grumbling against Me? protested the LORD to Moses and Aaron, ²⁷for I have heard the complaints of the people of Israel which they are continually muttering against Me. ²⁸Say to them, "As I live, declares the LORD, I am going to deal with you exactly as I have heard you prescribe it. ²⁹Your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, namely, all the enlisted men of your entire number above the age of twenty who have grumbled against Me. ³⁰None of you except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua, the son of Nun, shall enter the land in which I swore by the uplifted hand to establish you. ³¹I will be, however, an escort to your little ones who, you said, would be taken, so that they may appreciate the land which you have rejected. ³²But as for you, your corpses shall fall in this wilderness. ³³And because of your unfaithfulness your sons will have to wander as shepherds in this wilderness for forty years until all your corpses lie in the desert. ³⁴The forty years during which you must pay the penalty for your sins shall be determined by the number of days which you spent in spying out the land; that is, forty days — a year for each day; then you will realize what it means to have Me against you. ³⁵I the LORD have spoken; I will most certainly deal with this entire wicked assembly which has conspired against Me, even as I stated; they shall succumb and die in this wilderness.

³⁶Meanwhile, the men who had been dispatched by Moses to spy out the land and who on their return had prompted the entire assembly to grumble against him by starting a whispering campaign against the land, ³⁷these very men, who had spread this detri-

c) Moses' second argument. The LORD's character or Word is at stake. d) See Ex. 34:6,7.

e) The number of completeness. The LORD had enough; the promised judgment of Ex. 32:34 was now to be executed, for the punishment of sin is a divine principle which is not changed [Job 4:8, Gal. 6:7]. f) See Josh. 14:6ff.

g) Apparently the hardest message of the incident. Unbelief had cost them the promises of God. Read the lesson as taught in Heb. 3:7-19.

mental report of the land, died from a sudden plague before the LORD.^b ³⁸Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh alone survived of those men who had gone to spy out the land.

³⁹When Moses relayed this message to the entire nation of Israel, the people mourned deeply. ⁴⁰Early next morning they got up and started to ascend the mountain. "Here we are," they said; "we realize that we have sinned, but we are now ready to proceed to the place which the LORD has promised." ⁴¹Moses insisted, "Why are you trampling under foot the LORD's direct order? It will get you nowhere!" ⁴²The LORD is not with you; do not go up or you will be decimated before your enemies. ⁴³You will fall in battle, for the Amalekite and the Canaanite are there to oppose you. Since you have deserted the LORD, how do you expect Him to be with you?" ⁴⁴Nevertheless they stubbornly persisted in climbing the mountainous plateau, despite the fact that neither the Ark of the LORD's covenant nor Moses left the camp.¹ ⁴⁵Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that mountainous region came down and attacked them, driving them back in defeat as far as Hormah.

1444 B.C.

15 THE LORD GAVE THESE INSTRUCTIONS to Moses: ²Address the people of Israel and tell them, "When you arrive at your destination in the land which I am giving you^k ³and would present a burnt offering or a sacrifice by fire to the LORD—whether in fulfilling a special vow, or as a free will offering, or at your set festivals,¹ offering it as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD from herd or flock; ⁴then he who presents his offering to the LORD shall bring a meal offering composed of six pints^m of fine flour mixed with three pints of oilⁿ ⁵and a drink offering

of three pints of wine. Prepare this to accompany the burnt offering or the sacrifice of each lamb. ⁶If it is a ram, then prepare a meal-offering composed of six quarts of fine flour mixed with two quarts of oil ⁷and also a drink-offering of two quarts of wine; offer this as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ⁸When you prepare a young bull for a burnt-offering or as a sacrifice to fulfill a special vow or for a peace-offering to the LORD, ⁹one must present with the young bull a meal-offering composed of nine quarts of fine flour mixed with three quarts of oil ¹⁰and also present three quarts of wine for a drink-offering. This shall be offered by fire as a pleasing fragrance, to the LORD. ¹¹Every bull, ram, lamb, and goat must be presented in this prescribed manner. ¹²No matter how many you present, each one of the entire number must be prepared in the same way.

¹³Every native shall prepare these things in this same manner when presenting an offering by fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ¹⁴And if a foreigner lives among you now or one among you in succeeding generations, who shall present an offering by fire for a pleasing fragrance to the LORD, he shall present it exactly as you do. ¹⁵All residents, both you and the foreigner who lives with you, shall abide by the same regulation, and it shall continue in effect throughout all your future generations. The foreigner shall be regarded in the same light as you are before the LORD. ¹⁶The same law and ordinance shall apply to both you and the foreigner who lives with you."

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁸Address the people of Israel and tell them: When you arrive in the land to which I am conducting you ¹⁹and have started to eat of its food, you are to offer a heave offering to the LORD. ²⁰For this heave offering, present a cake made from the first of your coarse

h) Being struck down by the hand of God in divine judgment. Compare Prov. 29:1.

i) To the sin of unbelief [vs. 1-4] is now added the sin of presumptuous self-confidence.

k) These instructions gave hope to the new generation, while judgment was being executed upon their fathers, who were made to wander in the wilderness of Paran, from the autumn of 1445 to the autumn of 1407. ¹) See Lev. 23.

m) One-tenth of an ephah, an ephah being a little less than a bushel.

n) One-fourth of a hin, a hin being about six quarts.

meal; offer it as a heave offering from the threshing floor.^o ²¹Down through your successive generations you are to give a heave offering to the LORD from the first of your coarse meal.

²²If you make a mistake^p and fail to observe all these commands which the LORD has spoken to Moses—²³all these which the LORD has dictated to you by the ministry of Moses from the day He gave the commands down through your successive generations — ²⁴if it be committed ignorantly without the congregation realizing it, then the entire congregation must present a young bull for a burnt-offering, a pleasing fragrance to the LORD, along with its meal offering and drink offering as the ordinance prescribes.^q There shall also be a young goat for a sin offering. ²⁵The priest shall atone for the entire congregation of the people of Israel, and since the sin was committed ignorantly, they shall be forgiven because they have presented their offering by fire to the LORD and their sin offering in the LORD's presence for their mistake. ²⁶Both the entire congregation of the people of Israel and the foreigner who lives among you shall be forgiven, seeing that all the people were in ignorance in the matter.

²⁷If only one person should sin ignorantly, then he must present a year-old she-goat for a sin offering. ²⁸The priest shall atone before the LORD for the person who ignorantly sins by mistake, so that by making atonement for him, it may be forgiven him. ²⁹The native in the nation of Israel and the foreigner, who lives among you, shall benefit by the same law when he errs ignorantly. ³⁰But the person, whether the native or the foreigner, who defiantly rebels,^r is a blasphemer against the LORD; that a person must be de-

stroyed from among his people, ³¹because he has regarded the LORD's word with contempt and has violated His command; that person must unquestionably be cut off; his iniquity lies upon him.

³²While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they surprised a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day.⁸ ³³Those who had surprised him gathering the wood, brought him to Moses, Aaron, and the whole congregation;⁴ ³⁴but they were obliged to put him in confinement because there was no distinct ruling on how he should be punished.^u ³⁵The man must most certainly be executed, the LORD told Moses. Have the entire congregation hurl stones at him outside the camp. ³⁶So the whole congregation took him outside the camp and threw stones at him until he died, as the LORD had directed Moses.

³⁷The LORD said to Moses: ³⁸Address the people of Israel and tell them to attach tassels to the hems of their clothes^v throughout their successive generations. Fasten the tassels to the hem with a blue thread. ³⁹You are to have the tassel, so that when it catches your eye you may remember all the LORD's commands and observe them and may not wander after your heart's inclinations and after your eyes which have previously led you into harlotry.^w ⁴⁰Being thus reminded of all My commands, you will be able to observe them, for you must be holy before your God. ⁴¹I am the LORD your God, who has purposely brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God; I am Jehovah.

16 KORAH, WHOSE ANCESTRY WENT back through Izhar and Kohath to Levi, with three descendants of Reu-

o) Coarsely bruised meal procured at the beginning of the harvest.

p) Sins of omission as contrasted with the sins of commission in Lev. 4:13ff. q) Vss. 8-10.

r) Heb. — "sins with a high hand"; that is, raises his hand in defiance of the Lord.

s) A practical illustration of the "sinning with a high hand."

t) To the assembly of elders who were the congregation by representation, Ex. 18:25,26; Deut. 27:1.

u) The punishment was death, Ex. 31:14,15; but the mode of execution had not yet been revealed. Comp. Lev. 24:12.

v) The upper garments, Deut. 22:12. This ordinance may have been prompted by the foregoing incident.

w) Both physical and spiritual. Even as He is holy, so He has commanded us to be, Lev. 11:45; I Pet. 1:16. There is no valid excuse for sin, I Cor. 10:13.

ben* — Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On^y the son of Peleth—²enlisted 250 men of Israel, who were leaders in the assembly, national representatives and men of distinction ³and jointly they revolted against Moses Assembling themselves against Moses and Aaron, they said to them, "You assume too much authority. This entire community — yes, everyone of them — is dedicated,² for the LORD is present with them. Why should you elevate yourselves above the LORD's people?"

⁴When Moses heard this, he fell on his face. ⁵Then he said to Korah and all his company, "Tomorrow morning the LORD will make clear who belongs to Him, who is dedicated, and He will allow that one to approach Him. The man whom He singles out, He will allow to approach Him."^a ⁶Korah and all his company, you do this: ⁷get yourselves censers. Tomorrow in the LORD's presence place hot coals on them along with incense. He whom the LORD selects shall be the dedicated one. You descendants of Levi are the ones who are assuming too much."

⁸"Listen closely, you men of Levi," continued Moses to Korah. ⁹"Is it an insignificant thing to you that the God of Israel, by selecting you from the community of Israel, has given you the privilege of approaching Him, so that you may look after the service connected with the LORD's tabernacle and may stand before the congregation to wait upon them? ¹⁰Thus He has honored both you and your fellow clansmen, the men of Levi with you. And now do you desire to have the priesthood also?"^b ¹¹It is against the LORD that you and your entire company have assembled. As for Aaron, what has he done that you complain against him?"^c

¹²Then Moses sent a summons to

Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. "We will not come up," they answered. ¹³"Is it such a trivial matter that you have brought us up from a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, that you should also set up yourself as a dictator over us?" ¹⁴Furthermore, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or even given us a field or a vineyard as an inheritance.^d Do you think you can keep on blinding the eyes of these men? We will not come up!" ¹⁵Then Moses grew very angry. "Pay no attention to their offering," said Moses to the LORD. "I have not taken a single donkey from them; neither have I mistreated one of them."

¹⁶Moses further directed Korah, "Tomorrow you and your entire company present yourselves before the LORD; you, they, and Aaron. ¹⁷Each man is to take his censer, and, having put the incense upon it, each one shall present his censer before the LORD, 250 censers, both you and Aaron, each one with his censer." ¹⁸So each man took his censer and, having placed hot coals on them along with incense, they stationed themselves at the door of the tent of meeting along with Moses and Aaron. ¹⁹No sooner had Korah assembled the entire community^e against them at the door of the meeting tent, than the glory of the LORD appeared to the entire gathering. ²⁰The LORD addressed Moses and Aaron: ²¹Separate yourselves from this gathering; I will destroy them in a moment. ²²Falling on their faces, they prayed, "God, Thou God of the spirits of all flesh, if just one man sins,^f wilt Thou be indignant against the whole community?" ²³The LORD then instructed Moses: ²⁴Tell the congregation, Draw away from the vicinity of the home of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

²⁵Then Moses got up and, followed

x) As descendants of Reuben, the first-born, they claimed that they were entitled to giving orders.

y) On is not mentioned again in this conspiracy; he may have realized his mistake and withdrawn.

z) In a stricter sense, those who belonged to the LORD by His own choice [Ex. 28:1].

a) The LORD will make clear which tribe He has chosen and who in that tribe He has selected to be High Priest.

b) He wishes them to think it all over, that they may repent before it is too late.

c) Aaron has not usurped the priesthood, but has been chosen by the LORD to fulfill this office. God is responsible [Ex. 16:7].

d) The LORD had promised them this through Moses [Ex. 3:7ff; 4:30].

e) Rulers could demand tribute from their subjects [I Sam. 8:11ff; 12:3].

f) This was no small scale rebellion g) Korah, as instigator of the rebellion.

by the elders of Israel, he went to Dathan and Abiram. ²⁶He warned the community, "Draw away from the tents of these wicked men and do not touch anything that belongs to them; else you will be swept away with all their sins." ²⁷So they hurried away from the house of Korah, Dathan and Abiram; but Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents along with their wives, sons, and little ones. ²⁸"By this," declared Moses, "you shall understand that the LORD has commissioned me to carry out all these activities, that I do not act on my own impulse. ²⁹If these men die the natural death of all men, and if the usual experiences of all men are theirs, then the LORD has not commissioned me. ³⁰But if the LORD creates something new^h in which He causes the ground to split open and swallow them and all their possessions, so that they are buried alive in Sheol,ⁱ then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD."

³¹As soon as he had finished speaking all these things, the ground split open beneath them, ³²and having opened its mouth, it swallowed them and their families,^j all the men who had sided with Korah, and all their goods.^k ³³They and all their households were buried alive in Sheol as the earth fell in upon them, and they vanished from the community. ³⁴But all the Israelites who surrounded them fled at their screams, exclaiming, "The earth may swallow us too." ³⁵Moreover, a fire proceeded from the LORD, which consumed the 250 men who had offered the incense.^l

³⁶Afterwards the LORD gave Moses these directions: ³⁷Tell Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers from between those who were

burned, for they are now sacred,^m and scatter the hot coals at a far distance. ³⁸Have them beat the censers of these sinners, who have forfeited their lives, into broad plates as a covering for the altar. Since they presented them before the LORD, they are to be sacred; let them serve as a sign to the nation of Israel.

³⁹After Eleazar the priest had taken up the censers of brass, which those who had been burned had presented, they beat them into plating for the altar. ⁴⁰This was to serve as a memorial to the nation of Israel to remind any outsider, who was not from the offspring of Aaron, that he should not draw near to burn incense before the LORD, so they might not experience the same fate as did Korah and his company. This was carried out as the LORD through Moses had directed him.ⁿ

⁴¹The next day the entire congregation of the nation of Israel began to complain against Moses and Aaron, charging, "You have slain the LORD's people."^o ⁴²No sooner had the congregation assembled against Moses and Aaron, than they looked toward the tent of meeting, and there was the cloud covering it!^p When the glory of the LORD appeared also, ⁴³Moses and Aaron hurried out to the entrance of the meeting tent. ⁴⁴Whereupon the LORD commanded Moses: ⁴⁵Move away from this congregation so that I may destroy them in a moment. But they^q fell on their faces. ⁴⁶"Take your censer," Moses charged Aaron, "put hot coals on it from off the altar, place the incense upon it and hurriedly carry it to the congregation. Make expiation for them, for vengeance has already proceeded from the LORD; the plague has started!"^r ⁴⁷Aaron took it as Moses had directed, ran out among the

h) Heb. - "create a creation." i) In Hebrew, the place of the dead.

j) Not all of Korah's sons perished; his descendants are again mentioned. Num. 26:58; 1 Chron. 6:18-22, and in the Psalms.

k) By their rebellion their possessions, too, were contaminated. l) Compare Lev. 10:1-2.

m) Because presented to the LORD, Lev. 27:28. n) Eleazar.

o) "In destroying our indispensable leaders, you have destroyed us." The calamity had effected no change in their attitude.

p) When the people camped, the cloud was always over the tabernacle, Ch. 9:15ff. The cloud had something extraordinary about it at this time. Comp. Ex. 40:34.

q) Moses and Aaron.

r) Moses had no time for intercession or argument to avert God's judgment. The high-priestly offering was now the only remedy; Lev. 16:12,13.

people, and saw that the plague had already started among the people. Then having fixed the incense, he made expiation for the people. ⁴⁸When he had stationed himself between the dead and the living, the plague was checked. ⁴⁹Those who died in the plague numbered 14,700, besides those who died in the Korah event. ⁵⁰When the plague had ended, Aaron returned to Moses at the door of the tent of meeting.^a

17 LATER ON THE LORD SAID TO Moses: ²Speak to the Israelites and take one rod from each clan—that is, from all their princes according to their clans, twelve rods in all.^t Write each man's name on his rod,³ and put Aaron's name on the rod of Levi since each rod stands for the head of each respective clan. ⁴Place them in the tent of meeting in front of the Testimony^u where I always meet with you. ⁵The rod of the man whom I have chosen^v will then produce shoots. In this way I shall relieve Myself of the complaints which the people of Israel are continually lodging against you.

⁶After Moses had thus informed the Israelites, all the princes gave him rods, a rod each from their respective clans, twelve in all,^w Aaron's rod being among theirs. ⁷Moses placed the rods before the LORD in the tent containing the testimonial evidence. ⁸Next morning when Moses entered the tent containing the Testimony, Aaron's rod, representing the clan of Levi, had indeed sprouted, put forth shoots, produced blossoms, and had even borne some ripe almonds.^x ⁹When Moses brought each of the rods from the LORD's presence to all the people of Israel, they gazed at them and finally each man claimed his rod. ¹⁰The LORD then commanded Moses: Put Aaron's rod back in front of the Testimony,

that it may be preserved as an object lesson to these rebellious people. Thus you can put a stop to their complaints against Me, that they may not die. ¹¹Moses acted accordingly; he did what the LORD had told him.

¹²"Certainly we are in distress," cried the people of Israel to Moses. "We perish, we all perish!" ¹³Everyone who approaches, who even comes near the LORD's Dwelling dies; are we all to die?"

18 THE LORD MADE CLEAR TO AARON: You, your sons, and your family are responsible for the sins against the sanctuary;^y likewise, you and your sons are responsible for the sins against your priesthood.² ²Bring your relatives with you from the tribe of Levi, your father's tribe, so that by joining you, they may assist you when both you and your sons are in front of the tent containing the testimonial evidence. ³They shall discharge the obligations imposed by you and all the duties connected with the tent. Only they must be careful to stay away from the articles of the sanctuary and the altar in order that they may escape death, both they and you. ⁴Have them join you, that they may discharge the duties connected with the tent of meeting—that is, whatever work the tent entails. No layman, however, is to come near you. ⁵You are to discharge the duties connected with both the sanctuary and the altar so that wrath may never again fall upon the nation of Israel.^a ⁶Take notice that as a gift for you I have selected your relatives, the Levites, out of the nation of Israel, to serve as custodians of the tent of meeting, seeing that they were given to the LORD; ⁷but you and your sons are to discharge your priestly duties in everything, from that which pertains

s) The high-priestly ministration proved necessary to pacify the LORD's indignation.

t) The princes carried these as a symbol of their tribal authority, comp. Gen. 49:10.

u) The two stone tablets containing the Law which were in the Ark. v) For the priesthood, ch. 16:5.

w) Ephraim and Manasseh reckoned together under Joseph [Deut. 27:12].

x) Aaron's priestly powers were likewise supernatural. As a man he was on a level with the other princes. y) They must prevent its desecration by the people.

z) Neglect of their priestly duties, offenses against the priesthood and defilement in carrying out their official responsibilities. The holy articles, for instance, had to be cleansed once a year [Lev. 16:16ff].

a) Twice previously this had happened [Lev. 10:2 and Num. 16:35].

to the altar to that which is inside the veil. Be sure to perform it, for the office of the priesthood is a gift which I am giving you. Any layman who approaches^b must be executed.

⁸The LORD informed Aaron: I, indeed, have assigned to you My heave offerings to keep, even all the holy gifts from the people of Israel; I have allotted them to you as a consecrated portion and to your descendants as a perpetual allowance. ⁹You are to have the portion of the most holy gifts which is not burned; namely, all their offerings — all their meal offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings—with which they make restitution to Me. The most holy gifts belong to you and to your sons. ¹⁰Regard it as most holy as you eat it; every male may eat of it, because, being holy, it belongs to you.

¹¹The heave offering involved in their contribution which is included in all the wave offerings from the people of Israel is also yours. I have apportioned it as a perpetual allowance to you and to your sons and daughters, so that everyone in your family may eat it provided they are clean. ¹²I have likewise assigned to you their first fruits which they have given to the LORD — that is, all the best of the oil and of the fresh wine and grain. ¹³The first ripe fruits of everything which is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, is yours. Everyone in your family who is clean may eat it.

¹⁴Also every devoted thing^c in Israel is for you. ¹⁵Every first-born of all living beings — both man and animal which they present to the LORD — belongs to you. ¹⁶Only be sure to redeem the first-born of both men and unclean animals. The redemption money for the month-old child whom you are redeeming shall be fixed by you at five silver dollars,^d the standard being the dollar of the sanctuary, which is twenty nickels. ¹⁷Because they are holy, you must not redeem a first-born bullock, sheep, or goat; you are to sprinkle their

blood upon the altar and make their fat go up in smoky fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ¹⁸Their meat, however, is for you; you are to have especially the wave breast and the right thigh. ¹⁹Summarily, all the heave offerings included with the holy gifts, which the people of Israel offered to the LORD, I have apportioned as a perpetual allowance to you and to your sons and daughters. It is a covenant of salt^e which will last forever before the LORD for both you and your offspring after you. ²⁰The LORD further informed Aaron: You are not to have an inheritance in their land nor own any property among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.^f

²¹As for the descendants of Levi, I have assigned to them all the tithes in Israel as their share in payment for their services as custodians of the tent of meeting. ²²From now on the people of Israel are never to come near the tent of meeting, else they will incur the penalty of sin and die. ²³The Levites shall discharge the duties connected with the tent of meeting, and they shall be held responsible if they fail. This is a perpetual statute which shall continue in effect throughout your generations, that they are not to possess an inheritance among the people of Israel. ²⁴For I have designated the tithes which the people of Israel contribute to the LORD as the share which belongs to the Levites. Therefore I have told them that they are not to own any property among the people of Israel.

²⁵The LORD further said to Moses: ²⁶Speak to the Levites and direct them, "When you receive from the people of Israel the tithe which I have assigned to you as your share from them, set part of it aside as a heave offering to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷Your heave offering shall be credited to you as though it were the grain from the threshing floor and as the full produce

b) Not only to perform these priestly duties, but for any reason.

c) Anything which was entirely dedicated to the LORD and therefore could not be sold or redeemed, Lev. 27:28.

d) Heb. — Five shekels of silver. Weights which could be worth about five dollars today. See the footnote to ch. 3:47. e) An indissoluble covenant [Lev. 2:13].

f) If we trust the Possessor of heaven and earth, our needs will be supplied [Phil. 4:19].

of the wine press. ²⁸Thus from all your tithes which you receive from the people of Israel, you are to contribute a heave offering to the LORD and give the LORD's contribution to Aaron the priest. ²⁹Out of all that is given to you, you are to select from every heave offering for the LORD the best part, the sacred portion of it. ³⁰Tell them also, "When you offer the best part of it, it shall be credited to the Levites as the yield of the threshing floor and the wine press. ³¹As it is your remuneration for your services in the tent of meeting, you and your family may eat it anywhere you wish. ³²You will not bring any sin upon yourselves, provided that you contribute the best part of it. In short, you are not to desecrate the holy gifts of the Israelites or you will die."

19 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES AND Aaron: ²This is the statute of instruction which the LORD has instituted: Tell the people of Israel to bring you a perfect red heifer^g entirely without blemish, which has never borne a yoke. ³Give it to Eleazar the priest and after he has led it outside the camp, have someone^h slaughter it in his presence. ⁴Eleazar the priest shall next take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven timesⁱ toward the front of the meeting tent. ⁵Someone must then burn the heifer before his eyes, and after he is through burning its skin, flesh and blood, along with its waste, ⁶the priest shall take cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool and throw it into the midst of the burning heifer. ⁷Finally, before entering the camp, the priest must wash his clothes and bathe his body with water; nevertheless, the priest is still unclean till evening. ⁸He who burns it shall also wash his clothes with water and

bathe his body; he too remains unclean till evening. ⁹Someone who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them in a clean place outside the camp. They shall be kept for the congregation of the Israelites as water of uncleanness;^j it is a sin offering. ¹⁰He who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and remain unclean until evening.

This shall be a perpetual regulation for the nation of Israel and for the foreigner who resides among you. ¹¹He who touches the dead body of any person shall remain unclean for seven days. ¹²He shall cleanse himself with it^k on the third day, and on the seventh day, and then he shall be clean; but if he fails to purify himself on the third day, then on the seventh day he shall not be clean. ¹³Every one who touches the corpse of a man who has died and fails to cleanse himself has defiled the Dwelling of the LORD; that person must be excommunicated from Israel because the water of uncleanness was not sprinkled upon him. He is unclean; his uncleanness is still upon him.^l

¹⁴This rule applies when a man dies in a tent: Anyone who enters the tent, together with those who are already in the tent, shall be unclean for seven days. ¹⁵Every open utensil, which does not have its cover fastened down, is also contaminated. ¹⁶In addition, anyone in the open field who touches him, who is fatally wounded in battle, or a corpse,^m or a human bone, or a grave, shall stay unclean for seven days. ¹⁷For the unclean person they are to take some of the ashes left from the burning of the sin offering and pour fresh water over them in a basin. ¹⁸A clean person shall then take some hyssop, dip it in water, and sprinkle it on the tent, all the furniture, and the individuals

g) Of the female sex, as the bearer of life, Gen. 3:20.

h) Probably a representative of the congregation for whom the offering was being made.

i) It became a sacrifice, having been brought into relation with the LORD.

j) Water (mixed with ashes, vs. 17) by which uncleanness was to be removed. The ashes contained the blood of the heifer, (thus making it a sin offering), as well as the other purifying elements.

k) The water of purification.

l) Death is the wages of sin, Gen. 2:17; therefore a person was contaminated with sin when he touched a corpse. Because of the many deaths which were to occur in the wilderness as the penalty for unbelief, ch. 14:32ff, the usual laws of purification would not afford enough time to cleanse so many offenders. The red heifer purification took care of this.

m) A person who has died a natural death.

who were there, as well as on the person who touched the bone, or the slain, or the corpse, or the grave. ¹⁹The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean person on the third and on the seventh day so as to purify him on the seventh day. Then, after washing his clothes and bathing in water, he shall be clean that evening. ²⁰On the other hand, the individual who is unclean and will not purify himself, that person must be excommunicated from the community, for he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD by not having the water of uncleanness sprinkled upon him; he is unclean. ²¹This shall be a regulation for them forever. Moreover, he who sprinkles the water of uncleanness is to wash his clothes, and the one who touches the water of uncleanness shall remain unclean till evening. ²²Anything the unclean person touches becomes contaminated, and the individual who touches it shall likewise be unclean until evening.ⁿ

20 WHEN THE ENTIRE ASSEMBLY of the nation of Israel arrived at the wilderness of Zin in the first month,^o the people stayed in Kadesh. This is where Miriam died and was buried.^p

²Because the community was without water, they assembled against Moses and Aaron. ³The people started arguing with Moses, complaining, "Had we but died when our relatives died before the LORD!^q ⁴Why have you brought the congregation of the LORD into this desert to die, both we and our livestock? ⁵Why have you forced us to leave Egypt to bring us to this miserable location? It is no place for seed or fig trees, or vines, or pomegranates; there is not even any drinking water!"^r

⁶Moses and Aaron then went out from the assembly's presence to the

door of the tent of meeting, and as they fell on their faces, the glory of the LORD appeared to them. ⁷The LORD told Moses: ⁸"Take the rod^s and together with Aaron your brother assemble the congregation. Speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may give forth its waters. Thus you shall draw forth water for them out of the rock so that you may give the assembly and their livestock to drink. ⁹Accordingly Moses took the rod from before the LORD even as He had directed him.

¹⁰After Moses and Aaron had assembled the congregation in front of the rock, he said to them, "Listen well, you rebels; must we draw water out of this rock for you?" ¹¹Then lifting up his hand, Moses struck the rock twice with his rod,^t and out flowed the water freely, allowing both the congregation and their livestock to quench their thirst.^u ¹²Nevertheless, the LORD reprimanded both Moses and Aaron: Because you have not firmly trusted in Me so as to vindicate My holiness in the eyes of the people of Israel, you shall not lead this assembly into the land that I have given them. ¹³These are the waters of Meribah,^v where the nation of Israel contended with the LORD; nevertheless, He vindicated His holiness before them.^w

¹⁴Later Moses dispatched messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, "This comes from your brother Israel.^x You are well aware of all the misery which we have experienced; ¹⁵how our fathers went down to Egypt and stayed there for a long time and how the Egyptians mistreated both us and our fathers. ¹⁶But when we cried out to the LORD, He heard our plea and sent an angel to bring us out of Egypt. Now here we are at Kadesh, a town near the border of your territory. ¹⁷Would you be so kind as to permit us to pass

n) Our sins have harmful effects on others too.

o) In the fortieth year after they left Egypt. Comp. 14:33-35; 33:3, 37-39.

p) A thoughtful girl at Moses' birth, now about 130.

q) Generally throughout the 40 years of wandering and specifically as a result of Korah's rebellion, ch. 16.

r) Discontent as the fruit of unbelief. s) Aaron's rod from the Ark.

t) Temper, disobedience, self-will, and lack of faith, see Ps. 106:32,33. The Book that records his virtues, 12:3, now records his backsliding.

u) Despite the sin of Moses and Aaron, the people received the life-giving water, typical of the true life received from Christ [I Cor. 10:4]. God's blessings are not dependent on man.

v) Heb. - "Strife." w) Supplying the water and punishing Moses and Aaron. God is not mocked.

x) Esau, the brother of Jacob, was the father of the Edomites [Gen. 36].

through your country? We shall not cut across any field or vineyard, neither shall we drink any water from a well, but we shall take the king's highway^y without turning off to the right or to the left until we cross your border."¹⁸ "You cannot pass through here," Edom answered him, "for if you do, I shall come out in battle against you."¹⁹ "We shall go up the public highway," appealed the nation of Israel; "if we do drink of your water, however, either I or my livestock, I shall pay whatever it costs. I only want to pass through on foot; will that do any harm?"²⁰ Again he answered, "You cannot pass through." Edom then came out to engage him with a large, well-armed force.²¹ Therefore, seeing Edom refused permission for Israel to pass through his territory, Israel turned away from him.

²²After leaving Kadesh, the entire congregation of Israel came to Mount Hor.²³ While at Mount Hor, near the border of the land of Edom, the LORD informed Moses and Aaron:²⁴ Aaron shall be reunited with his kindred,^z for he cannot enter the land which I have given to the nation of Israel, because both of you rebelled against My instructions at the waters of Meribah.²⁵ Therefore take Aaron and his son Eleazar and bring them up to Mount Hor.²⁶ Strip Aaron of his robes and put them on Eleazar his son, inasmuch as Aaron is going to pass on and die there.²⁷ Moses did as the LORD had directed and they ascended Mount Hor, as the entire assembly looked on.²⁸ After Moses had stripped Aaron of his robes and had put them on Eleazar his son, Aaron died there^a on the mountain top; after which Moses and Eleazar came down, from the mountain.²⁹ When the entire congregation saw that Aaron had passed away, the

whole family of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.

August, 1407 B.C.

21 WHEN THE KING OF ARAD, A Canaanite who lived in the South-land, heard that Israel was approaching by way of Atharim,^b he attacked Israel, taking some of them prisoner.² Israel then made a vow to the LORD, saying, "If Thou wilt indeed deliver this people into our hand, we will completely wipe out their cities."³ The LORD heard Israel's request and delivered to them the Canaanites, so that they completely destroyed them and their cities; as a result, the place was named Hormah.^c

⁴In order to make the trip around the land of Edom, they were forced to travel by way of the Red Sea. The people, however, became depressed in spirit as a result of the route,⁵ and they again assailed God and Moses, "Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in the desert? There is neither bread nor water and we loathe to our souls this flat diet."^d ⁶As a consequence, the LORD sent among them stinging^e serpents, which bit the people so that many Israelites died.⁷ Then hurrying to Moses, the people confessed, "We have sinned in criticizing the LORD and you; pray to the LORD that He may remove the serpents from us." So Moses interceded in behalf of the people,⁸ and in turn the LORD instructed Moses: You make a stinging serpent and raise it on a pole. Anyone of those who are bitten, who looks at it, shall live.⁹ Moses therefore made a serpent of brass^f and lifted it up on the pole,^g and so it was that, if a person who had been bitten by the serpent, looked^h at the serpent of brass, he lived.¹

¹⁰The nation of Israel then pushed forward and set up camp in Obobh.

y) The main highway over which the king and his armies traveled.

z) An intimation of life after death. a) Aged 123 [ch. 33:39].

b) Or "Of the spies," apparently the route used by the spies in ch. 13:17,21.

c) Heb. - "a devoted thing," or, doomed to destruction.

d) The manna, which had been their wholesome nourishment, received without working for it and without which they must have starved. e) An inflammatory bite filled with poison and fever.

f) The form without the poison, so Christ in sinful flesh, yet without sin [II Cor. 5:21]. Our Lord accepts that brazen serpent as a symbol of Himself [John 3:14].

g) Comp. John 3:14; 12:32. h) Faith is ever the prerequisite for saving grace [Eph. 2:8; Isa. 45:22].

i) This serpent became an object of idolatrous worship and had to be destroyed [II Kings 18:4].

¹¹Leaving Oboth, they next camped at Iye-abarim in the desert on the eastern border of Moab.¹ ¹²After leaving there and camping in the valley of Zered, ¹³they continued and made camp where the desert extends back from the border of the Amorites on the other side of the Arnon, which is likewise Moab's boundary between them and the Amorites. ¹⁴For this reason it is described in the book, *The Wars of Jehovah*, "Waheb,^k like a stormy wind, and the water courses of Arnon, ¹⁵the ravine of the brooks which stretches toward the dwelling of Ar and rests on the border of Moab."

¹⁶From there they continued on to Beer,^l the place of the well where the LORD had said to Moses: Assemble the people and I will give them water.^m

¹⁷Israel then sang this song, "Spring up, O well! Sing ye to it!" ¹⁸A well which princes dug, which nobles of the people hollowed with the scepter and with their staves."

¹⁹From the desert they proceeded on through Mattanah, Nahaliel, ²⁰and Bamoth, to the valley overlooking the desert in the plateau of Moab by the top of Pisgah.

²¹Israel dispatched messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, with the message, ²²"Would you permit me to pass through your country? We shall not turn off into a field or vineyard, nor shall we drink any water from a well; for we promise to keep to the king's highway until we have crossed your border." ²³But Sihon would not grant Israel permission to pass through his territory; in fact, he mobilized his entire force and went out to meet Israel in the desert. Upon reaching Jahaz, he fought against Israel; ²⁴but Israel cut him down in battle and occupied his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, even to the nation of Ammon, since the Ammonite border was very strong." ²⁵Israel seized all these cities belonging to the Amorites and later

settled in them, both in Heshbon and all her towns; ²⁶for Heshbon was the capital of Sihon, the Amorite king who had fought against the former king of Moab and had seized control of all his territory as far as the Arnon. ²⁷Therefore the composers of ballads say, "Come to Heshbon. Let the city of Sihon be rebuilt; let it be restored." ²⁸For a fire went out from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon. It consumed Ar of Moab, the masters of the heights of the Arnon. ²⁹Woe to thee, O Moab; you are ruined, O people of Chemosh! He^o has surrendered his sons as fugitives, his daughters too as captives, to Sihon, king of the Amorites. ³⁰But we have shot them down; Heshbon is lost even to Dibon. We have ravaged as far as Nophah, which reaches even to Medeba."

³¹While Israel was residing in the land of the Amorites, ³²Moses sent out a reconnaissance party to Jazer. They then captured her towns, driving out the Amorites who were there.

³³After this they turned and traveled up the road toward Bashan; but Og, the king of Bashan, came out with all his forces to battle with them at Edrei.

³⁴Nevertheless, the LORD assured Moses: Be not afraid of him, for I have delivered him into your hand^p—along with all his subjects and land. You shall deal with him even as you dealt with Sihon, the Amorite king who lived in Heshbon. ³⁵So they slew him, his sons, and all his subjects until he did not have a single survivor remaining, and then they occupied his land. January/February, 1406 B.C.

22 THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL THEN traveled on and set up camp in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan^q opposite Jericho. ²And when Balak the son of Zippor perceived all that Israel had done to the Amorites, ³Moab was utterly dismayed at the people's presence because there were so many of them; in fact, Moab was terrified at the

j) Heb. — "Toward the sunrise." k) A town near the Arnon river northward. l) Heb. — "Well."

m) There is a promise for every need [Phil. 4:19].

n) The main reason for not entering Ammon is given in Deut. 2:19: Lot was their ancestor.

o) Chemosh the chief god of Moab [Jer. 48:7].

p) Need we ever fail with such sustaining power? Isa. 41:10.

q) The common term for the land taken east of the Jordan.

presence of the nation of Israel. ⁴In view of this, Moab consulted with the elders of Midian, "This multitude will now shear off everything around us, as an ox shears off the grass in the field."

Wherefore Balak the son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, ⁵dispatched messengers to solicit the aid of Balaam^r the son of Beor, who was in Pethor, his native land, which is near the River,^s saying, "Look, a people has emigrated from Egypt; mind you, they cover the face of the earth! They are even staying directly across from me. ⁶Come at once and curse this people for me, for they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I shall be in a position where we can defeat them and drive them out of the country, because I know he whom you bless remains blessed and he whom you curse stays cursed."

⁷Accordingly, the elders of Moab and Midian, having left with the fees for sorcery in their hand, came to Balaam and conveyed to him Balak's message. ⁸"Spend the night here," he said, "and I shall give you a reply as the LORD directs me;"^t so the princes of Moab lodged with Balaam. ⁹God then came to Balaam and asked: Who are these men with you? ¹⁰Balaam answered God, "Balak, the son of Zippor, the king of Moab, has sent for me saying, ¹¹'Look! The people that emigrated from Egypt have covered the face of the earth. Please come at once and curse them for me. Perhaps I can fight against them and drive them away.'"

¹²But God restrained Balaam: You shall not go with them; you are not to curse the people, for they are blessed.^u

¹³In the morning Balaam got up and told the princes of Balak, "Return to your own land, for the LORD has refused^v me permission to go with you."

¹⁴The princes of Moab arose and re-

turning to Balak reported to him, "Balaam refused to come with us."

¹⁵In spite of this, Balak again tried, sending a larger number of princes who were more distinguished than the former. ¹⁶When they came to Balaam they said to him, "Balak the son of Zippor has this to say, 'Please let nothing hinder you from joining me, ¹⁷for I will surely honor you exceedingly. Besides, I promise to do whatever you request of me; only please come and curse this people for me.'"¹⁸In answer Balaam replied to Balak's officers, "If Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not overstep the command of the LORD my God to do anything, whether small or great. ¹⁹Nevertheless, you stay here tonight, too, and I shall find out what else the LORD may have to say to me."²⁰During that night God came to Balaam and told him; If the men have come to summon you, get up and go with them, but you are to do only what I tell you.

²¹So next morning he got up, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab. ²²But God's anger was inflamed over his going,^x and the Angel of the LORD stationed Himself on the road as his adversary. He was riding on his donkey accompanied by two servants, ²³when suddenly the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the road with His drawn sword in His hand, and she turned off the road and went into the field. Balaam, however, hit the donkey to get her back on the road.^y ²⁴Next the Angel of the LORD stood in a lane between the vineyards, a wall being on either side. ²⁵On seeing the Angel of the LORD, the donkey pressed against the wall, squeezing Balaam's foot in the process, thus causing him to strike her again. ²⁶The Angel of the LORD

r) Whose God was Jehovah, to whom here an idolater turns in distress.

s) The Euphrates.

t) He knew their mission was evil. To entertain temptation is sin, as in Gen. 3.

u) God's word is always clear, if we will hear.

v) He suppresses the fact that the LORD has forbidden him to curse Israel.

w) The LORD may grant a persistent selfish request even though He knows the answer will hurt [Ps. 106:15]. Balaam's heart was not right; "he loved the wages of wickedness" [II Pet. 2:15].

x) The Hebrew construction here suggests that God was displeased with his frame of heart as he traveled. See further vs. 32.

y) Balaam was unable to see the LORD, for the reward Balak had promised. Sin blinds us spiritually.

then moved still farther and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn either to the right or to the left. ²⁷When the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam. Balaam lost his temper and struck the donkey with his stick. ²⁸At that point, the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you should hit me these three times?" ²⁹"Because you have made me look ridiculous," Balaam retorted to the donkey; "if I had only had a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now." ³⁰The donkey reminded Balaam, "Have I not been your donkey upon which you have ridden all your life to this very day? Have I always been in the habit of doing this to you?" "No," he admitted.

³¹The LORD then opened Balaam's eyes, and when he saw the Angel of the LORD standing there in the road with His drawn sword in His hand, he bowed his head and fell on his face.

³²"Why have you struck your donkey these three times?" the Angel of the LORD admonished him. "Take note, I have come as an adversary because in My sight your road leads headlong into destruction." ³³The donkey saw Me and has shied away from Me these three times and if it had not been for her shying away from Me, I certainly would have killed you by now and spared her." ³⁴Balaam confessed to the Angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not realize that Thou wert standing in the road to confront me; but now if it is displeasing in Thy sight, I shall go back." ³⁵However, the Angel of the LORD directed Balaam: Go with the men, but you are only to relay the message that I tell you. Thus Balaam continued on with the princes of Balak.

³⁶When Balak heard that Balaam had arrived, he went out to meet him in a city of Moab near the border of

the Arnon river, which is at the far end of the boundary. ³⁷Balak questioned Balaam, "Did I not urgently send you a party to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not capable of honoring you?" ³⁸Balaam replied to Balak, "But look! I have now come to you; nevertheless, am I entirely at liberty to speak anything? The message which God brings to my mind, that I must speak." ³⁹Balaam then went with Balak until they reached Kiriath-huzoth,^a ⁴⁰where Balak proceeded to sacrifice bullocks and sheep,^b sending some^c to Balaam and to the princes who were with him. ⁴¹And early the next day Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal, from which vantage point he could see to the outer-most edge of the people.

23 "BUILD ME SEVEN ALTARS here," ²Balaam directed Balak; "and likewise prepare seven bulls and seven rams."^d After Balak did as Balaam had ordered, Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar. ³"Stand beside your burnt offering while I am gone," Balaam told Balak; "perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and then whatever message He imparts to me I shall reveal in turn to you." When he had gone to a barren height,^e ⁴God did meet Balaam who told Him, "I have arranged the seven altars in a row and have offered a bull and a ram on each altar." ⁵Presently the LORD placed a message in Balaam's mouth, explaining: Return to Balak, for this is what you must say. ⁶When Balaam returned to him, there he was standing beside his burnt offering along with all of Moab's princes. ⁷Balaam then began his discourse, "From Aram^f I am brought by Balak from eastern mountains by Moab's king; Oh, come and curse Jacob for me, yes, come and threaten Israel. ⁸How shall I curse whom God has not cursed, and how condemn when the LORD condemns not? ⁹For

z) Balaam's spiritual resistance weakened steadily during the trip; God knew that unless his spiritual senses were awakened, tragedy would result.

a) City of streets. b) To Jehovah, since He was the God of Balaam and of the Israelites.

c) As a sacrificial meal.

d) He was a perfectionist, but his heart was not right with God; "To obey is better than sacrifice" [1 Sam. 15:22; Mark 12:33]. e) The common practice of pagan sorcerers. f) Mesopotamia.

from the rocky peak I view them, and from the heights I observe them; surely a people who live by themselves, who cast not their lot among other nations.^g ¹⁰Who can number Jacob's millions,^h or count one fourth of Israel's?ⁱ Let me die as dies the righteous,^j and may my end resemble his."

¹¹"What have you done to me?" demanded Balak of Balaam. "I secured you to curse my enemies, but you certainly have done nothing but bless them." ¹²In answer he said, "Must I not be extremely careful to relay only that which the LORD puts in my mouth?"

¹³Nevertheless, Balak urged him, "Please come with me to another place from which you can see them, although you shall only see the further edge of them, not all of them. Curse them for me from there." ¹⁴After taking him to the field of Zophim,^k at the top of Pisgah, he built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. ¹⁵He then instructed Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offering while I have a meeting yonder."

¹⁶The LORD then met Balaam and placed a message in his mouth, explaining: Return to Balak, for this is what you must say. ¹⁷When he rejoined him, there Balak was standing beside his burnt offering along with the princes of Moab. Balak asked him, "What did the LORD say?" ¹⁸Balaam then announced this discourse:

"Get to your feet, O Balak, and listen, pay attention to me, O son of Zippor! ¹⁹For God is not man that He should lie, neither human that He should change his mind. When He gives His word, does He not perform it? Or does He promise and not fulfill it? ²⁰Look! I was given an order

to bless, and since He has blessed, I cannot alter it. ²¹He has detected no sin in Jacob,^m neither has He witnessed mischief in Israel. The LORD, their God, is ever among them, and they shout with praise to a King.ⁿ ²²God is leading them out of Egypt, their strength is like that of a buffalo,^o ²³Indeed, there is no sorcery in Jacob, neither is witchcraft found in Israel.^p At a proper time it shall be stated to Jacob, yes, to Israel what God has brought about! ²⁴Surely the people arise as a lioness, even as a lion they exert themselves;^q it does not rest till it eats the prey, nor till it drinks the blood of the slain."

²⁵In view of this, Balak charged Balaam, "Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all." ²⁶In answer to Balak, Balaam said, "Did I not explain this to you? Whatever the LORD says I must do."

²⁷Nevertheless, Balak urged Balaam, "Please come. Let me take you to another place; perhaps it will be agreeable with God to curse them for me from there." ²⁸So Balak conducted Balaam to the top of Peor where it looks out over the desert. ²⁹Again Balaam directed Balak, "Construct seven altars for me here, and likewise prepare seven bulls and seven rams." ³⁰After Balak did as Balaam had ordered, he offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

24 WHEN BALAAM PERCEIVED THAT it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go back and resort to omens as on previous occasions, but turned his face toward the desert.^r ²As he raised his eyes and viewed Israel, camping according to their tribes, the Spirit of God came upon him. ³He then took up his oracles; he said, "The

g) Israel, as God's chosen people, was religiously and morally separate from the Gentile nations. h) Heb. — "dust," an allusion to God's statement in Gen. 13:16.

i) One of the four divisions in the camp, ch. 2.

j) To die as the righteous one must live as the righteous. He was later killed in a battle between Israel and the Midianites.

k) Or "watchers"; because of its location it was probably an observation post in times of disturbance. l) A vague statement, possibly to encourage Balak. Balaam, too, may have been hoping for a change for his own benefit.

m) Their sins were covered by the blood on the mercy seat; so those of every repentant sinner.

n) The theocratic kingdom which they later rejected [I Sam. 8].

o) A species of buffalo now extinct which had towering horns, a symbol of its strength.

p) They had no need of these. So the church today has no use for godless cunning; she has the Holy Spirit and His Word [John 14:26; I Cor. 2:6ff].

q) Probably an allusion to Gen. 49:9. Here the strength is applied to all Israel.

r) The plain of Moab where Israel was camped.

revelation of Balaam, Beor's son, the revelation of a man whose eye is opened; ⁴the revelation of him who hears God's words, a vision of the Almighty he also sees; for when he falls, his eyes are open. ⁵How pleasant, O Jacob, are your tents, your dwellings, O Israel. ⁶Spread out as valleys, as gardens along a stream, like aloes^s which the LORD has planted, like cedars beside the waters.^t ⁷Water will flow from their buckets,^u their offspring shall be by much water. Their king shall be higher than Agag,^v their kingdom too shall be exalted. ⁸God is leading them out of Egypt, their strength like that of a buffalo. The nations, their opponents, they shall swallow, crushing their bones into pieces, piercing them through with their arrows. ⁹They lie, they crouch as a lion; as a lioness, who would disturb them? Blessed are they who bless you and cursed are they who curse you."

¹⁰Balak's anger flared up against Balaam, and striking his fists, he rebuked Balaam, "I engaged you to curse my enemy, but without fail you have done nothing but bless them these three times. ¹¹Flee immediately to your home; I certainly promised I would highly honor you, but the LORD has held you back from this prestige."

¹²Balaam reminded Balak, "But did I not inform your messengers whom you sent me, ¹³If Balak should give me his house full of silver and gold, I still cannot overstep the LORD's command to do good or evil of my own accord; whatever the LORD tells me I must say?" ¹⁴But now, notice! I am return-

ing to my people. Come, let me inform you what this people shall do to your people in the future days."^x ¹⁵He then took up his discourse, saying:

"The revelation of Balaam son of Beor, the revelation of a man with opened eyes, ¹⁶the revelation of him who hears God's words, who perceives the knowledge of the Most High. A vision of the Almighty he also sees, for when he falls, his eyes are open. ¹⁷I see Him but not now; I observe Him but not nearby. A Star shall come up out of Jacob,^y a Scepter shall rise out of Israel,^z which shall crush Moab from one end to the other and destroy all the children of Sheth.^a ¹⁸Edom too shall become a possession and Seir a conquered territory,^b while Israel is displaying his strength. ¹⁹One with dominion shall come out of Jacob and kill the survivors left from the city."

²⁰When he perceived Amalek,^c he took up his discourse: "Amalek was the first of the nations,^d but his end shall close with destruction."

²¹Then observing the Kenite^e he proceeded with his discourse: "Your home is of lasting duration, and your nest is set in the rock. ²²Nevertheless Kain^{ee} shall head toward destruction till Assyria^f departs you as captives."

²³He then concluded his discourse by saying, "Woe! who shall live when God performs this?"^g ²⁴Ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus;^h they shall oppress both Assyria and Eber.ⁱ He also shall end in destruction."^j

²⁵Balaam then got up to leave^k and returned to his home, while Balak also went his way.

s) A plant highly valued for its fragrance and used in making incense. t) Compare Ps. 1:3.

u) An abundance of water in a hot, arid climate.

v) A general title given to the Amalekite kings, as the name Pharaoh was in Egypt. The Amalekites here represent the gentile kingdoms in opposition to God's kingdom, since they were the first to oppose Israel after leaving Egypt [Ex. 17:8]. w) Does not imply divine approval.

x) This national prophecy became history and will be climaxed with victory over all world powers. y) The coming Messiah. The star has long been the symbol of royalty and imperial greatness [Matt. 2:2 and Rev. 22:16]. z) Gen. 49:10.

a) The history of Moab was characterized by warlike confusion.

b) Edom, the people, Seir the country. c) In his vision.

d) The first to oppose Israel as they left Egypt.

e) The Kenites were friendly. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was of this tribe. See Num. 10:29; I Sam. 15:6. ee) Or, the Kenite.

f) Destruction must come for the Kenites in so far as they did not with Israel enter into God's gracious covenant [I Sam. 15:6].

g) To destruction. h) Heb. — Kittim, Gen. 10:4.

i) Descendants of Eber, Gen. 10:21-30, who settled in the Near East. Together with Assyria they represented the coming world powers of the East.

j) II Sam. 7:12ff; Ps. 2; Dan. 2:44,45.

k) Sometime before Balaam left, he suggested to Balak immoral ways of leading the men of Israel astray [31:16 and Rev. 2:14].

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25 WHILE ISRAEL WAS STAYING IN Acacia,¹ the people began to have illicit relations with the women of Moab,² who had invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods. The people then started eating and bowing down to these gods,³ and before long Israel was uniting freely with Baal-peor. The LORD's anger burned against Israel,⁴ and He commanded Moses: Summon all the leaders of the people and hang them⁵ up in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD's burning anger may be diverted from Israel. ⁶Therefore Moses ordered the judges of Israel, "Each of you execute those of his men who have fraternized with Baal-peor."

⁶Later, indeed, one of the men of Israel, in plain view of Moses and of the entire Israelite community,⁷ who were weeping at the door of the meeting tent,⁸ came in and introduced a woman of Midian to his relatives. ⁹When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the grandson of Aaron the priest, witnessed this, he withdrew hurriedly from the congregation, and seizing a spear in his hand,¹⁰ he rushed after this man into the tent and pierced them both through, the man of Israel and the woman right through her stomach. The plague upon Israel then came to a stop,¹¹ but not until 24,000 had died of the plague.

¹⁰The LORD then said to Moses: ¹¹Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the grandson of Aaron the priest, has turned away My indignation from the nation of Israel by being so concerned about My zeal among you and as a result I did not finish dealing with the people of Israel according to My zeal. ¹²Therefore announce: I indeed am re-

affirming with him My covenant of peace.¹³ He and his descendants after him shall retain this covenant of the everlasting priesthood,¹⁴ because he has been zealous for his God and has made atonement¹⁵ for the people of Israel.

¹⁴The slain man's name, the Israelite who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, the leader of one of Simeon's clans. ¹⁵The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur who was the head of a group of clans in Midian.

¹⁶Moses was then ordered by the LORD: ¹⁷Provoke aggression with the Midianites and afterwards smite them; ¹⁸for, you see, they too are tormenting you with their underhandedness, having deceived you in the Peor affair and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of the prince of Midian, their sister, who was killed on the day of the plague in the Peor trouble.

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26 A SHORT TIME AFTER THE plague, the LORD told Moses and Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest: ²Take a census of the entire assembly of the people of Israel from 20 years of age and upward according to their clans; all who are subject to military service in Israel.³ In turn Moses and Eleazar the priest relayed this order to them⁴ in the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho, saying, ⁴"Take a census of the people from twenty years of age and upward, in the same manner as the LORD commanded Moses and the people of Israel who emigrated from the land of Egypt."⁵

⁶The descendants of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, were: Hanoch of whom is the Hanochite clan; Pallu, the

1) At the northern end of their camp in the plains of Moab they came in closest contact with the Moabites. m) Eating of the pagan offerings and practicing the accompanying immoralities.

n) As leaders they had failed the people; see Lk. 12:48.

o) The shameless attitude before the people was wicked, but worse yet was the brazen blasphemy against God. p) Over the death of their leaders and the plague victims.

q) Nothing could intervene to break this covenant: the promise of eternal priesthood [vs. 13]. Comp. Ps. 106:28-31.

r) The final and perpetual High Priest would be Christ Himself. Ps. 110:4.

s) An unprecedented means of atonement; not a required sacrifice but a voluntary deed prompted by his righteous indignation against sin as opposition to God.

t) While the primary purpose of the census was to determine the inheritance of each tribe in Canaan, vs. 52-56, it was also a military census.

u) Presumably, the various tribal leaders as in ch. 1:4ff. v) Num. 1:2,3.

Palluite clan; ⁶Hezron, the Hezronite clan; and Carmi, the Carmite clan. ⁷These are the Reubenite clans whose conscriptees totaled 43,730. ⁸The son of Pallu was Eliab, ⁹ whose sons were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the same Dathan and Abiram, national representatives, who contended against Moses and Aaron along with Korah's company when they quarreled against the Lord. ¹⁰The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them along with Korah at the same time when that company was killed by the fire which, as a warning,^w consumed the 250 men. ¹¹Korah's sons, however, did not die.

¹²The sons of Simeon according to their respective clans were: Nemuel, of whom is the Nemuelite clan; Jamin, the Jaminite clan; Jachin, the Jachinite clan; ¹³Zerah, the Zerahite clan; and Shaul, the Shaulite clan. ¹⁴These Simonite clans totaled 22,200.^x

¹⁵The sons of Gad^y according to their respective clans were: Zephon, of whom is the Zephonite clan; Haggi, the Haggite clan; Shuni, the Shunite clan; ¹⁶Ozni, the Oznite clan; Eri, the Erite clan; ¹⁷Arod, the Arodite clan; and Areli, the Arelite clan. ¹⁸These are the clans of Gad's descendants, whose conscriptees totaled 40,500.

¹⁹Two of Judah's sons were Er and Onan who died in the land of Canaan.^z ²⁰The sons of Judah according to their respective clans were: Shelah, of whom is the Shelanite clan; Perez, the Perezite clan;^a and Zerah, the Zerahite clan. ²¹The sons of Perez were: Hezron, of whom is the Hezronite clan; and Hamul, the Hamulite clan. ²²These are the clans of Judah, whose conscriptees totaled 76,500.

²³The sons of Issachar according to their respective clans were: Tola, of whom is the Tolaite clan; Puvah, the Punite clan; ²⁴Jashub, the Jashubite

clan; and Shimron, the Shimronite clan. ²⁵These are the clans of Issachar, whose conscriptees totaled 64,300.

²⁶The sons of Zebulun according to their respective clans were: Sered, of whom is the Seredite clan; Elon, the Elonite clan; and Jahleel, the Jahleelite clan. ²⁷These are the Zebulunite clans whose conscriptees totaled 60,500.

²⁸The sons of Joseph according to their respective tribes were Manasseh and Ephraim. ²⁹The descendants of Manasseh were: Machir, of whom is the Machirite clan. Machir was the father of Gilead, of whom is the Gileadite clan. ³⁰The sons of Gilead were: Iezer, of whom is the Iezerite clan; Helek, the Helekite clan; ³¹Asriel, the Asrielite clan; Shechem, the Shechemite clan; ³²Shemida, the Shemidaite clan; and Hephher, the Hephherite clan. ³³Now Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, had no sons but only daughters, and the names of Zelophehad's daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.^b ³⁴These are the clans of Manasseh whose conscriptees totaled 52,700.

³⁵The sons of Ephraim according to their respective clans were: Shuthelah, of whom is the Shuthelahite clan; Becher, the Becherite clan; and Tahan, the Tahanite clan. ³⁶The following are the sons of Shuthelah: Eran of whom is the Eranite clan. ³⁷These are the clans of Ephraim's descendants whose conscriptees totaled 32,500. The preceding are the sons of Joseph according to their clans.

³⁸The sons of Benjamin according to their respective clans were: Bela, of whom is the Belaite clan; Ashbel, the Ashbelite clan; Ahiram, the Ahiramite clan; ³⁹Shephupham, the Shuphamite clan; and Hupham, the Huphamite clan. ⁴⁰The sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: Ard, of whom is the Ardite clan; and Naaman, the Naamite

w) Num. 16:30,38, a further evidence of God's mercy.

x) Comparing the national census of ch. 1, Simeon suffered the greatest decrease; they were probably most involved in the Baal-peor affair.

y) After Reuben and Simeon the Levites are next in line, but they as ministers, are numbered by themselves. Gad, elder son of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, fills the gap between Simeon and Judah.

z) Gen. 38:6-9.

a) From which David and thus ultimately Jesus were born. Occasionally it is spelled Pharez, and the Pharisees - separatists - revived the name.

b) Here mentioned because their father's inheritance passed down through them [see ch. 27:5-7].

clan. ⁴¹These are the sons of Benjamin according to their clans who totaled 45,600.

⁴²These are the sons of Dan according to their clans: Shuham, of whom is the Shuhamite clan. These represent the families of Dan according to their clans. ⁴³The number from all the Shuhamite clans totaled 64,400.

⁴⁴The sons of Asher according to their respective clans were: Imnah, of whom is the Imnite clan; Ishvi, the Ishvite clan; and Beriah, the Beriite clan. ⁴⁵Beriah's sons were: Heber of whom is the Heberite clan; and Malchiel, the Malchielite clan. ⁴⁶Asher also had a daughter named Serah. ⁴⁷These are the clans of Asher's sons whose number totaled 53,400.

⁴⁸The sons of Naphtali according to their respective clans were: Jahzeel, of whom is the Jahzeelite clan; Guni, the Gunitite clan; ⁴⁹Jezer, the Jezerite clan; and Shillem, the Shillemite clan. ⁵⁰These represent the families of Naphtali according to their clans who totaled 45,400.

⁵¹The foregoing are the conscriptees from the nation of Israel, whose sum total was 601,730.

⁵²Afterwards the LORD instructed Moses, ⁵³The land is to be allotted as an inheritance in proportion to the number of names. ⁵⁴The one with the larger amount shall receive the greater inheritance; the one with the fewer shall receive the smaller inheritance. Each tribe shall be allotted its inheritance in proportion to its total number. ⁵⁵Nevertheless, the land shall be distributed by lot;^c and they shall take possession of it according to the names of their paternal tribes. ⁵⁶Their inheritance shall be divided according to lot between the larger and the smaller.

⁵⁷Those who were numbered of the Levites according to their respective clans are: Gershon, of whom is the Gershonite clan; Kohath, the Kohathite clan; and Merari, the Merarite clan. ⁵⁸These are also the clans of Levi:^d The Libnite clan, the Hebron-

ite clan, the Mahlite clan, the Mushite clan, and the Korahite clan. Now Kohath was the father of Amram,⁵⁹ whose wife's name was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi who was born to him in Egypt. She gave birth by Amram to Aaron, Moses, and their sister, Miriam. ⁶⁰Aaron was the father of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ⁶¹Nadab and Abihu, however, died when they offered improper fire^e before the LORD. ⁶²Their enrollment, all the males a month or more old, totaled 23,000, for they were not counted with the Israelites since there was no inheritance assigned to them among the people of Israel.^f

⁶³The foregoing are those who were enrolled by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they took a census of the nation of Israel in the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho. ⁶⁴Among these, however, there was not a single man who had been enrolled by Moses and Aaron the priest when they took the census of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai, ⁶⁵for the LORD had declared to them: Without fail you will die in the wilderness.^g Consequently, not a single one of them survived except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.^h

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27 THEN CAME FORWARD THE daughters of Zelophehad, whose ancestry goes back through Hephher, Gilead, Machir, and Manasseh, the clans of Manasseh, to Joseph. These are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ²As they stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the princes, and the entire assembly at the entrance of the meeting tent, they stated, ³'Our father died in the wilderness — though he did not go along with the company, Korah's company, which assembled against the LORD; he died because of his own sinⁱ — leaving no sons. ⁴But why should our father's name be withdrawn from his family tree just because he had no son? Grant us a pos-

c) To prevent any jealousy or strife which might arise.

d) Descendants of the preceding three major clans.

e) See ch. 3:4.

f) Ch. 18:20, 24.

j) Ch. 14:28ff. k) The Lord breaks no promise or threat [Gal. 6:7,8].

l) Included in the general punishment prescribed at Kadesh, but not in any rebellious group.

session among our father's relatives."^m

⁶Moses therefore brought their case to the LORD, ⁶and in reply the LORD instructed Moses: ⁷The daughters of Zelophehad have a just complaint. You must certainly grant them a possession by right of inheritance among their father's relatives by transferring their father's inheritance to them. ⁸In addition, issue this statement to the people of Israel: If a man dies who has no son, you are to transfer his property to his daughter. ⁹If he has no daughter, then assign it to his brother. ¹⁰If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his uncles, ¹¹and if he has no uncles, then assign his property to the closest relative in his family;ⁿ this one shall possess it. The people of Israel shall have this as a statute for determining legal right in accord with the LORD's command to Moses.

¹²The LORD said to Moses: Climb this mountain of Abarim^o and view the country which I have given to the nation of Israel. ¹³After you have seen it, you also will be reunited with your people as Aaron, your brother, was reunited with his kinsfolk, ¹⁴because by failing to vindicate Me before their eyes at the waters, you rebelled against My orders when the congregation was finding fault in the wilderness of Zin. These are the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

¹⁵Moses then made this request of the LORD:^p ¹⁶"Let the LORD, the God who knows the dispositions of all mankind, put a man in charge of the congregation ¹⁷who can lead them in war and direct their national affairs so that the LORD's congregation be not like a flock without a shepherd."^q ¹⁸The LORD therefore directed Moses: Secure for yourself Joshua the son of Nun, a man who has the Spirit within him, and lay your hands upon him. ¹⁹Have

him stand before Eleazar the priest and before the entire community that you may commission him before their eyes. ²⁰Confer upon him some of your authority,^r in order that the entire congregation of the Israelites may be obedient to him. ²¹He shall present himself before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him before the LORD the decision of the Urim. Both in war and in peace they, Joshua along with all the Israelites and the entire assembly, shall act under his orders.^s ²²Moses acted accordingly, even as the LORD had commanded him; he took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and before the entire assembly. ²³As he placed his hands upon him, he commissioned him as the LORD had instructed through Moses.

28 THE LORD FURTHER TOLD Moses:^t ²Command the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be careful to present My sacrificial gift, My food which is offered with fire as a pleasing fragrance to Me, at its designated time. ³The offering made by fire which you are to present to the LORD is this: Flawless yearling lambs, two each day, as a continual burnt offering.^u ⁴Offer one of the lambs in the morning and the other at dusk, ⁵along with a meal offering composed of three quarts of fine flour mixed with three pints of oil. ⁶This is the continual burnt offering instituted at Mount Sinai^v to be offered with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ⁷The accompanying drink offering shall be three pints for each lamb. Pour out this drink offering of strong wine^w before the LORD in the holy place. ⁸Offer the other lamb at dusk in the same manner as the morning meal offering and drink offering, burning it with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD.

m) By faith they took advantage of God's promise to Abraham [Gen. 15:18].

n) Peruse the story of Ruth and Boaz in the Book of Ruth, ch. 4:1-11.

o) Its peak Nebo, comp. the parallel account in Deut. 32:48-52.

p) Not a word of complaint, although he fully realized that another was to reap the reward of his labors. q) In spite of all their failures, Moses still had their interests at heart.

r) "Some of your spiritual gifts and the respect you have of the people."

s) The high priest would be God's representative in this theocracy as soon as Moses passed away, because no one could personally replace him.

t) The congregation is now on the eve of entering Canaan and is reminded of the prerequisites for enjoying a constant fellowship with their LORD.

u) Symbolic of daily consecration to the LORD. v) Ex. 29:38-42. w) Wine not to be imbibed.

⁹On the Sabbath day you are to offer two flawless male yearling lambs, a meal offering composed of six quarts of fine flour mixed with oil, and the accompanying drink offering. ¹⁰The burnt offering for every Sabbath is in addition to the continual burnt offering^x and its accompanying drink offering.

¹¹At the beginning of each month,^y you are also to offer to the LORD a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven flawless male yearling lambs. ¹²Nine quarts of fine flour mixed with oil is to serve as a meal offering to accompany each bull; six quarts of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal offering for the ram; ¹³and three quarts of fine flour mixed with oil as a meal offering for each lamb. This is a burnt offering presented with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. ¹⁴The drink offerings which shall accompany them shall be three quarts of wine for a bull, two quarts for a ram, and three pints for a lamb. This is the burnt offering for each month throughout the entire year.^z

¹⁵In addition to the regular burnt offering and its accompanying drink offering, one he-goat is also to be offered as a sin offering^a to the LORD.

¹⁶The LORD's Passover is on the fourteenth day of the first month. ¹⁷Therefore on the fifteenth of this month there shall be a feast, lasting for seven days, at which unleavened bread shall be eaten. ¹⁸You are to refrain from any strenuous labor on the first day, for it has been set aside for a sacred meeting. ¹⁹You are to sacrifice with fire a burnt offering to the LORD of two young bulls, one ram, and seven male yearling lambs; make sure they are flawless,^b ²⁰along with their respective meal offerings, fine flour

mixed with oil. Present nine quarts with a bull, six quarts with the ram, ²¹and three quarts with each of the seven lambs. ²²Moreover, offer one he-goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you. ²³You are to offer these in addition to the morning burnt offering, which is the regular burnt offering. ²⁴Follow this pattern daily for seven days as you offer the food^c with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD. It shall be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its accompanying drink offering. ²⁵You are to refrain from any strenuous labor on the seventh day since it has been set aside for a sacred meeting.

²⁶On the day of the first fruits, when in your feast of weeks you bring the LORD a food offering of new grain, you shall have a sacred meeting; you shall do no exhausting work. ²⁷But offer a burnt offering for a pleasing fragrance to the LORD — two young bullocks, one ram, seven yearling he-lambs; ²⁸and their food offering — fine flour mixed with oil, ten and a half quarts for each bullock, seven quarts for the ram, ²⁹seven pints for each of the seven he-lambs; ³⁰one he-goat to make atonement for you. ³¹You shall offer these and their libations in addition to the regular burnt offering and food offering; and be sure they are sound.

29 YOU ARE ALSO TO HAVE A SACRED meeting on the first day of the seventh month^d and because of that you must refrain from all strenuous labor; the day has been set aside for you for the blowing of trumpets.^e ²As a pleasing fragrance to the LORD you are to present to the LORD a burnt offering of one young bull, one ram, and seven yearling male lambs which are flawless, ³together with their re-

x) Since this day was especially the LORD's.

y) Monthly as well as daily consecration. This was binding upon them; thus we may offer ourselves personally and also as represented by our gifts in works and money [Rom. 12:1].

z) According to Num. 10:10, a trumpet was to be blown at this time to bring to God's remembrance their prayers and offerings, so that He would deal mercifully with them.

a) Consecration is not effective until sin is removed.

b) For details see Lev. 22:18-25, typical of the moral perfections of Christ, I Pet. 1:19.

c) The burnt offering and its accompanying offerings. These, being symbolic of consecration, were to respond to God's yearning for human love and worship.

d) Consecrated as a Sabbatical month, the two main events being the Day of Atonement, vss. 7-11, and the Feast of Tabernacles, vss. 12-28. God's order is atonement, then fellowship and blessing.

e) To invoke God's blessed attention upon them, see ch. 10:10.

spective meal offering of fine flour mixed with oil, nine quarts with the bull, six quarts with the ram, ⁴and three quarts with each of the seven lambs. ⁵In addition offer a he-goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you, ⁶together with the burnt offering of the new moon with its meal offering, the regular burnt offering with its meal offering, and their respective drink offerings as their regulation specifies. They are an offering made with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD.

⁷On the tenth day of this seventh month you are to have a sacred meeting; you shall humble yourselves^f and refrain from any type of work. ⁸Furthermore, present as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD a burnt offering of one young bull, one ram, and seven yearling male lambs, making certain they are flawless, ⁹along with their respective meal offerings of fine flour mixed with oil, nine quarts with the bull, six quarts with the ram, ¹⁰and three quarts with each of the seven lambs. ¹¹Moreover, offer one he-goat for a sin offering in addition to the sin offering of atonement,^g the continual burnt offering, its accompanying meal offering, and their respective drink offerings.

¹²Likewise on the fifteenth day of the seventh month you are to have a sacred meeting; you are to refrain from any strenuous labor and are to observe a feast to the LORD for seven days.^h

¹³Offer a burnt offering with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen yearling male lambs, which are flawless, ¹⁴along with their respective meal offerings of fine flour mixed with oil, nine quarts with each of the thirteen bulls, six quarts with each of the two rams, ¹⁵and three quarts with each of the fourteen lambs. ¹⁶Offer one he-goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering and its accom-

panying meal offering and drink offering.

¹⁷On the second day offer twelve young bulls,ⁱ two rams, and fourteen yearling male lambs which are flawless. ¹⁸Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ¹⁹In addition offer one he-goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering, its accompanying meal offering and their respective drink offerings.

²⁰On the third day offer eleven young bulls, two rams, and fourteen yearling male lambs which are flawless. ²¹Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams, and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ²²In addition offer one male goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

²³On the fourth day offer ten young bulls, two rams and fourteen male yearling lambs which are flawless. ²⁴Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ²⁵In addition offer one he-goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

²⁶On the fifth day offer nine young bulls, two rams and fourteen male yearling lambs, which are flawless. ²⁷Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ²⁸In addition offer one he-goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

f) Heb. - Afflict your soul, probably including fasting. Comp. Isa. 58:5-10.

g) The annual atonement for the people's sin, Lev. 16, and for a comparison with Christ's atonement, see Heb. 9, especially vss. 25, 26.

h) The feast was a memorial of God's care for Israel in the desert and a thanksgiving for His provision during the year just completed [Lev. 23:39-43].

i) The number of bulls is arranged to reach seven on the seventh day, the number of perfection, to represent God's complete provision, such as we now enjoy in Christ and in His dealings with men.

²⁹On the sixth day offer eight young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male yearling lambs which are flawless. ³⁰Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ³¹In addition offer one he-goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

³²On the seventh day offer seven young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male yearling lambs, which are flawless. ³³Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bulls, the rams and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ³⁴In addition offer one he-goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

³⁵On the eighth day you are to have a sacred meeting and therefore must refrain from any strenuous labor. ³⁶Offer a burnt offering with fire as a pleasing fragrance to the LORD: namely, one young bull, one ram, and seven male yearling lambs, which are flawless. ³⁷Their respective meal offerings and drink offerings are to accompany the bull, the ram, and the lambs, depending on their number as the regulation specifies. ³⁸In addition offer one male goat as a sin offering together with the continual burnt offering and its accompanying meal offering and drink offering.

³⁹You are to offer these to the LORD at your set festivals in addition to your vows and your freewill offerings,^j consisting of your burnt offerings, your meal offerings, your drink offerings, and your peace offerings. ⁴⁰Moses told the people of Israel exactly what the LORD had commanded him.

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30 MOSES ADDRESSED THE TRIBAL leaders of the Israelites, "The Lord has issued the following order:

²When a man makes a vow^k to the LORD or takes an oath to abstain from something,^l thereby pledging himself to it, he must not go back on his word but must carry out all that his mouth has uttered. ³Similarly, when a woman makes a vow to the LORD or takes a pledge of self-denial, while still an adolescent in her father's house, ⁴and her father hears of her vow or this pledge of self-denial and grants her his silent consent, then all her vows and every pledge of self-denial with which she has bound herself shall remain in effect. ⁵But if, on the day he hears of it, her father should forbid her, then all her vows and pledges of self-denial shall be invalid; in this case the LORD will forgive her, since she was forbidden by her father.

⁶Likewise, if she is about to be married to her fiancé while still committed to her vows or to a thoughtless statement which she has made,^m ⁷and her fiancé hears of this, then if he says nothing on the day he hears of it, her vows and pledges of abstinence shall remain in effect. ⁸On the other hand, if on the day her fiancé hears of this he restrains her by annulling the vow which obligates her and the thoughtless pledge to which she has committed herself, then the LORD will forgive her.

⁹But in the case of the vow of a widow or of a divorcee, anything with which she has bound herself shall remain as her personal responsibility. ¹⁰Similarly, when she makes a vow while in her husband's house or pledges herself to abstinence by oath, ¹¹and her husband, hearing of this, by silent consent does not forbid her, then every vow and pledge of self-denial shall remain in effect. ¹²If her husband, however, definitely nullifies them on the day he hears of it, then whatever has passed her lips, whether her vow or pledge of self-denial, shall not stand; and since her husband made them invalid, the LORD will forgive her.

¹³In short, her husband may either

j) Comp. ch. 15:3-13. The foregoing were obligatory; these are optional.

k) A positive vow in appreciation, in worship, or in distress.

l) A negative vow, usually fasting or some other form of self-denial. Comp. the Nazarite vow in ch. 6.

m) A promise to God demands supreme consideration and attention, Prov. 20:25; Eccl. 5:4,5.

confirm or nullify every vow and every pledge of abstinence she made in self-denial. ¹⁴If her husband offers her no objection from day to day, he then confirms all her vows and pledges which obligate her; he thus establishes them because he gave her his silent consent on the day he heard of them. ¹⁵If however, he utterly renounces them after he has heard of them,ⁿ he must suffer the consequences of her sin."^o ¹⁶These are the regulations which the LORD prescribed to Moses governing a man and his wife, or a father and his daughter who is still an adolescent in her father's house.

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31 THEN THE LORD SAID TO Moses: ²Seek retribution for the Israelites against the Midianites, after which you shall be reunited with your people.^p ³Moses therefore spoke to the people, "Arm some of your men for battle, for they are to attack Midian to execute retribution against them for the LORD."^q ⁴Send 1,000 men per tribe from all of Israel's tribes." ⁵So after 1,000 men from each tribe were conscripted from Israel's families, 12,000 in all who were equipped for warfare, ⁶Moses sent them — 1,000 men from each tribe — to battle, along with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, the sacred articles,^r and the alarm trumpets which he carried in his hand. ⁷They engaged Midian as the LORD had ordered Moses, killing every male.^s ⁸In addition they executed, along with their fallen men, the Midianite kings: namely, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian.^t In the battle^u they also killed Balaam the son of Beor. ⁹Furthermore, the Israelites captured the Midianite women and their children, seized all their cattle, flocks, and wealth as booty ¹⁰and set fire to all the cities in which they lived and to all their camps. ¹¹They then took all the booty and prey, both

people and livestock, ¹²and brought them — that is, the captives, prey, and booty — to the camp in the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho, to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of Israel.

¹³When Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders in the congregation went to meet them outside the camp, ¹⁴Moses grew very angry with the army heads, the battalion commanders, and the company commanders, who were just returning from the battle front. ¹⁵"Have you left all the women alive?" demanded Moses. ¹⁶"Take note, in the Peor affair these are the ones who, at Balaam's advice, caused the men of Israel to renounce fidelity to the LORD," resulting in a plague among the congregation of the LORD. ¹⁷Now kill every young boy and every woman who has had intercourse with a man. ¹⁸Every young girl, however, who has not had intercourse with a man you may keep alive for yourselves. ¹⁹Besides, all of you who have killed a person or have touched a slain body, must remain outside the camp for seven days. Then purify both yourselves and your prisoners on the third and seventh days, ²⁰as well as every garment, all leather goods, all materials of goat's hair, and all wooden articles."

²¹Eleazar the priest informed the soldiers who had engaged in the battle: "This is the statute of instruction which the LORD has commanded Moses. ²²In the case of gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead — ²³everything which will stand fire — you are to pass it through fire, that it may be cleansed; nevertheless, it must also be purified with the water of uncleanness."^w In addition you are to rinse with water everything that cannot stand fire. ²⁴Then after you have washed your clothes, on the seventh day you shall be clean and may re-enter the camp."

²⁵The LORD also told Moses: ²⁶You,

n) Other than the day he heard of them. o) For the two have become one in marriage.

p) A detailed reminder of the command given in ch. 25:17.

q) The seduction by the Midianites had brought dishonor to the LORD.

r) The sacred articles may refer to the Ark, comp. Josh. 6:8; they represented God's presence.

s) All adult males, see vs. 17. t) Comp. Josh. 13:21.

u) The LORD repays, Gal. 6:6,7. II Pet. 2:15.

v) Balaam became a false prophet; he tried to serve two masters.

w) See ch. 19:9.

Eleazar the priest, and the tribal leaders of the assembly, find out how much booty was seized both of people and of livestock. ²⁷Then divide the booty in two parts between the soldiers who have engaged in the battle and the rest of the congregation.^x ²⁸Moreover, levy a tax for the LORD on the soldiers who have engaged in the battle: namely, one out of every 500 of the people, the oxen, the donkeys, and the flocks. ²⁹Exact this from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as a contribution to the LORD. ³⁰In addition, from the congregation's half, appropriate one out of every fifty from the captives, the oxen, the donkeys, and the flocks, even of all the livestock, and distribute them to the Levites who have charge of the LORD's tabernacle.^y ³¹Moses and Eleazar the priest thus did as the LORD had directed Moses.

³²The booty that remained^z of what the soldiers had originally taken amounted in all to 675,000 sheep, ³³72,000 oxen, ³⁴61,000 donkeys, ³⁵and 32,000 persons, that is, women who had never lain with a man.^a ³⁶The half which fell to the war veterans totaled 337,500 sheep, ³⁷minus 675 which were due the LORD, ³⁸36,000 oxen of which 72 were due the LORD, ³⁹and 30,500 donkeys of which 61 were due the LORD. ⁴⁰There were also 16,000 persons of whom 32 were due the LORD. ⁴¹Moses then gave the tribute, which was the offering for the LORD, to Eleazar the priest as the LORD had directed him.

⁴²From the half belonging to the people of Israel which Moses had separated from that of the war veterans—⁴³this half belonging to the congregation was 337,500 sheep, ⁴⁴36,000 oxen, ⁴⁵30,500 donkeys, ⁴⁶and 16,000 persons. ⁴⁷From the half belonging to the Israelites, Moses in compliance

with the LORD's directions to him, appropriated one out of every fifty from both people and livestock and gave them to the Levites, who discharged the duties of the LORD's tabernacle.

⁴⁸Later the generals of the army, the battalion commanders, and the company officers approached Moses ⁴⁹and reported to him, "Your staff has taken a census of the soldiers who are under our command and not one of our men is missing.^b ⁵⁰Moreover, we have brought an offering to the LORD of what each one has obtained — golden jewelry, ankle bracelets, wrist bracelets,^c signet rings, earrings, and necklaces — to make atonement for our souls before the LORD."^d ⁵¹Moses and Eleazar the priest then accepted the gold from them, which was worked jewelry entirely, ⁵²and all the gold in this contribution which they — the battalion and company commanders — had presented to the LORD was about 305,000 dollars.^e ⁵³In this connection the soldiers had taken the booty for themselves personally. ⁵⁴After Moses and Eleazar the priest had received the gold from the battalion and company commanders, they brought it into the tent of meeting as a memorial for the people of Israel before the LORD.^f

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32 NOW THE PEOPLE OF REUBEN and Gad had a vast number of cattle and when they saw^g that the country of Jazer and Gilead would indeed be a place of fine pasture land,^h ²they approached Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the assembly leaders saying, ³"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon — ⁴the area which the LORD conquered before the congregation of Israel — is cattle country, and, as you know, your servants have cattle. ⁵If we have found favor in your eyes,"

x) Comp. I Sam. 30:24.

y) This percentage gave all the tribes an equal share in the booty.

z) Persons who had not been executed and livestock which had not been consumed by the soldiers. a) These women would hardly become ideal mothers to train their offspring in the worship and service of God. b) A striking proof of God's protection, note Ps. 91:7.

c) Given to the Levites and priests.

d) Not so much for sin as to offer humble gratitude to the LORD.

e) Heb. — 16,750 shekels of gold, a shekel being worth about \$18.20.

f) A thankful remembrance to the LORD and for a favorable remembrance by the LORD.

g) One of the widest avenues of temptation, comp. Gen. 3:6; 13:10.

h) Many are satisfied with only the good and as a result miss God's best. They were among the first to go into captivity [I Chron. 5:25,26].

they petitioned, "then let this area be granted to your servants as a possession. Do not force us to cross the Jordan."

⁶"Shall your fellow men engage in combat while you relax here?" Moses reprimanded the men of Gad and Reuben. ⁷"Now why do you turn the heart of the Israelites against crossing into the country which the LORD has given them?" ⁸That is exactly what your fathers did, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to survey the land; ⁹for after they went up to the valley of Eschol and viewed the land, they spread fear into the hearts of the Israelites, so as to hinder them from entering the land which the LORD had promised them. ¹⁰Consequently the LORD's anger was inflamed at that time and He swore saying: ¹¹The men from twenty years of age and upward who came from Egypt shall never seeⁱ the land which I have promised by oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because they have been disloyal to Me, ¹²with the exception of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, both of whom have wholeheartedly followed the LORD. ¹³So the LORD's anger was inflamed against Israel, and as a result He made them wander back and forth in the desert for forty years until the entire generation that had practiced evil in the LORD's sight had perished.^k ¹⁴Now here you are rising up in your fathers' place as a brood of sinners to amplify even further the fiery anger of the LORD against Israel. ¹⁵If you give up following Him, He will leave them even longer in the desert, and you, in turn, will bring disaster to this entire nation!"

¹⁶But they approached him, saying, "Here we will build some pens for our livestock, and towns for our little ones,^l ¹⁷but we ourselves shall be armed and on the alert in front of Israel's men until we have escorted them to

their settlement. Meanwhile our families will remain in the fortified towns out of reach of the native residents. ¹⁸We shall not return to our homes until each of the Israelites has taken over his possession. ¹⁹Since we have fallen heir to our own possession across Jordan to the east,^m we shall not be occupying with them on the further side of the Jordan and onward."

²⁰Moses replied, "If you will carry out this plan, if you will equip yourselves for combat in the LORD's presenceⁿ ²¹and every equipped soldier among you in turn will cross the Jordan in the LORD's presence until He has driven His enemies before Him ²²and the land is subdued before the LORD, then you may return free of guilt before the LORD and Israel, and this land will belong to you as an inheritance before the LORD. ²³But if you fail to act accordingly, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out.^o ²⁴Now build yourselves some towns for your families and pens for your livestock, and then do what you said you would." ²⁵The men of Gad and the men of Reuben assured Moses, "Your servants will carry out my^p commander's orders. ²⁶Our children, wives, flocks and cattle shall remain there in the cities of Gilead ²⁷while your servants — all who are on active military duty — cross over in the LORD's presence to the battle, as my commander directs."

²⁸Moses then gave orders concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun and to the tribal leaders of the Israelites; ²⁹he directed them, "If all the equipped soldiers from Gad and Reuben cross the Jordan with you in the LORD's presence and the country is subdued before you, then grant them the territory of Gilead as a possession. ³⁰But if those under arms fail to cross with you, then they shall have to possess^q property along with you in the

i) Personal stumbling is bad; causing a brother to stumble is devilish [Matt. 18:6-9].

j) Woe to the man who goes beyond this point of God's mercy!

k) Chapters 13, 14. l) Implying all the defenseless personnel.

m) On the east side of the Jordan, comp. vs. 32.

n) Either generally, that is, "under the LORD's observation," Ps. 139:7-16; or specifically, the LORD's presence with the Ark which was taken into battle.

o) You will experience the consequence of your sin which is certain to overtake you.

p) There seems to be one spokesman for the entire group.

q) To prevent a rebellion or division in the nation.

land of Canaan." ³¹The men of Gad and Reuben spoke up and explained, "Whatever the LORD orders your servants we shall carry out. ³²We definitely will cross over under arms before the LORD to the land of Canaan, so allow us^r to possess our inheritance beyond the Jordan."

³³Under these conditions Moses granted them — the people of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasse^s the son of Joseph — the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, even the entire land with its towns and their surrounding districts. ³⁴The men of Gad then built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, ³⁵Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, ³⁶Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified towns and also constructed sheep pens. ³⁷The men of Reuben built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, ³⁸Nebo, Baal-meon — the names being changed — and Sibmah; and they gave new names to the cities which they built. ³⁹The men of Machir the son of Manasseh, went out and captured Gilead, driving out the Amorites located there. ⁴⁰Moses therefore assigned Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh and there he settled. ⁴¹Likewise, Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, went out and captured some of their^t towns, naming them Havvoth-jair,^u ⁴²while Nobah went out and seized Kenath and its surrounding villages, renaming it Nobah after himself.^v

33 THIS IS THE ITINERARY OF THE nation of Israel which, according to their armies under the leadership of Moses and Aaron, emigrated from the land of Egypt. ²At the LORD's command Moses recorded their places of departure according to the route they trekked, and this is their itinerary according to their places of departure. ³The people of Israel broke camp at Rameses the morning after the Passover, on the fifteenth day of the first

month. They departed by an uplifted hand* in plain view of all the Egyptians ⁴who were burying all their first-born whom the LORD had struck dead among them. In conjunction with this, the LORD had also inflicted judgments upon their gods.

⁵The people of Israel left Rameses^w and camped in Succoth. ⁶Leaving Succoth, they next stayed at Etham which is at the edge of the desert. ⁷After leaving Etham they turned back towards Pi-hahiroth, which is opposite Baal-Zephon, and camped before Migdol. ⁸They left the vicinity of Hahiroth, cut across the middle of the sea into the desert, traveling for three days as far as they could in the desert of Etham, and set up camp^x at Marah. ⁹Leaving Marah,^x they pushed forward to Elim, which had twelve springs of water and 70 palm trees, and they camped there. ¹⁰Leaving Elim, they camped by the Red Sea, ¹¹then, in the wilderness of Sin, ¹²at Dophkah, ¹³Alush, and Rephidim, where there was no drinking water for the people. ¹⁴They left Rephidim; and after having camped in the wilderness of Sinai, ¹⁵they traveled on, camping at Kibroth-hattaavah, ¹⁶Hazereth, ¹⁷Rithmah, ¹⁸Rimmone-perez, ¹⁹Libnah, ²⁰Rissah, ²¹Kehelathah, ²²Mount Shepher, ²³Haradah, ²⁴Makheloth, ²⁵Tahath, ²⁶Terah, ²⁷Mithkah, ²⁸Hashmonah, ²⁹Mosereth, ³⁰Benejaakan, ³¹Hor-hagidgad, ³²Jotbathah, ³³Abronah, ³⁴Ezion-geber, ³⁵the wilderness of Zin — namely, Kadesh — ³⁶and then at Mount Hor on the border of the land of Edom. July, 1407 B.C.

³⁷Now under the LORD's command Aaron the priest ascended Mount Hor and died there on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the nation of Israel had emigrated from the land of Egypt. ³⁸Aaron was 123 years old when he died there on Mount Hor.^y

⁴⁰At this time it was reported to the

r) Heb.: "Let it be with us."

s) The participation of the half tribe in the possession seems due to their acquisitions as recorded in vs. 39. See further 21:33-35. t) Of the kings mentioned in vs. 33. u) "Towns of Jair."

v) Comp. I Chron. 2:22,23. *God delivered them and made their departure possible.

w) The name of each place which they left behind is a memorial of God's faithfulness.

x) In recounting the journey the bitterness of Marah is forgotten while the blessedness of Elim is remembered. Thus it is best in life's journey; "beauty for ashes" [Isa. 61:3; 35:13].

y) Ch. 20:22-29.

Canaanite king of Arad, who was living in the Negeb in the land of Canaan that the nation of Israel was coming.²

⁴¹Leaving Mount Hor they next made camp at Zalmonah, ⁴²then at Punon, at ⁴³Oboth, at ⁴⁴Iye-abarim near the border of Moab, at ⁴⁵Dibongad, at ⁴⁶Almon-diblathaim, at ⁴⁷the mountains of Abarim before Nebo, ⁴⁸and finally along the Jordan in the plains of Moab opposite Jericho. ⁴⁹Their camp lay along the Jordan in the plains of Moab from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim.

⁵⁰While there along the Jordan in the plains of Moab opposite Jericho, ⁵¹Moses was told by the LORD: Say to the people of Israel: After you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵²you are to drive all the native residents out of your area,^a smash all their stone idols and molten images, and demolish all their high places.^b ⁵³Then take possession of the land and live there, for I have given you the land to occupy. ⁵⁴In this connection, you are to divide the property among yourselves by lot according to the size of your families; the one with the largest number shall receive the largest inheritance; the one with the fewest shall receive the smallest inheritance.^c Each shall have whatever falls to him by lot; furthermore, you are to apportion the land according to your paternal tribes.^d ⁵⁵But if you fail to drive out the native residents from your area, then that portion that you allow to remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides,^e for they shall be a constant source of irritation to you in the country in which you settle, ⁵⁶and sooner or later I will do to you as I had originally intended doing to them.^f

34 THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: ²GIVE this order to the people of Israel: When you enter the land of Canaan, this shall be the territory which you will receive as an inheritance — that is, the land of Canaan within these limits:^g ³Your southern frontier shall extend to the wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom; more specifically, your southern border shall extend eastward ⁴from the further end of the Dead Sea, angling to the south of the Ascent of Akrabbim^h and then on over to Zin. Its lowest point shall be south of Kadesh-barnea, and it shall then extend to Hazar-addar and pass on over to Azmon. ⁵From here the border shall veer over to the river of Egypt,ⁱ terminating at the sea.^j

⁶As for your western boundary, it shall be the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea; this is your western border.

⁷This shall be your northern boundary: from the Mediterranean Sea you shall draw your boundary line to Mount Hor;^k ⁸from Mount Hor strike a line to the entrance of Hamath, continuing it on as far as Zedad. ⁹The border shall then extend to Ziphron and terminate at Hazar-enan; this is to be your northern border.

¹⁰Next you shall mark off your eastern boundary from Hazar-enan to Shepham ¹¹and from there on down to Riblah on the east side of Ain. The border shall then extend down until it touches the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee.^l ¹²The border shall then reach down to the Jordan and finally end at the Dead Sea;^m the preceding are the boundaries of the land which you shall own.

¹³Moses then commanded the people of Israel, "This is the territory you are to apportion by lot among your-

z) Ch. 21:1-3. a) It implies extermination.

b) The continued presence of temptation is likely to be fatal. "Lead us not into temptation."

c) God is no respecter of persons.

d) Each tribe to receive its respective province. Comp. ch. 26:53-56.

e) They who fail to expel or to convert the enemy will eventually be overcome by the enemy.

f) This warning, prompted by love and mercy, was repeated by Joshua. [Josh. 23:13].

g) The boundaries of all nations are set by God [Acts 17:26]; thus nations should set bounds to their ambition; so should individuals. h) Scorpion Pass.

i) Not the Nile; but halfway between Canaan and Egypt, the River of Egypt.

j) The Mediterranean Sea.

k) Not the Mount Hor on which Aaron died; but at the northern boundary.

l) Heb.: Sea of Chinnereth. m) Heb. — Salt Sea.

selves. The LORD has given orders to assign it to the nine and a half tribes, ¹⁴since the tribe of Reuben's descendants, and that of Gad — according to their respective clans — and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance, ¹⁵these two and one-half tribes having received their inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan opposite Jericho."

¹⁶The LORD further directed Moses:

¹⁷These are the names of the men who shall divide your inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun.

¹⁸You are to select a prince from each tribe to assist in distributing the land for inheritance.ⁿ ¹⁹The names of the additional men are, from the tribe of

Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh;

²⁰from the tribe of Simeon's descendants, Shemuel the son of Ammihud;

²¹from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad of Chislon;

²²from the tribe of Dan, a prince^o named Bukki the son of Jogli;

²³from Joseph's descendants: from the tribe of Manasseh a prince named Hanniel the son of Ephod,

²⁴and from the tribe of Ephraim, prince Kemuel of Shiphtan;

²⁵from the tribe of Zebulun, prince Elizaphan of Parnach;

²⁶from the tribe of Issachar, prince Paltiel of Azzan;

²⁷from the tribe of Asher, prince Ahihud of Shelomi;

²⁸and from the tribe of Naphthali's descendants, a prince named Pedahel the son of Ammihud.

²⁹These are the men whom the LORD authorized to distribute the inheritance among the people of Israel in the land of Canaan.

35 WHILE IN THE PLAINS OF MOAB along the Jordan opposite Jericho, the LORD said to Moses: ²Order the Israelites to grant the Levites towns in which to live from the inheritance which they have possessed; furthermore, give the Levites the pasture lands around the towns. ³The towns are for them to occupy, while the pastures are

for their cattle and flocks, all their livestock. ⁴Now the pasture lands which you are to give the Levites shall extend from the wall of the town outward on all sides for a distance of 1,500 feet.

⁵Then outside the town mark off 3000 feet on the east side, 3000 feet on the south side, 3000 feet on the west side, and 3000 feet on the north side, the city being in the center. This area shall be theirs to serve as pasture land for the towns.

⁶Of the towns which you assign to the Levites, six shall serve as cities of refuge to which the person guilty of manslaughter^p may flee. You are also to furnish 42 towns in addition to these.

⁷In all, you are to assign to the Levites a total of 48 towns together with their pastures.

⁸With regard to the towns which you are to provide from the possession of the Israelites, you shall appropriate more from the larger (tribes) and less from the smaller;^q each one shall contribute some of its towns to the Levites in proportion to the size of the property^r which it inherits.

⁹The LORD further said to Moses:

¹⁰Tell the nation of Israel and instruct them: When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan,

¹¹you are to select suitable towns^s as cities of refuge to which the manslayer, who has accidentally killed a person, may flee.

¹²These cities shall be for your benefit to serve as an asylum from the avenger,^t so that the manslayer may not die until he has stood trial before the assembly.

¹³As for the towns which you are to furnish, you are to have six cities of refuge.

¹⁴You are to assign three towns on this side of the Jordan, and three in the land of Canaan, and they shall serve as cities of refuge.

¹⁵Accordingly, these six cities shall serve the people of Israel, the foreigner, and the native among them as a sanctuary to which anyone^u who has accidentally killed a person may flee.

n) By faith, for they had not yet conquered the land; comp. II Cor. 1:20.

o) The first three are not called princes as the rest are; the main idea is that these men are leaders.

p) A man who has killed someone unintentionally. These cities were a fulfillment of the promise given in Ex. 21:13.

q) See Josh. 21. r) The LORD is mindful of our capacities. s) See Deut. 19:2-10.

t) Heb.: "goel," that is, redeemer, a close relative who was to restore the injured's family integrity by paying the amount due, see Lev. 25:23-28. The blood-revenge was the payment and Christ, our kinsman Redeemer, ransomed us with His own blood [I Pet. 1:18,19].

u) So is Christ our Refuge; "whoever will may come," [John 6:37; Rom. 10:13; Rev. 22:17].

¹⁶However, if one hits another with an iron instrument^v and the victim dies, then he is a murderer; he must certainly be executed. ¹⁷Or if he strikes him with a stone large enough to cause death and he dies, the man is a murderer and must be executed without fail. ¹⁸Or, again, if he strikes him with a large piece of wood from which a person could die, and he dies, the guilty one must certainly be executed because he is a murderer. ¹⁹The avenger of blood shall himself execute the murderer; in fact, he may kill him whenever he catches up with him. ²⁰In case one shoves another in anger or, while hiding, throws something at him, thus causing him to die, ²¹or if from animosity he strikes him with his fist so that he dies, then the one who did the striking must certainly be executed, for he is a murderer.^w The avenger of blood shall kill him whenever he gets hold of him.

²²But if one should push another accidentally^x without ill will, or, without being concealed, throw something at him, ²³or without noticing him drop a stone on him which is heavy enough to kill someone, and as a result he dies — although he was not his enemy and he meant him no harm — ²⁴then the assembly shall decide between the slayer and the avenger of blood according to these regulations. ²⁵The assembly shall rescue the manslayer from the clutches of the avenger of blood and return him to his city of refuge to which he had fled. He shall then live there until the death of the high priest who has been anointed with the holy oil.^y ²⁶But if at any time the manslayer shall set foot outside the precincts of the asylum to which he has fled, ²⁷and the avenger of blood finds him outside the area of his sanctuary, then the avenger of blood may kill the man-

slayer without incurring guilt; ²⁸he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. After the death of the high priest, however, the individual, guilty of manslaughter, may return to his home.^z

²⁹You are to follow this statute in order to determine justice down through your generations wherever you may be living; ³⁰In case someone kills a person, the murderer must be executed when his guilt is attested by witnesses,^a but the testimony against a person by one witness shall not be sufficient to incur the death penalty. ³¹Neither are you to accept a ransom of money^b for the life of a murderer who deserves to die; he must be executed. ³²Neither are you to accept a ransom in behalf of him who has fled to his city of refuge in order to allow him to return and live at home until the death of the priest. ³³You are not to desecrate the land in which you live, since blood defiles the land. Once more, no atonement can be made to the land^c for the blood shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it. ³⁴You are not to defile the land where you reside, because I too am living in it, for I, Jehovah, am residing among the people of Israel.

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36 THE CLAN LEADERS OF THE family composed of the descendants of Gilead, the son of Machir^d and the grandson of Manasseh — families belonging to Joseph's descendants — appeared before Moses and the princes, the tribal leaders in the nation of Israel, ²and said, "The LORD ordered my master to have the land for inheritance assigned by lot to the Israelites. In this connection, my master was instructed to grant the inheritance of Zelophehad, our brother, to his daugh-

v) Intentionally.

w) Even if he had fled to a city of refuge, he was to be turned over to the avenger outside the city [Deut. 19:11,12]. But through the blood of Christ even intentional sins will on repentance be forgiven. x) Heb. — "suddenly."

y) Perhaps the death of the high priest — as man's representative before God and with the holy anointing making him God's representative here on earth — symbolized the expiation for the manslaughter, as Christ our High Priest is the expiation for all our sin [Rom. 3:25; I John 2:2]. z) Heb. — "land of his possession." For details, see Deut. 4:41-43; 19:1-13.

a) Two or more [Deut. 17:6; 19:15]. b) Coming to terms with the victim's relatives through a bribe. c) The earth cries for vengeance [Gen. 4:10]. The land is abused by shedding human blood upon it and demands expiation. d) See ch. 26:28-34.

ters.^e ³When they marry one of the men from the other tribes of Israel, however, their property shall be withdrawn from our father's inheritance and added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they then belong, and that being the case, it shall diminish our share of the inheritance. ⁴Besides, when the people of Israel have the jubilee,^f their property shall certainly be added to that tribe with which they have united; consequently, their property shall be withdrawn from the inheritance of our father's tribe."

⁶Concerning this, Moses instructed the Israelites as the LORD dictated,^g "What the men of Joseph's tribe have affirmed is right. ⁶Now this is the policy which the LORD has prescribed for Zelophehad's daughters: Let them marry any one they please, except that they must marry in the family of their father's tribe.^h ⁷In this way the inheritance of the Israelites shall not pass from tribe to tribe, but each of the Israelites shall retain the inheri-

tance of his father's tribe. ⁸Thus any heiress who inherits property in any tribe of the Israelites must marry someone in the family of her father's tribe in order that each Israelite may retain possession of his father's property. ⁹An inheritance may not pass from one tribe to another, because each of Israel's tribes must retain his particular inheritance."

¹⁰Moses therefore dealt with Zelophehad's daughters exactly as the LORD had instructed him. Later the daughters of Zelophehad — ¹¹Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah — married their first cousins, ¹²and since they married into the families of the descendants of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, their property remained in their father's tribe.

¹³These are the commands and regulations which the LORD issued through Moses to the nation of Israel in the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho.

e) See ch. 27:1-11.

f) At this time transferred property returned to its original owner or his heir [Lev. 25:23-28]. In this case, the only heirs would be in the husband's family.

g) Note ch. 27:5. This command is an example of the "spirit of the law" being followed and not the "letter." The Lord is fully aware of human circumstances and needs.

h) The tribe of Manasseh, and possibly limited to a particular family or clan within the tribe, so that this particular family would not be without heirs.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY^a

February-March, 1406 B. C.

1 THESE ARE THE WORDS WHICH Moses spoke to all Israel on the other side of the Jordan, in the wilderness, in the Arabah^b opposite Suph, between Paran on the one hand and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Di-Zahab on the other. ²By the Mount Seir road it is eleven days' journey from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea.^c

³In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses addressed^d Israel in accord with all that the LORD had commanded him to say to them. ⁴After he had defeated Sihon, king of the Amorites, whose capital was Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ashtaroth and Edrei ⁵beyond Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this law. He said, ⁶"At Horeb^e the LORD our God told us, 'You have now tarried at this mountain long enough; ⁷break camp, trek your way into the hill country of the Amorites^f and to all the land neighboring upon it; the Arabah, the highlands, the foothills, the southern plains, the seacoast—the land of the Canaanites—and Lebanon as far as the

great river, the river Euphrates. ⁸See, I have put the land at your disposal; enter it and take possession of the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them and their descendants after them.'

⁹"At that time^g I announced to you, 'I am no longer able to take care of you alone. ¹⁰The LORD your God,' I said, 'has made you a multitude as the stars of heaven in number, ¹¹and may the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase you yet a thousandfold and may He bless you, as He promised you. ¹²But how can I alone handle your troubles, your burdens and your court cases? ¹³Select from your tribes men of wisdom and understanding, men of experience, and I will appoint them to be your rulers.'^h ¹⁴You responded to me, and said, 'What you propose to be done is good.' ¹⁵So I took the heads of your tribes among you, men of wisdom and experience, and I made them heads over you, captains of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and your tribal officers. ¹⁶At that time I also gave the charge to your judges,

a) Repeated Law.

b) The term Arabah or Plain is in common use in the O.T. to designate any region of the Jordan valley from the Sea of Galilee to and including the Dead Sea and the territory south of it. Our words Arab and Arabian are related to it.

c) Deuteronomy is one of the great books of the Old Testament. It expresses truths which always reflect the mind of God. Its leading thought for Israel was that she must ever remember that God is one; and that He chose her for a great mission. To be true to Him she must always be true to the Covenant which He had made with her at the beginning. Deuteronomy shows the way. Jesus knew this wonderful book. Compare Mark 12:28-30 with Deut. 6:4,5.

d) Shortly before his death, Moses delivered four addresses to the Israelites.

e) Most of the discourse, Deut. 1:6-3:29, is a review of Israel's experiences from the time they left Horeb until the death of Moses. Deut. 4:1-40 constitutes the appeal to observe the Law, to beware of idols, and to cling to evidences of God's love for His people.

f) As used here, the expression 'the hill country of the Amorites' is the whole land of promise.

g) While still at Horeb.

h) We learn from Ex. 18:14-26, that these steps were taken at Jethro's suggestion.

You will be hearing cases in dispute between your brothers, and you must judge fairly between the one and the other, whether brother or resident alien.¹ ¹⁷You must show no partiality in your decisions. You must listen to low and high alike without being afraid in the presence of any man; for judgment belongs to God. The case that proves too difficult for you, you must bring to me and I will hear it.' ¹⁸At that time I gave you orders concerning all the things you were to do.

¹⁹'As we set out from Horeb, we passed through the whole great and terrible desert, which you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as the LORD our God had commanded us, and we arrived at Kadesh-barnea. ²⁰There I told you, 'You have now come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹See! The LORD your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has said to you. Have no fear; be not discouraged.' ²²You then came to me, all of you, and you said, 'Let us send men ahead of us to explore the land for us and to bring back a report with regard to the road by which we shall go up, and the cities we would be entering.' ²³The suggestion seemed good to me, so I selected twelve men of you, one for each tribe. ²⁴They turned and made their way up to the hill country as far as the valley of Eshcol,^j and explored it. ²⁵Taking along in their hands some of the fruit of the land, they brought it down to us and gave their report: 'It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us.'^k ²⁶But you refused to go up. You rebelled against the command of the LORD your God ²⁷and kept murmuring in your tents. 'It is because the LORD hates us,' you said, 'that He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us over to the Amor-

ites to destroy us. ²⁸Where would we be going? Our brothers have made our hearts melt, saying, "The people are bigger and taller than we, and their cities are large and fortified up to the heavens; besides, we saw the sons of the Anakim there."¹ ²⁹So I said to you: 'Do not dread these people or stand in awe of them. ³⁰The LORD your God, who goes before you, will Himself fight for you in agreement with all He did in your behalf in Egypt before your eyes, ³¹and in the desert, where you have seen how the LORD your God Himself bore you up as a man carries his son throughout your whole journey until you reached this place.' ³²But, in spite of this statement you continued distrusting the LORD your God, ³³who went before you in your journeying to search out for you a place to encamp, in a fire by night to show you the road to take, and in a cloud by day. ³⁴So when the LORD heard your words He was indignant and swore: ³⁵Not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land which I promised to give your fathers, ³⁶no one except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and to his sons I will give the land upon which he has set foot, because in this he has followed the LORD completely.

³⁷'The LORD was angry with me, too, on account of you, saying: Not even you shall enter there; ³⁸your attendant, Joshua the son of Nun, shall enter; encourage him, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. ³⁹Your little ones, too, who, you said, would become plunder, and your children, who do not yet know the difference between good and evil, shall go there; I will give it to them and they shall occupy it. ⁴⁰But as for the rest of you, turn around; follow the Red Sea road back into the desert.

⁴¹'Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the LORD, we will go

i) The Hebrew word involved here is *ger* (pronounced *gare*), translated variously: sojourner, stranger, immigrant, alien. The *ger* was a non-Israelite resident who for the most part enjoyed equal rights under the law with his Hebrew neighbor. If poor, he was provided for, along with the Levites, the orphan and the widow, provided he was circumcised and conformed to the laws of the Hebrews.

j) Near Hebron.

k) Compare this narrative of the spies with that in Num. 13, 14. One grows conscious of the high moral and spiritual atmosphere in the Deuteronomy narrative, as is so often the case in this great book. 1) Literally "the long-necked"; they were a family of giants.

up, and we will fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' So you girded on your armor,^m each one of you, and you regarded lightly the matter of climbing into the hill country. ⁴²But the LORD said to me: Tell them not to go up and not to fight, lest you are beaten by your enemies; for I shall not be among you. ⁴³So I warned you, but you would not listen. You rebelled against the LORD's command; foolishly you marched into the hills. ⁴⁴The Amorites, who occupied that hill country, came out against you; they chased you like bees and smote you all the way from Seir to Hormah. ⁴⁵You returned, and you wept before the LORD. The LORD, however, did neither hear nor listen to you, ⁴⁶so you remained at Kadesh many a day, the many days you spent there.

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2 "WE THEN TURNED AND MOVED into the desert along the road to the Red Sea, as the LORD had told me; and for many days we circled around the hill country of Seir. ²Then the LORD said to me: ³You have now spent enough time moving about these hills; turn and head north. ⁴This you shall order the people, 'Now you will be crossing the frontiers of your brothers, the children of Esau, living in Seir, and they will be afraid of you. So be very careful; ⁵do not challenge them; for I will not be giving you any of their land, not a foot of it; for I have already assigned this hill area of Seir to Esau. ⁶You shall buy from them for money the food you eat, and you shall buy from them for money the water you drink. ⁷For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows about your crossing this great desert. These forty years the LORD your God has accompanied you and you have lacked nothing.'

⁸"So we passed on beyond the territory of our kinsmen, the children of Esau, who have their home in Seir,

and our course led away from the Arabah road, away from Elath and Ezion-geber; and we turned in the direction of the Moab desert.

⁹"At this point the LORD told me: Do not distress the Moabites, and do not challenge them to fight, for I will not give you any of their land to possess, because I have assigned Ar to the children of Lot for their possession. ¹⁰In an earlier period the Emim lived there,ⁿ a strong, tall, numerous race, much like the Anakim; and, like the Anakim, ¹¹they too used to be regarded as Rephaim; the Moabites, however, call them Emim. ¹²In earlier days the land of Seir was occupied by the Horites, but the children of Esau dispossessed and exterminated them, taking over their territory for themselves, just as the Israelites did with the land which the LORD gave them. ¹³Get up now and cross over the brook Zered. So we crossed the brook Zered, ¹⁴and the time from the day we left Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the brook Zered was 38 years, until that whole generation of fighting men had wasted away from among your camp, as the LORD had sworn they should. ¹⁵The hand of the LORD had prevailed against them to snatch them away from the camp until they all had perished.^o

¹⁶"So it was when all the fighting men had died from among the people, ¹⁷the LORD said to me, ¹⁸Today you will be moving along the frontiers of Moab at the city of Ar; ¹⁹you will then be in the neighborhood of the children of Ammon. You are not to distress the Ammonites nor to contend with them, for I will allow you no part of Ammon's land, because I have given it to the children of Lot for a possession. ²⁰This area, too, used to be reckoned as a land of the Rephaim; the Rephaim dwelt in it formerly; but the Ammonites called them Zamzummim.

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²¹They were a strong and numerous

m) Taken from the drowned Egyptians, Ex. 14:30.

n) Mentioned in Gen. 14:5 as defeated by the four Near Eastern kings on their march to Sodom and Gomorrah. They were a mighty, prehistoric race driven out by the Moabites.

o) See ch. 1:34, 35. Where did Israel spend the 38 wilderness years? They are told, Num. 14:25, to go into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, and Num. 33:35 locates them at Ezion-Geber, a town near the Red Sea. Kadesh-Barnea is frequently mentioned, much more north and near the promised land. Many must have roamed the desert and oases to graze their livestock.

people and tall as the Anakim; but the LORD expelled and destroyed them; so they dispossessed them and the Amorites dwelt there in their place; ²²thus had the LORD done for the children of Esau, who live in Seir, when He expelled and destroyed the Horites before them, so they took their domain in possession and still live there in their stead. ²³As for the Avvim, who were living in villages as far away as Gaza, it was the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, who exterminated them, took over their territory, and dwelt there.^p

²⁴"Now rise up,^q get on your way, and cross the Arnon River. See, I hand over to you, Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin the seizure and challenge him to battle. ²⁵This day I begin making your name a dread and terror to all nations under heaven so that wherever mention of you is heard, the peoples will tremble and shake.

²⁶"Then I sent messengers from the desert region of Kedemoth to Sihon, the king of Heshbon, with a message of peace, saying, ²⁷'Permit me to pass through your land; I will keep strictly to the highway, turning neither to the right nor to the left. ²⁸You will sell us for money the food we eat and the water we drink; only let us pass through on foot ²⁹as did the children of Esau for us in Seir and the Moabites in Ar. Do this until we cross the Jordan into the land which the LORD our God is giving us.' ³⁰But Sihon king of Heshbon was not willing to grant us passage, because the LORD your God stiffened his will and hardened his heart, to hand him over to you, as it is today.

³¹"Then the LORD said to me: See I have begun with placing Sihon and his land at your disposal; so start to possess it. ³²Then Sihon and all his people came out to attack us at Jahaz;

³³but the LORD our God handed him over to us, so that we conquered him, his sons and all his people. ³⁴We also captured all his cities at that time, and we destroyed all those in them, men, women and children; we left no survivor. ³⁵Only the cattle we kept for ourselves, along with any other booty in the captured cities. ³⁶So from Aroer, on the bank of the Arnon River, and from the city in the valley as far as Gilead, there was not a city too strong for us. Every one of them the LORD our God delivered to us. ³⁷However, at orders from the LORD, you did refrain from approaching the land of the children of Ammon,^r whether bordering on the river Jabbok or near the cities in the highlands, or wherever the LORD our God forbade us.

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3 "WE NEXT TURNED AND MOVED ON up the road to Bashan, where Og, Bashan's king came out against us, he and all his people, to fight us at Edrei. ²Be not afraid of him, the LORD told me, for I have put him and all his people together with his land into your hands, and you must do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon. ³Thus the LORD our God also delivered to us Og king of Bashan with all his people. We defeated him utterly; not one survivor did we leave him. ⁴Besides, we captured all his cities at that time, 60 in all, not a city that we did not take from him — the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ⁵All these cities were well fortified with their high walls, gates and bars, and besides there were many unwallled villages. ⁶We wiped them out completely, just as we had done to Sihon king of Heshbon, destroying every city with its men, women and children. ⁷We did spare the livestock, however, which, with the loot of the city, we retained for ourselves as booty.

p) This part of Deuteronomy contains several archeological notices, giving information about peoples who occupied parts of the land at a time earlier than the period of the peoples whom the Hebrews found there. Moses' interest is not confined to Edom, Moab and East Jordan. He mentions Gaza and Philistine territory to the west. The Caphtorim are the Philistines, who came from Caphtor, believed to be Crete, which was settled by Greeks, but Gen. 10:13, 14 traces the Philistines to Mizraim, that is, Egypt. q) Moses keeps quoting God's words.

r) Ammon and Moab were sons of Lot, Abraham's nephew. Edom's ancestor was Esau, Jacob's older brother. These relatives the Hebrews must not fight, except to defend themselves.

⁸"So it was that at that time we sized the territory of the two kings of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan from the river Arnon to Mount Hermon—the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, but the Amorites call it Senir—all the cities of the plateau, all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ¹¹Og king of Bashan was the last survivor remaining of the Rephaim; his bedstead was a couch made of iron, 13½ feet long and six feet wide. Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites?

¹²"Now of this land which we then captured, I gave the Reubenites and the Gadites the portion from Aroer on the river Arnon and half of Mount Gilead, including its cities. ¹³The remainder of Gilead and all Bashan—the kingdom of Og, all the region of Argob—I gave to the half tribe of Manasseh. All Bashan was once called the land of the Rephaim. ¹⁴Jair of Manasseh took over the whole region of Argob—that is, Bashan—as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites and renamed it Havvoth-jair^a after his own name, as it is to this day. ¹⁵To Machir I gave Gilead, while to the Reubenites and the Gadites I assigned the area from Gilead to the Arnon valley, establishing the middle of the valley as the boundary and including territory as far north as the river Jabbok, the frontier of the Ammonites, ¹⁷as well as the Arabah, with the Jordan as boundary, from Chinnereth to the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah eastward.

February-March, 1406 B.C.

¹⁸"At that time I gave you these orders, 'The LORD your God has given you this land to possess it. All you men of valor must arm yourselves and cross over as vanguard to your brothers, the Israelites. ¹⁹But your wives, your children, and your cattle—I know you have much cattle—shall remain

here in the cities which I have allotted to you, ²⁰until the LORD has given your brothers peaceful possession of the land, which the LORD your God has granted them across the Jordan. After that you shall each return to the possession which I have given you.'

²¹"Then, too, I ordered Joshua, 'Your eyes have fully seen how the LORD your God has dealt with these two kings. So shall the LORD deal with all the kingdoms to which you are marching. ²²You shall not fear them, for the LORD your God will Himself do battle for you.'

²³"After that I pleaded with the LORD. ²⁴'O LORD God,' I said, 'Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can perform the deeds Thou doest, or match Thy power? ²⁵O let me cross over, I pray, and see this fair land beyond the Jordan,¹ its pleasing hills, and Lebanon.' ²⁶But the LORD was indignant at me because of you and did not listen to me. That is enough, the LORD said to me, do not again speak to Me about this. ²⁷Climb to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes westward and northward, southward, eastward and gaze well on what you see; for you shall not cross the Jordan. ²⁸But charge Joshua, encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall cross over as leader of this people and make them inherit the land on which you will direct your gaze.' ²⁹So we remained encamped in the valley over against Beth-Peor.

4 "AND NOW, ISRAEL, PAY STRICT attention to the laws and ordinances which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live and enter and possess the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is granting you. ²You are neither to add to the word that I command you, nor to take from it; these commands which I enjoin upon you are of the LORD your

) Jair's villages.

) Granted at Christ's transfiguration [Matt. 17:3; Mark 9:4]; and Moses did not cross the Jordan or it.

) So true to life! Moses, the unique leader, had served his generation well; but now a younger man was better qualified for the conquest of Canaan. Even our Lord Jesus could say to His disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away."

God; you must obey them.^v ³You saw with your own eyes what the LORD did regarding Baal-Peor,^w how the LORD your God purged from your midst every man who followed after the Baal of Peor, ⁴and how those of you who remained true to the LORD your God are still alive today. ⁵See! The laws and ordinances I am teaching you are those which the LORD my God commanded me, so that you should practice them in the land which you are entering to possess. ⁶So, observe and practice them; for this will show how wise and intelligent a nation you are and the people who hear about all these laws will say, 'What a great people this is, a people of wisdom and understanding!' ⁷For what great nation is there, which has gods so near as the LORD our God is to us, every time we implore Him? ⁸And what great nation is there which possesses such righteous statutes and ordinances as this whole Law, which I am now setting before you?

⁹"Still you must be on your guard and watch your step, lest you forget the things you have seen.^x Never let them fade from your memory all the days of your life but make them known to your children and to your grandchildren, ¹⁰(especially) that day at Horeb, when you stood in the presence of the LORD your God, and the LORD said to me: Assemble the people here in My presence, and I will make them hear My word, that they may learn to revere Me as long as they shall live on the earth, and that they may teach the same to their children.

¹¹"You came close and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain was flaming with fire into the very heart of the heavens, which were

shrouded in darkness with thick black clouds; ¹²the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard a voice, but you caught no vision of any form; only a voice. ¹³So He made known to you in the Ten Words the covenant which He ordered you to keep, and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴At that same time the LORD gave me His orders to teach you these laws and ordinances,^y that you might observe them in the land you are invading to make it your own. ¹⁵Be thoroughly on guard, therefore, with profoundest gravity, for you saw no manner of form on that day when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, ¹⁶that you may not behave corruptly and fashion you an image, the shape of any statue resembling either male or female, ¹⁷the likeness of any animal on earth, or of any bird that flies in the heavens, ¹⁸or of some creeping creature that crawls on the ground, or of any fish in the waters lower than the earth. ¹⁹Neither shall you lift up your eyes toward the heavens to see the sun or the moon or the stars, the host of the heavens, to be led astray, to bow down to them in worship, and to serve them, things which the LORD your God has rendered available to all peoples under the whole heavens.^z ²⁰But the LORD took you and brought you out from the iron furnace of Egypt to be a people all His own, as you are this day.

²¹"But the LORD was indignant with me on account of you and swore that I should not cross the Jordan into that good land which the LORD your God is giving you for a heritage; ²²for I must die in this land; I must not cross the Jordan; but you will cross over to take possession of that good land. ²³Be

v) The importance of the Law is stressed everywhere in this Book. If Israel fails to keep it, all is lost. Keeping the Law is counted on to clear the land of all false worship.

w) See Num. 25:1-5, cited here to reinforce the statement that obedience means life; for the disobedient the end is death.

x) Continuously this is stressed in Deuteronomy, because so much in Israel's world continued to lure away from the one true God. See I John 2:15,16; 5:21.

y) The covenant made at Horeb, based on the Decalogue [in Hebrew, "the Ten Words"], which God spoke directly to the people. Becoming fearful, they could bear no more, so at the LORD's command, Moses sent them to their tents; but he remained while the LORD gave him the laws [Ex. 20:22, 31:18] which the people were to observe when settled in their new home. These laws Moses delivered in the Moab plain as his third discourse [Deut. 12:26].

z) In His providential ordering of the world, He assigns the heavenly bodies to minister to all His offspring, a grace which the nations abused [cf. Rom. 1:20-25].

mindful, then, lest you forget the covenant into which the LORD your God has entered with you, and make you any image or the likeness of any thing which the LORD your God has forbidden you. ²⁴For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.^a

²⁵"When you shall have begotten children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, and in your corruptness you make you a graven image or any likeness, and you do what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God so as to provoke Him, ²⁶I call heaven and earth to bear witness against you this day, that you shall soon completely perish from the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You shall not live in it long; but you shall be cut off entirely, ²⁷the LORD scattering you among the peoples, so that few of you shall be left among the nations, whither the LORD will be leading you.^b ²⁸There you will be worshipping gods that are the works of human hands, wood and stone, things that can neither see, nor hear, nor taste, nor smell. ²⁹Then you will there seek the LORD your God, and you shall find Him, when you seek for Him with all your heart and with all your soul. ³⁰In later times, when anguish is yours and all these experiences overtake you, then you will return to the LORD your God, and you will listen to Him; ³¹for the LORD your God is a merciful God; He will not abandon you or destroy you; neither will He forget the covenant made on oath with your fathers.

³²"Ask about the days of old, before your time, from the day when God created man upon the earth; inquire from one end of the heavens to the other and see whether such great happenings as these, or anything like them, have been heard of anywhere.

³³Have any people ever heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of

fire, as you have heard it, and remained alive? ³⁴Or did ever a god venture to go and take to himself a nation from the midst of another nation by testings, by signs, by wonders, by wars, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with awful terrors, as the LORD your God has done for you before your very eyes in Egypt?^c ³⁵All this you were given to see in order that you might know that the LORD, He is God; there is none other besides Him. ³⁶Out of the heavens He made you hear His voice in order to discipline you, and on earth He caused you to see His mighty fire; you heard His voice from the midst of the flames. ³⁷Because He loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them, He personally brought you out of Egypt by His own mighty power, ³⁸enabling you to drive out nations greater and stronger than you, to bring you into their land and to give it to you for a heritage, as is the case today. ³⁹Know therefore and take to heart, that the LORD, He is God in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is no other.^d ⁴⁰So obey His laws and keep His commandments, which I am now enjoining upon you, so that all may go well with you and with your children after you and that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God will be allotting you forever."

⁴¹After this Moses set apart three cities east of the Jordan as places of refuge, ⁴²in order that a man who had unintentionally killed a neighbor with whom he had had no previous quarrel might flee to one of these cities and remain alive: ⁴³Bezer in the desert on the plateau for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites.^e

⁴⁴This is the Law that Moses set before the Israelites; ⁴⁵these are the decrees, the statutes and the ordinances, which he proclaimed to them

^a) Intolerant of the worship of nothingness [cf. Ps. 115:4-8].

^b) All the prophets thereafter told Israel that exile would be their doom, if they disobeyed without repentance; and so it eventuated.

^c) As a people Israel witnessed it, not all individually, because almost an entire generation had died in the desert, and a new generation had been born there.

^d) A remarkable declaration of pure monotheism; see, in addition, Isa. 45:5,6,14,18,21,22 and 46:9.

^e) In Israel if a man was murdered, his nearest of kin, the avenger of blood, was obliged to slay the murderer. But the killing might have been accidental; in such a case, the killer could flee to the city of refuge and escape the avenger of blood. See further Deut. 19:1-13.

when they came out of Egypt ⁴⁶and were encamped beyond the Jordan^f in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, whose capital was Heshbon, and whom Moses and the Israelites conquered after they had left Egypt.^g ⁴⁷They made conquest of his land and of the land of Og, king of Bashan, the two Amorite kings on the other side of the Jordan to the east, ⁴⁸from Arcoer, on the banks of the Arnon, as far as Mount Sion—that is, Hermon—⁴⁹along with all the plain on the east of the Jordan, as far as the Sea of the Plain^h below the slopes of Pisgah.

5 MOSES SUMMONED ALL ISRAEL AND saidⁱ to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and ordinances which I am announcing in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to practice them, keeping ever in mind ²the covenant which the LORD our God made with us at Horeb. ³It was not with our fathers that the LORD made this covenant; it was with us, all of us alive here today. ⁴The LORD spoke to you face to face there in the mountain, from the center of the fire. ⁵You were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain to hear the LORD's words; so I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to announce to you the LORD's words. He said: ⁶I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ⁷You shall have no other gods besides Me. ⁸You shall not make for yourself an image or the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters lower than the earth; ⁹you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am God who brooks no rival, bringing home to the children the iniquities of their fathers to the third and fourth genera-

tion of those who hate Me, ¹⁰and bestowing loving kindness on thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

¹¹"You shall not use the name of the LORD your God profanely; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who uses His name profanely.

¹²"Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³Six days you shall labor and do all your work; ¹⁴but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God; on it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your servant, nor your maid, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your animals, nor the stranger among you, in order that your servants, male and female, may rest as well as you. ¹⁵Remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD your God redeemed you, bringing you out by a strong hand and an outstretched arm. This is why the LORD your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.^j

¹⁶"Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you; that you may enjoy long life and that you may prosper in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

¹⁷You shall commit no murder.

¹⁸You shall commit no adultery.

¹⁹You shall not steal.

²⁰You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

²¹"You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.^k You shall not covet your neighbor's house, or his field, or his servant, or his maid, or his ox, or his donkey or anything belonging to your neighbor.

²²"These words the LORD spoke to you, while you were all assembled at the mountain, in a loud voice out of the flaming fire with thick clouds and

f) East of Jordan.

g) Reiteration is a rule of pedagogy which the ancients wisely practiced, for without much writing the memory must be put to continual use.

h) Plain, usually desert Arabah. This sea we now know as the Dead Sea.

i) Ch. 5-11 are Moses' second discourse, introducing ch. 12-26, the Law. For Israel, the acceptance and observance of the Law was the all-important matter, and this discourse prepares the nation to receive and obey it. It stresses as the basis for obedience—love, reverence and loyalty toward God. These chapters reveal a warmth of affection for God, rarely seen elsewhere in the Pentateuch.

j) Reasons, then, for observing the Sabbath—physical and spiritual refreshing, and remembrance of divine redemption. k) Here, the wife comes first; in Ex. 20, she comes second.

darkness. He added nothing more.¹ He then wrote the words upon two tablets of stone, and these He gave to me.²³ When you heard the voice from within the darkness, with the whole mountain aflame with fire, all your elders and tribal chiefs came to me and said: 'This day the LORD our God has revealed to us His glory and greatness, and we have heard His voice from the fire; thus we have learned that God may speak to a person and he person still live.'²⁵ But why should we die now? For surely this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God again, we shall die.²⁶ For who of all flesh has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking from within the fire, as we have done, and remained alive? ²⁷You go near and hear everything the LORD our God has to say; then come and tell us all that the LORD our God tells you, and we will listen and observe His commands.'

²⁸"The LORD heard your words, as you were speaking to me. He said to me, I listened to the words which the people spoke to you, and all they said was good; ²⁹if only they had hearts so true that they would always show Me reverence and always keep all My commandments, so that it would go well with them and with their children after them forever!

³⁰"Go, tell them to return to their tents; ³¹but you stay here with Me while I give you all the commandments, the laws, the ordinances they are to observe when they reach the land and which I am giving them to possess. ³²Thus you must be most careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you, not turning to right or left, ³³but going strictly the whole

course the LORD your God has ordered you, that you may live and prosper and enjoy length of days in the land you shall possess.

6 "HERE, THEN, YOU HAVE THESE commandments, statutes and ordinances* which the LORD your God directed me to teach you. They are the laws you are to observe in the land to which you are crossing over to possess it; ²so you may revere the LORD your God by practicing all His statutes and His commandments which He lays upon you, on you and on your son and on your grandson, all the days of your life; and your days will be prolonged. ³So be attentive, Israel; be careful to practice them, that it may be well with you, and that you may be greatly increased in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you.

⁴"Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD, ⁵and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.⁶ These words with which I am now charging you shall be written on your heart;⁷ and you shall impress them deeply upon your children;⁸ you shall talk of them when you are sitting at home, while you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up;⁹ ⁸you shall bind them as a token on your hands, wear them on your forehead as a badge,⁹ and write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

¹⁰"When the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you great and splendid cities which you did not build; ¹¹houses filled with all kinds of goods

) In Deuteronomy, the Decalogue alone is the basis of the covenant — "He added nothing more." n) It was a common belief in Israel that if a man heard God speak to him, he would surely die. Deut. 4:33; Judg. 6:22; 13:22.

Ordinances are civil and criminal; statutes are religious and ceremonial.

) This is the great passage of the Pentateuch. It is not surprising that Jesus quoted Deuteronomy so often. God's love for Israel is mentioned in four places in it, and Israel's love for God twelve times. In the Jewish church vs. 4,5 are known as the great Shema, daily repeated in their prayers, the fundamental article of their faith, still the central tenet of monotheism.

) See Jer. 31:33.

) Through the ages and to date, neglect of this divine suggestion was, and is, a major cause of juvenile delinquency. Cf. Prov. 22:6.

) This is the O.T. conception of religious education; Israelites must personally know the Scriptures and teach them to their children in the home.

) A phylactery, discovered recently in one of the Dead Sea caves, contains these verses 4-9.

which you did not put there; cisterns dug which you did not dig; vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, but of which you will eat and be satisfied, ¹²then be on your guard lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³Revere the LORD your God; truly serve Him, and swear by His name alone. ¹⁴Run after no other gods, of the gods of the peoples around you, ¹⁵lest the anger of the LORD your God blaze out fiercely against you and He wipe you off the face of the earth; for the LORD your God who is among you is a jealous God.

¹⁶"You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah;" ¹⁷but you shall obey strictly the commandments of the LORD your God, as also His decrees and statutes which He has enjoined upon you. ¹⁸Seek to do all that is right and good in the LORD's sight, so that you may prosper and enter into possession of the good land which the LORD promised on oath to your fathers, ¹⁹to clear it of all who oppose you, as the LORD has spoken.

²⁰"When, in time to come, your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of these decrees, these laws and ordinances which the LORD our God has enjoined upon you?' ²¹thus shall you answer your son: 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD rescued us from there by a strong hand. ²²Before our eyes the LORD worked by portents and marvels, great and terrible, against Pharaoh and against his whole household, against all Egypt; ²³and the LORD brought us out from there and ensured to us an entrance here, giving us this land which He had promised on oath to our fathers. ²⁴So it was that the LORD commanded us to keep all these laws and to show

reverence for the LORD our God, for our welfare so He might keep us alive as we are kept alive today. ²⁵This will make for our righteousness, provided we take care before the LORD our God to obey all His requirements as He has ordered us to do.'

7 "WHEN THE LORD YOUR GOD HAS brought you into the land which you are entering to take possession and after He has cleared it of many nations before you — the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you — ²after the LORD your God puts them into your hands so that you overcome them, then you must devote them to utter destruction, making no treaty with them and showing them no mercy.' ³You must not intermarry with them; neither give your daughters to their sons, nor receive their daughters for your sons ⁴for they will lure your sons away from Me, and they will be worshipping other gods. Then the LORD's anger will flare out against you, and He will annihilate you quickly. ⁵This then is the way you shall deal with them: You will pull down their altars, break in pieces their dedicated pillars, cut down their shame images," and burn their idols in the fire. ⁶For you are a holy people," set apart to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you out of all the nations on the earth, to be His valued possession. ⁷It was not because you were greater in numbers than any other nation that the LORD fastened His affection upon you and chose you: for you were the least of all peoples. ⁸No, it was because the LORD loved you, and on account of His oath which He had sworn to your fathers, that He brought you out by a mighty hand and delivered you from the house of slav-

s) Ex. 17:7, also mentioned as Meribah.

t) See Deut. 2:34; 7:20; 20:17,18. Israel's gravest danger after the conquest was defection to pagan deities; one reason why, when she captured a city in Canaan, she must destroy all its inhabitants.

u) Heb. — Asherah — poles, on either side of the pagan altar, carved to resemble or portray sex organs — one with male, the other with female organs.

v) The word here translated "holy" means separate, set apart; Israel is unique among nations; she belongs to God, is His cherished possession. In later Scriptures, the moral aspect of holiness comes to the fore.

ry and from the power of Pharaoh, ing of Egypt. ⁹You should know that the LORD your God, He is the only God; the faithful God, keeping His covenant and showing loving kindness to a thousand generations of those who love Him and are obedient to His orders; ¹⁰but repaying in person those who hate Him, by destroying them; He does not delay with those who hate Him but repays them personally. ¹¹So, you shall keep His commandments and be obedient to His laws and ordinances, which I am now charging you to do.

¹²"As you show obedience to these ordinances and observe them well, the LORD your God will remember His covenant with you and will confirm His loving-kindness toward you as He swore to your fathers. ¹³He will love you, bless you, and increase your numbers. Moreover, He will bless the fruit of your body and the produce of your oil, your grain, your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flocks, in the land which He promised on oath to give to your fathers." ¹⁴So you will be lessed above all nations; not a male or female among you, or among your livestock shall be barren. ¹⁵The LORD will reserve you from every sickness, and He will not inflict upon you any of those hurtful diseases* of Egypt, with which you are familiar; but He will lay them upon all who hate you. ¹⁶On your part, you shall completely annihilate the nations which the LORD your God will be putting into your hands, and you must not spare them, neither serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

¹⁷"If you should say to yourselves: These nations are greater than I; how am I drive them out? ¹⁸do not surrender to fear. Keep in mind what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt. ¹⁹You saw those terrible tests with your own eyes, likewise the signs and wonders, the strong hand and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do as much now

to all the nations of whom you are afraid. ²⁰Besides, the LORD your God will send hornets against those nations, until every survivor or any that may be in hiding from you, shall perish. ²¹Do not dread them; for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and terrible God. ²²The LORD your God will be thrusting out these nations little by little; you shall not be able to exterminate them all at once; for wild beasts might increase too rapidly for you.

²³"But the LORD your God will hand them over to you, and He will crush them utterly, until they no longer exist. ²⁴He will set their kings before you, and you shall wipe out their names from under the heavens; not one shall be able to maintain himself before you until you have destroyed them. ²⁵As for those carved images of their gods, you must commit them all to the flames without coveting or appropriating the silver and gold upon them, lest you be snared by it, for it is an abhorrence to the LORD your God. ²⁶You shall not bring such an abomination into your house, lest you yourselves, like it, become a thing doomed. Utterly detest it and loathe it, for it is doomed.

8 "TO LIVE, O ISRAEL, TO BECOME A numerous nation, to gain entrance to the land which the LORD promised your fathers under oath, you must obey every command with which I am now charging you. ²Keep in mind the whole way over which the LORD your God has been leading you these 40 years in the wilderness, to humble you, to test you, so that He might discover your true disposition and learn whether you will observe His orders or not. ³He humbled you; He let you suffer hunger; He gave you manna to eat, something neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live by bread alone; but that man lives on everything that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD." ⁴During those 40 years, your clothing did not

* Increase of livestock; produce of soil and family fertility are gifts from God, not from the idols, as the natives believed and told them [Hos. 2:7,8].

*) Especially any of the Ten Plagues.

*) Bodily and spiritually. If Christ, Matt. 4:4, was dependent on the Word of God for strength, how much more are we!

wear out, nor did your feet blister; ⁵thus you will heartily acknowledge that, just as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God was disciplining you, ⁶that you might learn to keep the commandments of the LORD your God, walk in His ways, and show Him all due reverence. ⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a rich country, a land with streams of water, where springs and lakes well up in the valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines, fig trees and pomegranates, a land of oil-producing olive trees and of honey, ⁹a land where you may eat your bread without scarcity or any kind of want, a land whose stones produce iron and in whose hills you can mine copper. ¹⁰You shall eat and be filled and bless the LORD your God for the good land He has granted you. ¹¹Be ever on your guard not to forget the LORD your God by neglecting His ordinances, His laws and His statutes, which I am now laying before you, ¹²lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, building your houses and dwelling in them, ¹³your flocks and herds increasing, your silver and gold multiplying, and all you possess becoming abundant, ¹⁴your heart will swell with pride, and you will forget the LORD your God^a who brought you out from Egypt, redeeming you from the house of slavery ¹⁵and guiding you across that terrible desert, with its fiery serpents, its scorpions, its parched, waterless ground, and providing water for you from the flinty rock, ¹⁶and feeding you with manna about which your fathers knew nothing. All this He did to discipline you and to test you for your eventual good. ¹⁷Beware, then, not to say in your heart, 'My own power and the strength of my own hand have brought me this wealth.' ¹⁸Instead, remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the power to gain wealth, that He might fulfil at this time the covenant which He made with your fathers.

¹⁹However, if you do forget the LORD your God and follow after other

gods, serving and worshiping them, I warn you this day that you shall certainly go down to ruin. ²⁰Like the nations which the LORD will be destroying before you, you too, shall be destroyed, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

9 "HEAR, O ISRAEL: TODAY YOU ARE to cross the Jordan and invade and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, living in large cities that are fortified to the heavens, ^{2a}a people great and tall, the Anakim. You know their kind and have heard it said; 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' ³Be assured, however, that the LORD is crossing before you like a consuming fire; He will destroy and subdue them in your sight, and you will be able to dispossess them and kill them off quickly, as the LORD promised you. ⁴But see to it, after the LORD your God has thrust them out, that you do not say, 'It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me into possession of this land.' For the LORD your God is driving out these nations before you, because of their wickedness. ⁵It cannot at all be laid to any goodness or uprightness on your part. He will be driving them out on account of their wickedness and to establish the word which the LORD swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶You must understand clearly that it is not because of any merit you may possess that the LORD your God will be granting you this good land, for you are a stiff-necked people.

⁷Bear it always in mind, and never forget how you stirred the anger of the LORD your God in the desert; indeed, from the day you came out from the land of Egypt until your arrival here, you have been rebellious against the LORD. ⁸At Horeb you so provoked the LORD that He was ready to destroy you. ⁹I had gone up the mountain to receive the stone tables, the tablets of the covenant which He had made with you; and I remained on the mountain

2) For recent discovery of ancient copper mines and smelters south of the Dead Sea, read Nelson Glueck's, "The Other Side of Jordan."

a) So occupied with the temporal as to neglect the eternal?

40 days and 40 nights without eating bread or drinking water. ¹⁰Then the LORD gave me the two stone tablets inscribed by His own hand, and on them were all the words He had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire, on the occasion of your assembly there in His presence. ¹¹He gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. Then ¹²the LORD said to me, Arise, get down from here at once, for your people whom you brought out from Egypt, have corrupted themselves; they have turned aside in haste from the way I had set for them and have made themselves a molten image.^b ¹³I have observed this people, the LORD continued to me, and, see, they are a stiff-necked race! Do not plead for them; ¹⁴let Me alone that I may wipe them out; I will leave no trace of them under the heavens. I will make you into a nation that will be greater and stronger than they.

¹⁵"So with the two tablets of the covenant in my two hands, I went down immediately from the mountain aflame with fire. ¹⁶Then I saw it. Truly you had committed a grievous sin against the LORD your God! You had made yourselves a molten calf; as the LORD said, you had soon turned aside from the way which the LORD commanded you. ¹⁷I gripped the two tablets and flung them from me with both hands and broke them to bits before you. ¹⁸After that, as I had done before, I prostrated myself before the LORD and again fasted 40 days and 40 nights because of all the sins you committed when you did this wickedness in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger. ¹⁹For I dreaded the awful indignation and fierce anger of the LORD against you, so that He would surely destroy you. Once more, however, the LORD listened to me. ²⁰But the LORD's displeasure with Aaron was so great that He would destroy him; so, I interceded for Aaron, too, in prayer. ²¹Then

that sinful object you had made — that golden calf! I seized it, and I burned it in the fire; I crushed it, ground it into dust, and scattered the dust on the stream that was flowing down the mountain.

²²"At Taberah, at Massah, as well as at Kibroth-hattaavah, you were continually provoking the LORD's indignation. ²³And when the LORD sent you out from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and take over the land I have given you; there, too, you rebelled and did not listen to the LORD's command. You did not believe Him and did not obey His voice. ²⁴In truth, you have been rebellious toward the LORD from the day I first knew you.

²⁵"Then I did again prostrate myself before the LORD 40 days and 40 nights, because the LORD had said He would destroy you. ²⁶I prayed to the LORD. I said, 'O Lord God, do not wipe out Thy people and Thy heritage whom Thou didst rescue by Thy might, whom Thou didst bring out of Egypt by a strong hand. ²⁷Remember Thy servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; regard not the stubbornness of this people; look not upon their wickedness and sin, ²⁸lest it be said by the nation from which Thou didst redeem us, "The LORD was not able to bring them into the land He promised them; for this reason, and because He hates them, He brought them out to slay them in the desert." ²⁹Yet they are Thy people, Thy special heritage, whom Thou didst bring out by Thy great strength and by Thy outstretched arm.'

10 "AT THAT TIME THE LORD SAID to me: Cut two stone tablets like the first, and come up to Me here in the mountain. Also make an ark of wood. ²I will write on the tablets the commandments that were on the first tablets which you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.^c ³So I made an

b) In Ex. 32 the story of the golden calf is told more dramatically and in greater detail. Israel's paganism had an early start. Whom did the sons of Jacob marry, if not the daughters of Canaanites, except Joseph whose wife was the pagan high priest's daughter?

c) The Ark contained the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were inscribed. The Covenant being based on the Commandments, inspired the expression "The Ark of the Covenant," the symbol of the presence of God in the midst of His people.

ark of acacia wood, and I cut out the two stone tablets, making them like the first, and I climbed the mountain, taking them with me. ⁴Upon these, as He had done before, He wrote the Ten Commandments which the LORD had announced to you out of the fire that day on the mountain, and the LORD gave them to me. ⁵I turned then, came down, and placed the tablets in the Ark which I had prepared, and there they have remained, in keeping with the command the LORD gave me.

⁶"The Israelites set out from the wells of the children of Jaakan for Moserah, where Aaron died and was buried,* Eleazar his son succeeding him in the office of priest. ⁷From there they journeyed on to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with streams of water. ⁸Then it was that the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the Ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before Him as His ministers, and to pronounce blessings in His name, as they still do. ⁹Thus the Levites hold no property or inheritance, as the other tribesmen do; the LORD is their inheritance, as the LORD your God promised them.

¹⁰"Once more I remained on the mountain as at the first time 40 days and 40 nights, and again the LORD listened to me, and the LORD did not destroy you. ¹¹Then the LORD said to me, Arise, for you are to journey at the head of the people until they enter the land I promised their fathers to give them.

¹²"So now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to show the LORD your God due reverence, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul ¹³and to keep the LORD's commandments and statutes which, for your own

good, I enjoin on you this day?^d ¹⁴Behold, to the LORD your God belong the heavens and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that is in it; ¹⁵yet the LORD showed affection for your fathers and so loved them that He chose you, their sons, above all nations, as it is today. ¹⁶So be circumcised in heart and be stiff-necked no more. ¹⁷For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the LORD of lords. He is God, great, mighty, and terrible! He shows no partiality nor can He be bribed; ¹⁸He secures justice for the orphan and the widow; He cares for the foreigner among you, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹You, too, then, should love the foreigner. Were you not immigrants in the land of Egypt? ²⁰You must show reverence for the LORD your God; you must serve Him, cling to Him, and swear by His name. ²¹He is your praise^e and your God; He has done for you these great and marvelous things which your own eyes have witnessed. ²²Your fathers went down into Egypt, 70 souls in number, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of the heavens in multitude.

11 "LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, therefore, and always heed His charge, His laws, His ordinances, and His commandments.^f Of the LORD your God's discipline you must be ever mindful. ²I am not now speaking to your children; they do not know; they have not seen His greatness, His mighty hand and outstretched arm. ³His signs and the deeds He performed in Egypt against Pharaoh the king of Egypt and against all that land—⁴what He did to the Egyptian army, how he made the waters of the Red Sea engulf their horses and their chariots when they followed you; how the LORD destroyed them to this day:

*Near Mt. Hor, which means mountain, by the Edom boundary, Num. 20:22-29.

d) A remarkable parallel is the great passage in Micah 6:1-8. How simple God's commands! Yet they lift the soul of him who follows them, because they come from God. From here to the end of the chapter we have one of the great messages of Deut., yes, of the O.T. How did Israel achieve such an exalted conception of God-and-man relationship, except by revelation?

e) For full significance of the expression, study Jer. 17:14.

f) Through the last half of ch. 10 and the first part of ch. 11, we catch a remarkable glimpse of Israel's conception of God and life. If modern readers find Deuteronomy wearisome because of repetition, Hebrews gloried in it; it was strength to them. We read a page, then turn to the next with little rethinking. They heard and heard the same again; then ruminated, chewed the cud, thought things through and could thus master more truth than we master with our much reading.

what He did, likewise, for you in the desert until you reached this place; now He dealt with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, Reuben's son; now in the midst of all Israel the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, households, tents, and belongings in their camp — ⁷With your own eyes you have seen all these mighty works the LORD has done. ⁸Therefore, you must keep every commandment I join on you today, that you may be strong, able to enter and take over the land ⁹and long enjoy life upon the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, that He would grant them and their offspring a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰For the land which you are entering to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you could sow seed and water it with your foot^g like a vegetable garden. ¹¹No, the land you are reaching to possess is a land of hills and valleys; it depends for water upon the rains from heaven, ¹²a land over which the LORD your God watches; His eyes are upon it continually from the year's beginning to its end. ¹³And if you give heed truly to the orders with which I am charging you, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and your whole soul, ¹⁴then He will send rain upon your land in its season, the early and the latter rains and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil; ¹⁵He will also provide grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be filled. ¹⁶But you must be determined not to let your hearts be lured away and turned aside to serve other gods, to worship them, ¹⁷and so to bring upon you the indignation of the LORD, so that He would restrain the heavens that there be neither rain nor produce from the soil, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is granting you.

¹⁸"Store up these words of mine in

your heart and in your soul. Bind them as a token on your hands, and let them be as a forehead band between your eyes. ¹⁹Teach them to your children, talking about them when sitting at home and when walking on the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰Inscribe them on the door posts of your houses and on your gates ²¹so that your days and the days of your children may multiply and become as the days of heaven above the earth, the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them.

²²"For if you diligently obey all these commands which I command you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to remain loyal to Him, ²³then the LORD will drive out all these peoples from before you and you shall take possession of nations greater and stronger than you. ²⁴Every foot of ground you tread upon shall be yours. Your frontiers shall stretch from the desert to Lebanon, from the river Euphrates to the Western Sea; ²⁵not a man shall be able to stand against you, for the LORD your God will put the dread and the terror of you on all the land you walk upon, as He has promised you.

²⁶"Today I am setting before you a blessing and a curse; ²⁷a blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God, with which I am now charging you; ²⁸but a curse if you do not obey the commands of the LORD your God, but turn from the way I am commanding you this day and follow other gods whom you have not known.^h

²⁹And it shall be when the LORD your God has brought you into the land of which you are taking possession, you shall set the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

³⁰Are not the two mountains on the other side of the Jordan, west of the sunset road in the country of the Canaanites, who dwell in the plain op-

g) Israel's new land was superior to Egypt, where rain seldom falls and farmers depended on irrigation for any crops they might produce. The "foot" here was to open up small canals at points where water was wanted, to close them again by the foot. In Palestine, the spring rains came in March and April; then no rain until October and November, when the plowing began.

h) The Baals of Canaan mostly; Israel did not know them in the desert, but many learned to worship them after the conquest, with fatal consequences.

posite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? ³¹Now you are about to cross the Jordan to take over the land which the LORD your God intends you to have; you shall seize it and live there, ³²and then you must keep all these laws and ordinances which today I am putting before you."¹

12 "THESE ARE THE LAWS¹ AND ordinances you are to observe punctually in the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, has appointed you to possess, all the days you live on earth. ²You shall demolish utterly all the places where the nations whom you are to dispossess worshiped their gods,^k on high mountains, on hills, and under every green tree. ³You shall tear down their altars, break in pieces their dedicated pillars, and burn in the fire their sacred trees. The carved images of their gods you shall hew down, and thus you shall abolish their very name¹ from that place. ⁴Not so shall you behave toward the LORD your God, ⁵but you shall seek out that place which the LORD your God will choose^m from all your tribes to put His name there and make it His dwelling place. ⁶There you shall go,ⁿ and there you shall bring your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contributions you dedicate, your vows, your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks. ⁷There you shall eat before the LORD your God and rejoice over the fruits of your labors, you and your households, as the LORD your God has blessed you. ⁸You are not to do as we are now doing, the things that seem right to each in his own eyes, ⁹for you have not yet reached the place of rest and heritage

which the LORD is giving you. ¹⁰However, you will be crossing the Jordan and settling down in the land which the LORD your God is giving you, at rest from all your enemies and dwelling in security. ¹¹Then you will be seeking out the place around you where the LORD your God will choose to put His name, and there you shall bring everything that I now bid you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the dedicated contributions you will be making, and any special offering you may have vowed to the LORD. ¹²And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you, your sons and your daughters, your servants and your maids, and the Levite^o living in your community, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. ¹³Be sure not to present your burnt offerings at just any spot you chance upon; ¹⁴but only at the one place which the LORD shall choose in one of your tribes; there you shall bring your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you to do.

¹⁵"But if in your homes you want meat, you may kill and eat as much as you want, in accord with the blessing which the LORD your God grants you; the unclean as well as the clean may eat of it, as you would of the antelope and of the deer.^p ¹⁶Only do not eat the blood; you must pour it on the ground like water. ¹⁷Then again, you must not eat at home the tithe of your grain, or of your wine, or of your oil, or of the firstlings of your herd or flock, or anything you have promised in a vow to the LORD, or any freewill offering or dedicated contribution. ¹⁸Eat these before the LORD your God in the place of His choosing, you, your son

i) Vs. 32 brings Moses' second discourse to a close.

j) Moses' third discourse is in Ch. 12-26, 28. It is the major section of the book, the Deut. Law. It introduces a revolutionary form of Israel's joint worship, henceforth to be conducted in one place only; all other shrines must be destroyed.

k) This law was not fully carried out until King Josiah's time, in 621 B.C., II Kings 22 and 23.

l) The name of the god at each place.

m) "The place which the LORD your God will choose" is the phrase regularly used in Deuteronomy for the legitimate sanctuary to which Israel shall go to worship God.

n) Before crossing the Jordan into Canaan; the permanent place for the sanctuary had not yet been selected.

o) The Levite is frequently named in Deut. as one who must be cared for on all occasions. Helping the priests and teaching were his main functions.

p) During patriarchal days with local altars, the earlier Hebrews did at times, when eating meat or drinking, offer a portion at their local altar, Gen. 31:54; After the central altar was established, those too far away from that altar were allowed to eat meat without ceremonial sacrifice.

and your daughter, your servant and your maid, and the Levite in your community. Rejoice before the LORD your God in all that your hands have undertaken.^q ¹⁹And keep constantly in mind that you must not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.^r

²⁰"When the LORD your God shall enlarge your territory, as He promised you, and you say, 'I want to eat meat,' you may eat as much meat as you like. ²¹And if the place where the LORD your God has chosen to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has provided, in the way I have instructed you and eat of it at home as much as you wish, ²²as you would an antelope or a deer in your own home; the unclean and the clean alike may eat it; ²³but make sure you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the flesh. ²⁴Do not eat it; pour it on the ground like water. ²⁵You must not eat it, that you may prosper, both you and your children after you, doing what is right in the sight of the LORD. ²⁶But the consecrated gifts you have and the offerings you have promised in your vows, these you shall take with you to the place of the LORD's choice ²⁷and there offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God. The blood of your sacrifice shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God; but the flesh you may eat. ²⁸Carefully heed all these requirements which I am setting before you, that it may ever go well with you and with your children after you, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

²⁹"When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations against whom you will be advancing to dispossess them, and you take charge and settle down in their land, ³⁰then be on your guard lest, after their destruction,

you be lured into imitating them, inquiring after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations worship their gods?' so that you may do the same. ³¹You must not thus behave toward the LORD your God; for every abomination which He hates, these peoples have done for their gods, even to the burning of their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. ³²Everything I am commanding you, you shall do; you must not add to it or take from it.

13 "IF A PROPHET ARISES AMONG you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or wonder, ²and the sign or wonder he speaks about comes to pass, and he then says to you, 'Let us go after other gods and serve them,' gods you have never known,^s ³then do not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴You must follow the LORD your God and revere Him, keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him and cling to Him. ⁵But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams must be executed; for he has taught you to depart from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and rescued you from the house of slavery. He taught you to draw you away from the path which the LORD your God commanded you to follow; so you must purge the evil from among you.

⁶"If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, should secretly tempt you, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' whom neither you nor your fathers have known, ⁷the gods of the peoples of other nations, near or far, from one end of the earth to the other, ⁸you must refuse him and not listen to him. Neither pity him, nor spare him, nor conceal him. ⁹You

q) The Psalms of Ascent, 120-134, show with what genuine joy Israel followed this injunction.

r) Clean and unclean, as used here, are legal terms. If a member of the family was ritually unclean, he did not eat, I Sam. 20:26. This matter of eating meat played a role down through the centuries of Judaism and to N.T. days, Rom. 14:20, 21.

s) Deuteronomy seeks above all to purge Israel of every phase of pagan worship. Ch. 13 presents typical cases: if a trusted but false prophet seeks to lure the people after false gods, or a close relative is guilty, or a whole city goes astray. The penalty is death for the individual, annihilation for the city.

must certainly put him to death, and your hand must be the first against him, then the hand of all the people. ¹⁰You must stone him to death, mindful that he has sought to lead you away from the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt from the house of slavery, ¹¹and all Israel shall hear and fear and never again commit such evil among you.

¹²"If you hear a report that in one of the cities to which the LORD your God will be assigning you to live, ¹³wicked men have arisen and have led their fellow citizens astray with the cry, 'Let us go and worship other gods,' which you have never known, ¹⁴then you shall investigate and make thorough inquiry; and if the report proves true and it is certain that this abominable thing has taken place among you, ¹⁵then you shall put the dwellers of that city to the sword, smiting it without quarter, exterminating it and all in it, cattle and people alike with the edge of the sword. ¹⁶You shall gather all the spoil into the open square and there burn everything, offering it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God; it shall remain in ruins and never be rebuilt. ¹⁷Let nothing of the things in it, doomed to destruction, stick to your hands; that the LORD may turn from His fierce anger and show you mercy, and in His mercy multiply you as He has sworn to your fathers, ¹⁸provided that you listen to the voice of the LORD your God, keeping all His commandments which I am setting before you today and doing what is right in the presence of the LORD your God.

14 "YOU ARE THE CHILDREN OF the LORD your God; ¹you shall not cut yourselves or shave your forehead for the dead; ²for you are a people dedicated to the LORD your God, and He has chosen you from all peoples on the earth to be His and His alone.

³"You shall eat nothing abominable. ⁴These are animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵the deer, the

gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the chamois, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶Any animal that has divided hoofs and chews the cud you may eat. ⁷But of those that chew the cud or part the hoof there are some that you may not eat: the camel, the hare, the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not divide the hoof. They are unclean to you. ⁸The hog is unclean because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud; of their flesh you must not eat nor may you touch their carcass.

⁹"Of the creatures that live in water, those that have fins and scales you may eat, ¹⁰but whatever does not have fins and scales is unclean to you, you shall not eat of it.

¹¹"Of all clean birds you may eat, ¹²but these you may not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the fishhawk, ¹³the buzzard, all kinds of falcon, ¹⁴all ravens, ¹⁵the ostrich, the nighthawk, and the sea gull, all kinds of hawk, ¹⁶the screech owl, the eagle owl, the water hen, ¹⁷the pelican, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, ¹⁸the stork, all kinds of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat. ¹⁹Likewise, all winged creeping things are unclean to you and may not be eaten. ²⁰All clean winged creatures, however, you may eat.

²¹"You shall not eat anything that has died a natural death. You may give it to the alien in your community, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; but you are a people dedicated to the LORD your God.

"You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."^u

²²"Every year you must tithe all your seeds' produce that comes from your field. ²³And before the LORD your God, in the place He will be choosing to put His name there, you shall eat it; the tithe of your grain, your wine and your oil, as well as the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks, that you may learn to revere the LORD your God all your days. ²⁴If the way to the LORD's sanctuary proves too long

t) Mutilation of the body and shaving the forehead were common rites of mourning for the dead in Israel's world. Some rites mentioned in this passage were practiced by Israelites at the time of Jeremiah. u) In such a procedure there would be an element of heartlessness. The ewe's milk is primarily to keep the kid alive, not to render it good eating.

for you, and you are unable to carry the tithe, because the place of the LORD your God's choice to put His name there is so far away, when the LORD your God blesses you, ²⁵then you shall exchange your tithe for money in your home town and with the money securely in hand go to the place which the LORD your God chooses, ²⁶and there purchase whatever your heart may desire, bullocks sheep, wine, strong drink, anything your appetite suggests and, rejoicing before the LORD your God, eat it, both you and your household. ²⁷Also the Levite who belongs in your community you must not neglect, for he has no property or inheritance with you.

²⁸"At the end of every three years you shall bring out the full tithe of your produce for that year and deposit it within your city; ²⁹and the Levite, since he has no property or inheritance with you, the resident immigrant, the fatherless, and the widow shall come and eat and be satisfied; so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work you undertake.

15 "AT THE END OF EVERY SEVEN years there must be a canceling of debts, ²and this shall be the way of the canceling: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he made to his neighbor or to his brother; he shall make no demand for repayment, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.^v

³A foreigner you may press for payment, but whatever of yours was due from a brother^w you shall cancel.

⁴However, there should be no poor among you, for the LORD your God will abundantly bless you in the land. He will give you to possess as a heritage, ⁵if you listen to the LORD your God and rightly observe all these commandments which today I am enjoining upon you. ⁶When the LORD your God blesses you as He promised you, then you shall lend to many nations,

but not borrow; you shall rule many nations, but they shall not rule over you.

⁷"When there is among you a poor man, a brother of yours, in one of the towns which the LORD will be granting you, you shall not harden your heart or close your hand for your poor brother, refusing him a loan; no, ⁸you shall open wide your hand for him and lend him liberally to meet his need amply.

⁹"Be on your guard not to let the base thought get the upper hand in your heart: The seventh year is approaching, the year of release, so that you turn a loveless eye on your poor brother, and you give him nothing. He will cry out to the LORD against you, and it will become sin in you. ¹⁰You shall make the loan to him freely, not heavy of heart when you give to him; for the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all you undertake. ¹¹The land will never be without its poor,^x so I command you to be openhanded towards your brother, to the needy, and to the poor in the land.

¹²"If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall give him his freedom. ¹³When he leaves you, he must not go empty-handed, ¹⁴but you shall furnish him liberally with provisions from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your wine press, from that with which the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give him. ¹⁵Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and that the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I am now laying this command upon you. ¹⁶But if he says to you; 'I do not want to leave you; I am devoted to you and your family and am faring well with you,' ¹⁷then you shall take an awl and drill it through his ear against the doorpost of your house, and he shall be your servant for

^v) In Israel loans were granted to fellow Hebrews without interest; it was charity to the needy. Every seventh year all such loans were canceled. The law of release is in Deuteronomy only. Even after the exile, in the days of Nehemiah — ch. 5 — those who required interest on money loaned to Jews, were severely rebuked as usurers. It is a custom we Christians do well to practice.

^w) An Israelite.

^x) As our LORD remarked, John 12:8; when Mary of Bethany was criticized for anointing His feet.

all time; and for your maid you shall do the same.⁷ ¹⁸It must not be difficult for you to let your servant go free, for at half the cost of a hired workman he has served you six years; so the LORD your God will bless you in your every enterprise.

¹⁹"All the first-born males among your cattle and sheep you shall dedicate to the LORD your God; you shall not work the firstlings of your cattle nor shear the firstlings of your sheep. ²⁰Before the LORD you shall eat them, year by year, in the place of the LORD's choosing, you and your family. ²¹But if there is any blemish in one of them, if it is lame or blind, or shows any serious blemish at all, you must not offer it to the LORD. ²²You may eat it at home; the clean and the unclean alike may eat it, as you would the roebuck or the deer. ²³Only you must not eat the blood; it must be poured out on the ground like water.

16 "OBSERVE THE MONTH OF ABIB, celebrating the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month Abib the LORD your God brought you out from Egypt by night. ²You shall offer the Passover sacrifice from your flock or from your herd to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD will be choosing for His name to dwell there.² ³You shall not eat leavened bread with it. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, — for you left Egypt in great haste — that you may remember the day you came out from the land of Egypt all the days of your life. ⁴For seven days leaven must not be seen anywhere within your borders, and nothing of the flesh you sacrificed on the evening of the first day may be left over till morning. ⁵You must not

offer the Passover sacrifice in one of the local towns which the LORD your God will be giving you; ⁶but at the place which the LORD your God will choose as the dwelling place for His name, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice at sundown, the time of your exodus from Egypt. ⁷You shall boil it and eat it at the place which the LORD your God will choose, and on the next morning you may start for home. ⁸For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God; on it you shall not do any work.

⁹"You shall count off seven weeks, beginning when you first thrust the sickle in the standing grain;^a ¹⁰then you must keep the feast of weeks to the LORD your God, presenting a free-will offering in proportion to the measure in which the LORD your God shall bless you; ¹¹and you shall rejoice in the presence of the LORD your God, you, your son, your daughter, your male and female servants, the Levite in your town, the immigrant too, and the fatherless and the widow among you, at the place which the LORD your God chooses to make His name dwell there. ¹²Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and observe these statutes well.

¹³"After gathering in the produce from your threshing floor and wine press, you shall celebrate the festival of booths^b for seven days, ¹⁴and in your feast you shall rejoice, you, your son, your daughter, your male and female servants, the Levite, the immigrant, the fatherless, and the widow in your community. ¹⁵Seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD shall choose; for the LORD your God will bless you in your harvest and in your

y) In Deuteronomy when the slave is released, he is loaded with provisions to begin the new life. This is not mentioned in Exodus. In later times, Hebrews were not enslaved by Hebrews, but down to the Exile, the law of release was often neglected, Jer. 34:8-20 and Neh. 5:1-13.

z) Ch. 16 presents the laws regulating the three annual festivals: The Passover and Unleavened Bread, The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), The Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles). Many passages in Exodus, Numbers and Leviticus treat these celebrations; Deuteronomy requires that they all be nationally celebrated at the central sanctuary.

a) The Feast of Weeks was a harvest festival, celebrated when the grain harvest, that lasted seven weeks, was completed. Later it was given the Greek name, Pentecost, because it came 50 days after the Passover.

b) The Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles) came after every produce had been harvested, including figs, olives and grapes.

work, and you shall have enjoyment to the full. ¹⁶Thrice a year every male among you shall appear before the LORD your God in the place of His choosing: at the feast of unleavened bread, at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of booths. No one shall appear before the LORD empty-handed; ¹⁷every one (shall give) as he is able, according to the blessing which the LORD your God bestows on you.

¹⁸"You shall appoint judges and other officials^c throughout your tribes and in all the towns which the LORD your God will be granting you, to administer proper justice for the people. ¹⁹You shall not distort justice; you must be impartial, and accept no present; for a present makes even wise men blind and subverts the cause of the innocent. ²⁰Strive for justice only, so you may live and possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

²¹"Do not plant an Asherah, any tree, beside the altar of the LORD your God that you make; ²²nor erect there a dedicated pillar, an abomination to the LORD your God.

17 "SACRIFICES TO THE LORD YOUR God must never include a member of your herd or flock in which there is a blemish or defect; for such a sacrifice would be abhorrent to the LORD your God.

²"If there is found among you in one of the towns which the LORD your God is granting you, a man or a woman who is doing evil in the sight of the LORD your God, transgressing His covenant — ³one who has sought out and served other gods^d and bowed down to them, the sun, the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden you, ⁴and it is reported to you, then you must make searching inquiry. If the report is true and it is established that this abominable thing has been done in Israel, ⁵then you shall bring that man or that woman

out to your gates and there stone that man or that woman to death. ⁶It must be on the testimony of two or more witnesses that the one condemned is executed; no one shall die on the testimony of but a single witness. ⁷The hands of the witnesses shall cast the first stone, and after them the hands of all the people. So you shall root out the evil from among you.

⁸"When a case at law arises too difficult for you to decide between one degree of bloodshed and another; one plea for right and another — one type of bodily injury and another, matters of disagreement in your town — then you must go to the place which the LORD your God shall choose ⁹and there seek out the Levitical priests and the judge^e who shall be in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them, and they will tell you of their decision; ¹⁰you must act according to the decision they announce at that place which the LORD shall choose, and you must be careful to follow their instructions to the letter. ¹¹Carry out their decision, and be sure not to depart from their verdict in any way.

¹²The man who shall act presumptuously in such cases and declines to listen to the priest ministering there before the LORD your God, or to the judge, that man shall die, and you shall clear Israel of such evil. ¹³All the people shall hear of it and fear, and never again act so recklessly.

¹⁴"When you reach the land which the LORD your God gives you, and take possession and live in it, and you say, 'We want to put a king over us like other nations all around,' ¹⁵then you may, indeed, put a king over you, whom the LORD your God shall choose. From among your own brothers you will put a king over you, not a foreigner who is not your brother. ¹⁶He shall not multiply horses for himself nor make people return to Egypt to import horses from there; for the LORD

c) Ch. 16:18 through ch. 18 presents and characterizes the officers of the theocracy: judges, king, priests, and prophets.

d) Israel's worship of false gods was the major trouble through much of her history.

e) The passing on of difficult cases began with Moses at Jethro's suggestion, Ex. 18:13-26. From early times administration of justice by both priestly and civil heads of the community seems to have prevailed. II Chron. 19:8-11 tells of the setting up of a double court by king Jehoshaphat.

said, You shall never again return over that road. ¹⁷Neither may the king multiply wives to himself, lest his heart be turned away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold.^f ¹⁸When he is established upon his throne in his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, from (the scroll kept by) the priestly Levites; ¹⁹he shall keep it near him and read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to revere the LORD his God by observing all the words of this law and these statutes and practicing them. ²⁰Thus his heart will not be exalted above his brothers, nor will he turn aside from any commandments of the Book to right or left; so that he and his sons will long remain upon the throne in Israel.

18 ¹“THE LEVITICAL PRIESTS, THE whole tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the LORD’s offerings by fire and His fit portion; ²but among his brothers (Levi) shall have no inheritance. The LORD is his heritage, as He has promised him.^g ³When the people bring their offerings, taken from flock or herd, the due of the priests shall be the shoulder, both cheeks and the stomach. ⁴You shall give them the first of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the first fleece of your sheep, ⁵for out of all your tribes the LORD your God has chosen him to be in attendance and to minister in His name, him and his sons forever.

⁶“When a Levite goes out from one of your cities anywhere in Israel, where he has temporarily been residing and out of devotion moves to the place which the LORD will be choosing, ⁷then he shall minister there in the name of the LORD his God, like all his brother Levites serving there, ⁸and all shall share like portions of available food, taking no account of what he

may have received from family property.^h

⁹“When you reach the land which the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the obnoxious ways of those nations. ¹⁰There must not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, anyone practicing divination or soothsaying, observing omens, applying sorcery, ^{11a}a charmer, a medium, a wizard, or a necromancer.ⁱ ¹²For all who do these things are offensive to the LORD; and because of these abominable practices the LORD your God will be driving out these nations from before you. ¹³You, however, must be blameless before the LORD your God. ¹⁴These nations whom you will be dispossessing listen to soothsayers and diviners; but the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so. ¹⁵He will raise up for you a prophet like me, one of your own brothers, and you shall listen to him.^j ¹⁶just as you requested of the LORD at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said: ‘I must not again hear the voice of the LORD my God, or see this great fire any longer, lest I die.’ ¹⁷And the LORD said to me: They have spoken well. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet, one of their own number like you; I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall make known to them all that I command him; ¹⁹and the man who refuses to listen to the word he shall speak in My name, of that man I Myself will require it. ²⁰But if the prophet presumes to speak in My name a message which I have not commanded him to say, or shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. ²¹And if you say in your heart, ‘How are we to know which word the LORD has not spoken?’ ²²What a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD which is not fulfilled and does not happen, that is a message to which the LORD did not

f) Solomon should have been the pattern for the king described here, but in time he multiplied wives, introduced cavalry, and even accompanied his wives to their pagan temples.

g) In Deuteronomy there is always great concern for the Levites, whom the Israelites as worshipers of God were to support.

h) If not earned, then such supplies must have been voluntarily contributed by grateful Israelites.

i) The roster of the pagan practices listed here is factual; Israel became only too familiar with them.

j) Spoken concerning every true mouthpiece of God and supremely of the Son of God, the Messiah.

give utterance; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; have no fear of him.

19 "WHEN THE LORD YOUR GOD HAS eliminated the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you take possession, living in their cities and in their houses, ²you shall set apart three cities in the midst of the land which the LORD your God is granting to you to possess. ³You shall measure distances and divide into three districts the area which the LORD your God has you inherit, so that every man killing another may flee to them.^k ⁴In this case, the killer who flees there shall remain alive. When a man kills his neighbor against whom he bore no grudge, and the killing is unintentional; for instance, ⁵if a man and his neighbor go into the forest to cut wood, and while he swings the axe to fell a tree, the axe head of one of them flies off the handle, strikes his companion, and kills him, the man may then flee to one of those cities and live; ⁶otherwise, the avenger of blood will hunt him down in hot anger, overtake him because the way is long, and he will smite him mortally, although he was not deserving of death; for he had carried no grudge. ⁷Wherefore I command you to set apart three cities.

⁸"And if the LORD your God enlarges your boundaries, as He swore to your fathers to do, and gives you all the land He promised them, ⁹then, if you are careful to observe this whole command I am now enjoining upon you — to love the LORD your God and to walk always in His ways — then you must add three other cities to these three, ¹⁰so that innocent blood may not be shed in the land which the LORD your God gives you as your heritage, and that no blood guilt may rest upon you.^l

¹¹"If, however, a man hates his neighbor and lies in wait for him, attacks

him, and smites him mortally so that he dies, and that man flees to one of these cities, ¹²then the elders of his city must send and fetch him and deliver him to the avenger of blood, so that he dies. ¹³You shall not pity him, but purge innocent blood from Israel that it may be well with you.

¹⁴"You must not move your neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set in the inheritance to be yours in the land which the LORD your God gives you for your possession.

¹⁵"A single witness against a man shall not convict him of any crime or offense, in case of wrong which he may have committed; only on the testimony of two witnesses, or three, shall a charge be sustained. ¹⁶When a resentful witness arises against a man to accuse him of evil doing, ¹⁷then the two men involved in the dispute shall appear before the LORD, that is, before the priests and the judges who are then officiating, ¹⁸and the judges shall make careful inquiry. If they discover that the witness is, indeed, resentful and has accused falsely against his brother, ¹⁹then you shall do to him what he had planned to have done to his brother; and thus you shall eradicate the evil from among you. ²⁰For the rest shall hear and fear, and they shall never again be guilty of such evil among you. ²¹You must not pity him: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot!

20 "WHEN YOU GO OUT TO WAR against your enemies, and you see horses, chariots and warriors, more numerous than you, do not fear them; for the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, is with you. ²As you draw near for battle, the priest shall step forward and speak to the people. ³He shall say, 'Hear, O Israel! today you are entering battle against your enemies; let not your

k) In Israel innocent blood must be avenged, for until it was avenged, the guilt rested on the community. The nearest of kin of a murdered man was obligated to avenge the victim; he became "the avenger of blood." But killing could be accidental. In such a case, the killer could flee to one of six selected cities and find asylum. If his guilt was proven, he was taken back and surrendered to the avenger of blood. For asylum at the altar, see 1 Kings 2:28-31.

l) Executions, not involving the avenger of blood, often had to take place, if innocent blood were not to rest upon the community, but no officer of the state ever performed it. Since it was community responsibility, the people stoned the guilty to death.

hearts lack courage; do not fear; be not alarmed or terrified by them; ⁴for the LORD your God goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you the victory.' ⁵Then the officers shall say to the men, 'Is there any one among you who has built a new house and has not yet dedicated it? Let him go back home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it.' ⁶Is there any one who has planted a vineyard but has not yet enjoyed its fruits? Let him go back home, lest he die in battle and another enjoy its fruit. ⁷And is there a man who has betrothed a wife but has not yet taken her? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another take her.' ⁸Finally the officers shall say to their soldiers, 'Is there a man here who is afraid and weakhearted? Let him go home, lest he impart fear in other men and they likewise become fainthearted.' ⁹When the officers have thus completed their speaking, they shall appoint army captains to lead the people.

¹⁰"When you approach a city to attack it, first offer it terms of peace. ¹¹If there is peaceful response and they open its gates to you, all the people found there shall render you tribute service and shall be your subjects. ¹²However, if the city declines to make peace and proffers war, then you must lay siege to it, ¹³and the LORD your God will give it into your hands, and you shall put every male in it to the sword; ¹⁴but the women, the little ones, the livestock, and everything in the city, all its booty, you may take to yourselves as plunder and enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has granted you.

¹⁵"Such is the way you shall deal with cities that are at a considerable distance from you and do not belong to nations nearby. ¹⁶But in cities in the area which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not keep alive one that has breath; ¹⁷you must wipe them out completely: the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Periz-

ites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, all of them, as the LORD your God has commanded you; ¹⁸so that they may not teach you to practice all the abominable things they do for their gods, and give you cause to sin against the LORD your God.

¹⁹"When you lay siege to a city for many days, making war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its surrounding fruit trees by cutting them with an axe; you may eat their fruit, but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field people, defenders of the city, that you should lay siege to them? ²⁰Those trees, however, that you know are not fruit trees you may cut down and use to build siege works against the city that is warring against you, until it falls.

21 "IF IN THE LAND WHICH THE LORD your God gives you to possess, one is found lying murdered in the open field and it is not known who killed him, ²then your elders and judges must come out and measure the distance from the body to the neighboring cities. ³The elders of the city nearest the victim must select from the herd a heifer that has never been worked, never borne a yoke, ⁴and the elders of that city shall bring the heifer to a valley with running water, to a spot never plowed or sown, and there in the valley they shall break the heifer's neck; ⁵The priestly sons of Levi must come forward, for they have been chosen by the LORD your God to be His ministers to bless in His name and, by their decisions, to settle every dispute and every case of assault, ⁶so all the elders of the city closest to the murdered man shall wash their hands over the heifer, whose neck was broken in the valley, ⁷and they shall affirm: 'Our hands did not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen it shed. ⁸O LORD, forgive Thy people Israel, whom Thou didst redeem, and leave not the charge of innocent blood in the midst of Thy people Israel, but let the guilt of blood

m) The Hebrew word used here is the same as is used in dedicating the temple — I Kings 8:63 — but this is the only mention in the O.T. of dedicating a private home. It suggests a devotional setting apart for God.

be forgiven them.ⁿ ⁹So you shall remove the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when you do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

¹⁰"When you go out to war against your foe and the LORD your God puts them into your power and you take them captive, ¹¹and you notice among the captives a beautiful woman who wins your heart and you would take her to be your wife ¹²and bring her to your home, then she must shave her head, trim her nails, ¹³and lay aside her captive's dress. After she has bewailed her father and mother a month in your house, you may go in and marry her and make her your wife. ¹⁴However, if you no longer find delight in her, you shall send her away to go where she pleases; under no circumstances may you sell her for money or enslave her, for you have humbled her.

¹⁵"If a man has two wives, of whom he dislikes one and loves the other, each of them has borne him a son, and the first-born son is by the one he dislikes, ¹⁶he shall have no power to bequeath the rights of the first-born to the son of the wife he loves in preference to his first-born, the son of the wife he does not love. ¹⁷He must acknowledge the son of the despised wife as his first-born, assigning to him a double share of all he possesses; for he is the first fruit of his powers; the birthright belongs to him.^o

¹⁸"If a man's son is stubborn and rebellious against the voice of his father and of his mother, refusing to listen to and to obey them when they discipline him, ¹⁹then his father and mother must lay hold of him and bring him to the gate of his city, to the elders of his town, and ²⁰they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he refuses to listen to us; he is a spendthrift and a drunkard.' ²¹Then all the men of his

city shall stone him to death. Thus you shall exterminate the evil from among you; all Israel shall hear of it and be afraid.^p

²²"When a man, who has committed a crime deserving of death, is executed and you hang him on a tree, ²³his body must not be permitted to remain on the tree over night; you must bury him the same day; for one hanged is under the curse of God, and you must not defile the land which the LORD your God gives you as your heritage.^q

22 "YOU SHALL NOT SEE THE OX OR sheep of your brother straying away and do nothing about it; you shall certainly bring it back to your brother. ²If your brother does not live in your immediate neighborhood, or if you do not know him, then you must take the ox or sheep to your own place and keep it with you until your brother looks for it; then you must restore it to him. ³So also you must do with his donkey or his garment or, indeed, with anything belonging to your brother, that may be lost and you find it; you must not disregard it. ⁴You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fallen by the roadside and be unconcerned about it; you will certainly help him lift it up.^{*}

⁵"A woman shall not wear men's clothing nor shall a man put on a woman's dress; for anyone doing such things is abhorrent to the LORD your God.^r

⁶"If, on the road you come upon a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young birds or eggs and the mother bird sitting on her brood or on the eggs, you shall not carry off the mother with her young; ⁷you must let her go, although you may keep the young for yourself. So you may prosper and enjoy long life.

⁸"When you build a new house, you

n) For another case of the treatment when innocent blood must be expiated, see note on 19:3. The manner here cited is found in Deuteronomy only; it probably reflects a very ancient custom.

o) From very early times the first-born had special rights in Israel. Jacob gained the rights of Esau, but it cost him dearly.

p) In Israel juvenile delinquency or disregard of the fifth commandment could not be tolerated; but the penalty was not always death; see Prov. 30:17.

q) The usual method of execution was stoning, in order that each citizen might share in the responsibility. Hanging was performed, after his death; it represented an added curse of God.

*Injunction to be a good neighbor; we are our brothers' keepers.

r) This prohibition had religious significance, since pagan practices involved such exchanges.

must put a parapet around the roof, lest if someone falls to the ground, you bring bloodguilt upon your house.^s

⁹"Do not sow in your vineyard two kinds of seed, lest the whole of the produce, the seed you sow and the fruit of the vineyards, be confiscated to the sanctuary.

¹⁰"Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together; ¹¹nor wear garments woven of mixed threads, wool and linen combined.^t

¹²"Make tassels of twisted threads and attach them to the four corners of the cloak you use to cover yourself.^u

¹³"If a man takes a wife and, after cohabitation, tiring of her, ¹⁴brings damaging charges against her, giving her a bad name, saying, 'I took this woman and when I approached her, I did not find in her the evidences of virginity,' ¹⁵then the girl's father and mother shall bring out the proofs of her virginity and lay them before the elders at the gate of the city, ¹⁶and the father of the girl shall declare before the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man to be his wife, and he has turned against her' ¹⁷and now brings a shameful name upon her, saying that he found my daughter to be no virgin; but these are the evidences of her virginity.' The father and the mother shall then spread the garment before the elders of the city ¹⁸and the elders of the city are to take the man and chastise him; ¹⁹and, in addition, they shall fine him a hundred silver dollars, which they are to give to the girl's father, because the man has brought an evil name upon a virgin of Israel; moreover, the girl shall remain his wife; he may not divorce her as long as he lives. ²⁰But if his charges prove to be correct and no evidence of chastity has been found in the girl, ²¹then they shall bring her out to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death; she has committed a flagrant crime in Israel,

playing the harlot in her own home, and you must purge such evil from among you.

²²"When a man is surprised abed with a married woman, they shall both die, the man who lay with the woman and the woman too; you shall wipe out the evil from Israel.

²³"When a man comes upon a girl in the city, who is a virgin betrothed to another, and he lies with her, ²⁴you shall bring them both to the gate of the city and stone them to death, the girl because she did not cry out, although the city was all about her, and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. You shall purge such evil from among you. ²⁵But if the man comes upon the betrothed girl in the open field and seizes her to lie with her, then the man alone shall die. ²⁶You must do nothing to the girl, for there is no sin in her to deserve death; for it is as when a man attacks his neighbor and murders him; ²⁷the man found her in the open country; the betrothed girl cried out for help, but there was no one to hear her. ²⁸If, however, a man comes upon a girl who is a virgin and not betrothed and lays hold upon her and lies with her and they are discovered, ²⁹then the man must pay her father fifty silver dollars, and she shall become his wife, because he has dishonored her, and he shall not divorce her all his days.

³⁰"A man shall not marry his father's wife^v nor lie with her; she belongs to his father.

23 "NO ONE WHOSE TESTICLES HAVE been crushed or his male organ severed shall enter the LORD's congregation; ²neither may a bastard enter the LORD's congregation to his tenth generation.^w ³No Ammonite or Moabite^x shall enter the congregation of the LORD down to the tenth generation; ⁴because they did not meet you with bread and water on your way from

s) The flat roof was a preferred part of the house. In the summer the people lived and slept on the roof; a parapet was needed for protection. t) Man should use them as God made them. Isa. 28:25,26. u) Tassels served to remind them that they were the people of God and must keep His commandments, Num. 15:38,39. v) Not his mother.

w) Israel's religious attitudes and observances were never part-religious and part-secular. Such mutilations were probably associated with pagan practices; bodily mutilations self-induced, were abhorrent to the LORD, 14:1.

x) Throughout history there was hostility between these two nations and Israel.

Egypt, and because they hired Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor in Mesopotamia, to curse you. ⁵However, the LORD your God did not listen to Balaam,⁷ and the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing, because the LORD your God loved you. ⁶Never in all your days may you seek their peace or prosperity. ⁷The Edomite you must not detest; for he is your brother;² nor should you abhor the Egyptian, for you were once an immigrant in his country. ⁸Their children of the third generation may enter the assembly of the LORD.

⁹"When you are in camp in time of war, you must guard against every evil thing. ¹⁰If anyone becomes unclean through an emission in the night, let him go outside the camp and not come back all day, ¹¹but let him wash and return to camp at sundown.

¹²"You shall set off a place outside the camp ¹³and, when you go out to use it, you must carry a spade among your gear and dig a hole, have easement, and turn to cover the excrement. ¹⁴For the LORD your God walks among you to deliver you, to give you the victory, and your entire camp must be dedicated, so that He may see nothing indecent anywhere, so as to withdraw from you.

¹⁵"When a slave escapes from his master and takes refuge with you,^a you must not hand him back to his master. ¹⁶Let him remain among you anywhere he may choose, and you must not mistreat him.

¹⁷"No daughter in Israel, nor any son, may become a temple prostitute;^b ¹⁸nor may you bring into the house of the LORD your God the hire of a harlot or the earnings of a dog,^c for the payment of any vow; for both are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

¹⁹"You must charge no interest on a loan made to your brother, no interest on money, food, or anything on which interest might be charged. ²⁰On a loan to a foreigner, you may charge interest,

but not from your brother. Charge no interest, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your enterprises in the land of which you are taking possession.

²¹"When you make a vow to the LORD, you shall pay it without delay; for the LORD your God will require it, and to be slow in paying it would be your sin. ²²However, if you refrain from making a vow, that is no sin. ²³Perform any solemn word your lips have spoken; keep the promise you have made to the LORD your God of your own free will and which you have personally expressed.

²⁴"When you enter the vineyard of your neighbor, you may eat all the grapes you want, but you must not put any in your vessel. ²⁵As you walk through your neighbor's grainfield, you may pluck the heads of grain in your hand, but you must not thrust a sickle into the standing grain of your neighbor.

24 "WHEN A MAN HAS MARRIED A wife and comes to dislike her, having found something improper in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce and, putting it in her hand, ²sends her from his house, and she goes off and becomes the wife of another, ³and her second husband, likewise comes to hate her and also gives her a bill of divorce and sends her away, or if the second husband dies, ⁴in such case, the man who first divorced her, may not take her again to be his wife, for she has been defiled;^d such practice is abhorrent to the LORD, and you must not bring such guilt upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you for your heritage.

⁵"When a man has just taken a wife, he shall not go out with the army to war, nor shall any active service be required of him; he shall be free at home one year to enjoy happiness with the wife he has chosen.

⁶"No person shall take a hand mill,

y) For the story of Balaam see Num. 22,23,24. z) Edom's ancestor was Esau.

a) In this case the slave of a foreigner.

b) This immorality was common at pagan shrines; nor was Israel always guiltless, Amos 2:7,8.

c) The term "dog" was used of the male prostitute or catamite.

d) This is not a law of divorce; it simply defines a specific situation. Divorce was very common in Israel, as in the rest of the Semitic world. A man could divorce his wife on the slightest grounds; but a woman could not divorce her husband. Deuteronomy law seeks to limit divorce and prevent its abuse.

or the upper millstone in pledge for a debt, for it involves taking life itself in pledge.

⁷"If anyone is caught kidnapping a brother in Israel and lording it over him or selling him, that thief shall die; you shall remove such evil from among you.

⁸"In an attack of leprosy, be exceedingly concerned to do exactly as the Levitical priests instruct you to do, following the orders I have given them. ⁹Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on your way out from Egypt.^e

¹⁰"When you make a loan of any kind to your neighbor, do not enter his house to carry off his pledge;^f ¹¹you shall stand outdoors until the man to whom you made the loan can bring his pledge to you. ¹²If he is a poor man, do not sleep in what he gives you for security; ¹³you must return it to him by sundown so that he may sleep in his own coat. He will bless you, and it will be righteousness to you before the LORD your God.

¹⁴"Do not deal harshly with your hired man who is needy and poor, whether one of your brothers, or one of the immigrants in your community; ¹⁵pay him his daily wages before sundown, for he is in need, and his heart is set on it; lest he cry out to the LORD against you, and it become sin in you.

¹⁶"Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor sons for their fathers; each shall be executed for his own crime.^g

¹⁷"Do not violate the rights of the immigrant or of the orphan, nor take a widow's dress in pledge. ¹⁸Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and that the LORD your God redeemed you; wherefore, I am laying this command upon you.

¹⁹"When you bring in your harvest and forget a sheaf in the field, do not go back for it; leave it for the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all your activities. ²⁰When you beat your olive trees, do not go over the branches a second time; leave what is still on the trees for the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow. ²¹When you pick grapes from your vineyard, do not get the gleanings later, for they go to the immigrant, the fatherless, and the widow. ²²Remember that you were slaves in Egypt; wherefore I am laying the command upon you to do this.

25 "WHEN A DISPUTE ARISES BETWEEN men and they take their case to court to obtain judicial decision, the judge may acquit the innocent and condemn the guilty. ²If the judge finds the guilty one deserving of stripes, he shall order him to lie down in his presence to receive the number of stripes he deserves. ³The number may be as high as 40, but no more, lest too many stripes are administered and a brother suffers gross public humiliation.^h

⁴"You shall not muzzle the ox when he treads out the grain.ⁱ

⁵"When brothers are living together and one of them dies without leaving a son, his widow must not go outside the family and marry a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in to her and shall take her to be his wife and perform the duties of a husband's brother to her. ⁶The first son born of this union shall carry the deceased brother's name, so that his line may not be blotted out from Israel.^j ⁷But if the man declines to take his brother's wife, then she shall carry her case to the elders in the gate and testify, 'My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his

e) Num. 12:1-16.

f) The pledge was something given as surety for a loan, a garment, a utensil, anything the creditor would accept. The poor could offer little choice, sometimes all a man had was the mantle or robe he slept in.

g) In earlier times the moral unit was the community or family. Many children died for the crimes of their fathers. In Israel the idea of individual responsibility for crime was taught, see also Jer. 31:29,30 and Ezek. 18:3,4.

h) This law is peculiar to Deuteronomy and reflects the general attitude of the book — the punishment to come only after trial, and in accord with sentence pronounced. Later, stripes were limited to forty less one to eliminate abuse.

i) The unmuzzled ox will go slower while feeding, but he is earning his living.

j) This law is found in Deuteronomy only, but the practice was widespread in ancient times, see Gen. 38. So that his family may not die out, and a man shall perform this duty to his deceased brother, come what may of his own rights.

brother's name in Israel and to perform the duty of a husband's brother.' ⁸The elders of his city shall then summon him and counsel with him, and if he persists in declining to marry his sister-in-law, saying, 'It is not my desire to take her,' ⁹then in the presence of the elders, his brother's wife shall go up to him, loosen his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and give answer to him in these words, 'So shall it be done to the man who refuses to build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰And his name shall be known in Israel as 'the family of the unshod.'

¹¹"When two men are fighting and the wife of one of them rushes in to save her husband from the one who is beating him and she reaches out and seizes his assailant by the private parts, ¹²then you shall cut off her hand without compassion for her.

¹³"Do not carry about weights of different sizes, one large and one small; ¹⁴nor may you keep about the house two different measures, a large bushel and a small bushel. ¹⁵A full and just weight and a full and just measure they must be, so that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God gives you. ¹⁶For every one practicing unfairness is abominable to the LORD your God.

¹⁷"Remember what Amalek did to you when you came on your way out of Egypt, ¹⁸how without awe for God, he came against you on your journey, when you were weary and exhausted, and he cut off all who lagged behind. ¹⁹Therefore it shall be when the LORD your God has granted you rest from all your enemies in the land He gives you as your heritage, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

26 "WHEN YOU ENTER THE LAND which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and you take possession of it, making it your home, ²then select some of the first of all the

fruits of the soil, what you harvest from the land which the LORD your God gives you; put them in a basket, and carry them up to the place the LORD your God will be selecting as the dwelling place of His name. ³When you reach the priest, who shall be serving at the time, you shall say: 'I here declare to the LORD my God that I have now entered the land which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.' ⁴The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it before the altar of the LORD.¹

⁵"When he has done so, you shall bear witness before the LORD your God, giving this testimony, 'A wandering Aramean^m was my father. He went down into Egypt, few in number, and there he resided as an immigrant, but he became there a great, a powerful and populous nation. ⁶When the Egyptians treated us harshly, oppressing us and subjecting us to heavy bondage, ⁷we cried out to the LORD the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our cry, saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression; ⁸so the LORD brought us out from Egypt with a mighty hand, an outstretched arm, an awe-inspiring terror with signs and wonders. ⁹He conducted us to this place and gave us this land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰Now behold, I have brought the first of the fruits of the ground which Thou LORD hast bestowed upon me.' Set the basket down before the LORD your God, ¹¹bow in worship before the LORD your God, and rejoice because of all the goodness which the LORD your God has heaped upon you and your house, together with the Levite and the alien among you.

¹²"When you have finished setting apart all the tithes of your harvest in the third year, the year of tithing, and have distributed them to the Levite, the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow among you, and they have partaken of them in your towns and have enough, ¹³then you shall say before the LORD

k) Ruth 4 shows this rule practiced.

l) This chapter's three sections provide a fitting climax to the great Lawbook of Deut. 5-26. Vss. 5-11 are words of adoration and acts of thanksgiving; vss. 12-15 mean heartfelt benevolence with prayer for divine benediction; vss. 16-19 affirm the worshiper's covenant with God.

m) Or Syrian, Syria and Aram being the same country.

your God,ⁿ 'I have removed from my house the consecrated portion and have given it to the Levite, the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow, as Thou didst command me. I have transgressed none of the orders Thou hast laid upon me, nor have I forgotten them.^o ¹⁴I have not eaten of it while in mourning; I have not removed any of it while unclean, nor have I offered any for the dead; I have listened to the voice of the LORD my God; I have behaved according to all that Thou hast enjoined upon me.^p ¹⁶Look down, O LORD, from Thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel and the ground Thou hast given us, a land flowing with milk and honey which Thou didst promise on oath to our fathers.'

¹⁶"This day the LORD your God commands you to observe His statutes and ordinances; so observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. ¹⁷Today you have openly accepted the word of the LORD, that He is your God and that you will walk in His ways, heed His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and listen to His voice. ¹⁸Today the LORD's agreement with you is that you will be His own people, as He promised and, that you shall keep all His commandments, ¹⁹then He will place you in praise, in renown, in honor, high above all the nations He has created, a people holy to the LORD your God, as He has spoken."^q

27 MOSES, WITH THE ELDERS^r OF Israel, laid this charge upon the people, "Keep all the commandments which I am today enjoining upon you. ²On the day you cross the Jordan into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, erect for you large stones,

plaster them with plaster, ³and inscribe on them all the words of this Law after your crossing over, so you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD the God of your fathers promised you. ⁴When you have crossed the Jordan, you shall set up these stones as I order you to do, on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster. ⁵Moreover, you shall build there an altar^s to the LORD your God, an altar of stones which no iron has touched. ⁶You must build the altar of the LORD your God of undressed stones, and on it you shall offer burnt offerings to the LORD your God; ⁷you shall sacrifice peace offerings and there you shall eat and rejoice in the presence of the LORD your God. ⁸You shall write very distinctly on the stones all the words of this Law."

⁹Then Moses with the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, "Be still, Israel, and listen! This day you have become the people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰You shall obey the voice of the LORD your God and observe His commandments and His statutes which I am now enjoining upon you."

¹¹Moreover, Moses laid this charge upon the people that same day, ¹²"When you have crossed the Jordan, these (tribes) shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³And these shall stand upon Mount Ebal for the curse, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.^t ¹⁴And the Levites shall make this proclamation to all the men of Israel in a loud voice:

¹⁵"Cursed^u be the man who makes a carved or a molten image, an abhor-

n) The recital to take place at the central sanctuary.

o) For two years the annual tithe was to be taken to the central sanctuary, there in the presence of the LORD to be enjoyed by the family, and the Levite of their community. In the third year the tithe was stored for distribution to the poor.

p) When the tithe for the poor is set apart, it becomes holy and must not be used for common purposes. q) The Law has now been given in its completeness; Israel's responsibility of keeping it is her covenant with God.

r) Upon 70 of them the Spirit had come, so they might share with Moses the guidance of the people.

s) All pagan altars, which included all Canaanite altars, must be destroyed. This altar seems to have been used for this occasion only; but it stood for a historic event, the taking of the land, as workers together with God.

t) Four sons of Leah and Rachel's two sons are represented on the mount of blessing. The four sons of the two concubines stand on the mount of cursing with Reuben, who had forfeited the blessings, and for some reason, Zebulun.

u) Very appropriately the curses are spoken first as warnings; then the blessings for the true worshippers of God.

rence to the LORD, the handiwork of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret!' And all the people shall respond, 'Amen!'

¹⁶"'Cursed be he who despises his father or his mother!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

¹⁷"'Cursed be he who removes his neighbor's landmark!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

¹⁸"'Cursed be he who misleads a blind man on the road!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

¹⁹"'Cursed be he who perverts the justice due an alien, an orphan, or a widow!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁰"'Cursed be he who lies with his father's wife, because he uncovers her who belongs to his father!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²¹"'Cursed be he who lies with any kind of animal!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²²"'Cursed be he who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²³"'Cursed be he who lies with his mother-in-law!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁴"'Cursed be he who secretly slays his neighbor!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁵"'Cursed be he who accepts a bribe to murder an innocent person!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

²⁶"'Cursed be he who does not confirm the words of this Law by doing them!' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'^v

28"IT SHALL BE, IF YOU WILL LISTEN carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and seek fully to carry out all His commandments which I enjoin upon you today, then the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ²All these blessings will overtake you and rest

upon you — if you obey the voice of the LORD your God:^w

³"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.

⁴"Blessed shall be the fruit of your body and the fruit of your soil, the fruit also of your livestock, the increase of your herds, and the young of your flocks.

⁵"Blessed shall be your baskets and your kneading trough.

⁶"Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

⁷"The LORD will surrender your enemies who rise up against you to be smitten before you; one way they shall come out against you, and seven ways they shall flee before you. ⁸The LORD will command His benediction upon you in your barns, and in every activity of your hands; thus He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. ⁹The LORD will establish you as a people dedicated to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰Then all the nations of the earth will see that you are called by the LORD's name, that you are His people, and they will stand in awe of you. ¹¹The LORD will grant you an abundance of good things, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your cattle, and in the produce of your soil, in the land which He has sworn to give you. ¹²The LORD will open for you His rich treasury, the heavens to give rain upon your soil in its season, blessings to rest on all your enterprises. You shall lend to many nations while you yourselves borrow from none. ¹³The LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be moving ever higher up and never lower down when you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am enjoining upon you this day, carefully performing them, ¹⁴never turning to the right or to the left, and

v) These 12 curses apply to personal conduct, rather than to national sins. The warnings are all-inclusive. Every listener is vitally concerned.

w) This chapter concludes the great Law Book, the plea to the nation to be true to God, who has redeemed her, giving her a great land where she may become a nation such as history had not known. Her future will bring showers of blessing, if she is loyal to God. If she is not, all will conspire to defeat her.

never following after other gods to worship them.^x

¹⁶"However, if you do not listen to the voice of the LORD your God, not observing and obeying all His commandments and His statutes with which I am now charging you, then all these curses shall follow you and overtake you: ¹⁶Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field. ¹⁷Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading trough. ¹⁸Cursed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your soil, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock. ¹⁹Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

²⁰"The LORD will send curses upon you, confusion and failure in every enterprise to which you put your hand, until you are destroyed and perish quickly, because of your evil-doing in which you are forsaking Me.^y ²¹The LORD will make the pestilence cleave to you until He obliterates you from the land, which you are entering to possess it. ²²The LORD will smite you with tuberculosis, with fever, with inflammation, with fiery heat, with drought, with blight and with mildew, and they shall pursue you until you perish. ²³The heavens above your head will be brass and the earth beneath you will be iron. ²⁴For rain the LORD will give your land powder and dust; from heaven above they will descend upon you until you perish.

²⁵"The LORD will cause your defeat before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them, and you shall be a horrible spectacle to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶Your corpses shall become food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and there shall be none to frighten them away.

²⁷"The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with scurvy and with incurable itch. ²⁸The LORD will strike you with madness, with blindness, and with confusion.

²⁹You shall be groping at noonday, as a blind man gropes in the dark, and you shall not prosper in your ways. You shall be oppressed and robbed continually with no one to rescue you. ³⁰You shall betroth a wife and another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house and not live in it; you shall plant a vineyard and not use its fruits; ³¹your ox shall be slain before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey shall be seized in your presence and taken from you and not be returned; your sheep shall be given to your foes, and no one will help you. ³²Moreover, your sons and your daughters shall be handed over to another people, while you look on, and you will pine after them all the day long, powerless to do anything. ³³The produce of your soil and all that you have worked for shall be consumed by a people you do not know, and you shall be continually oppressed and trampled on. ³⁴You shall be driven mad by the sight of all you observe. ³⁵The LORD will smite you on your knees and on your legs, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head with malignant, incurable sores. ³⁶The LORD will bring you and your king, whom you will set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, ³⁷and you shall become an object of horror, a proverb, and a byword, among all the peoples into whose midst the LORD will lead you.

³⁸"You shall carry much seed into the field but gather in little; for locusts will devour it. ³⁹You shall plant vineyards and cultivate them, but you shall neither drink the wine nor preserve it; for worms will devour the grapes. ⁴⁰You shall have olive trees everywhere, but you shall not anoint yourselves with the oil; for your olives will drop from your trees. ⁴¹Sons and daughters shall be born to you, but you will not retain them; for they shall go into captivity. ⁴²All your trees and your crops will be taken over by lo-

x) The blessings and the curses were first announced in ch. 11:26-28, later to be declared in a ritual service, on Mount Gerizim for the blessings, and on Mount Ebal for the curses.

y) Take note of the "Me" here; the words of Moses passing almost unobserved into those of God, as often in the Prophets; see ch. 11:14, 15; 17:3; 29:5.

custs. ⁴³The alien in your midst shall mount above you higher and higher while you go down lower and lower. ⁴⁴He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he will be the head, and you shall be the tail. ⁴⁵All these curses shall come upon you; they shall pursue you and overtake you, and you shall be destroyed, because you refused to listen to the voice of the LORD your God; you declined to keep His commandments and His statutes which He ordered you. ⁴⁶They shall be upon you and upon your descendants for a sign and a wonder forever.

⁴⁷"Because you have not served the LORD your God with joy and a glad heart for all your rich abundance, ⁴⁸you shall, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and in want of everything, serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, and He will put a yoke of iron upon your neck until He has destroyed you. ⁴⁹The LORD will bring against you a nation from afar, from the ends of the earth, swooping down upon you like a vulture, a nation whose speech you do not understand, ⁵⁰a nation of fierce appearance, which shows neither personal regard for the old nor mercy to the young, ⁵¹which shall eat up the offspring of your cattle and the produce of your soil, and you shall perish; it will leave you nothing, neither grain, nor wine, nor oil, nor the increase of your herd, nor the young of your flock, until it has destroyed you.

⁵²"They will lay siege to all your cities until your high, fortified walls, in which you put your trust, come down all over the land; they will besiege you in every community throughout the land which the LORD your God has given you, ⁵³so that in the siege and distress with which your enemies will plague you, you will be eating the fruit of your own bosom, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God has given you. ⁵⁴The most refined man among you, the one with the most kindly nature, will turn grudgingly toward his

brother, toward the wife of his bosom and toward his remaining children who may be left to him, ⁵⁵so that he will give them nothing of the flesh of his children, which he will be eating; since the enemy has left him nothing at all in the siege, nothing but dire adversity with which your enemy shall plague you in every city. ⁵⁶The woman, too, who is the most tender among you, who is of such delicate nature that she would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so dainty and delicate, such a one will show a grudging attitude toward the husband of her bosom, toward her son and her daughter, ⁵⁷sharing nothing with them, not even the afterbirth from her womb and her own children whom she may bear; these she will eat secretly because of her hunger, having nothing else in the time of siege and distress, wherewith your enemies will oppress you in your communities.

⁵⁸"Indeed, if you are not careful to observe all the requirements of this Law, written in this book, to revere the glorious and awesome name of the LORD your God, ⁵⁹then the LORD will bring on you and on your descendants extraordinary plagues, severe and lasting, and diseases, trying and prolonged. ⁶⁰He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt, so dreaded by you, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹Every sickness, too, and every pestilence not mentioned in this book of the Law, the LORD will put upon you until you are destroyed. ⁶²You shall remain few in number, you who were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God. ⁶³As it was agreeable to the LORD to make you prosper and multiply, so it will be agreeable to the LORD to make you perish, and He will glory in your destruction. You shall be torn away from the land which you are entering to possess. ⁶⁴The LORD will scatter you among all the peoples, from one end of the earth to the other; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, whom neither you nor your fathers have known.^z ⁶⁵Among those

z) For nearly two hundred years the later Prophets kept warning Israel of doom, if she did not turn and follow God's demands for righteousness, and worship Him alone. Doom caught up with the northern kingdom in 722 B.C., and Judah knew from 605 on what it meant to be a conquered people.

nations you shall have no ease, nor shall you find a resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you a trembling heart, homesick eyes, and a languishing spirit; ⁶⁶you will sense danger night and day, your life in suspense, having no life security whatever. ⁶⁷In the morning you shall say, 'O that it were evening!' and in the evening you shall say, 'O that it were morning!' because of the dread weariness of soul which you will experience, and the spectacle before your eyes. ⁶⁸The LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by the way I said you would never see again, and there you shall allow yourselves to be sold to your enemies as slaves, male and female, but there will be no buyer."

29^a SUCH ARE THE TERMS OF THE covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, besides the covenant He had made with them in Horeb. ²So Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "You have seen everything the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and all his court and to his whole kingdom; ³the great tests which your own eyes beheld, the signs and those great wonders; ⁴yet to this day the LORD has not given you a mind to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.^b ⁵Through forty years I have led you in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out upon you, nor have your sandals worn away from your feet.^c ⁶Bread you have not eaten, wine or strong drink you have not drunk, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. ⁷When you came to this place, Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan, came out against us to battle, and we defeated them; ⁸we seized their land and gave it as their heritage to the Reubenites, the

Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. ⁹Take care, then, to observe the terms of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all you undertake.

¹⁰"You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God; your tribal heads, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, ¹¹your children, your wives, the aliens in your camp, from your woodcutter to your water drawer, ¹²so that you may enter into the oath-sealed covenant of the LORD your God, which He is making with you now ¹³in order that He may establish you today as His people, and that He may be your God, as He promised and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. ¹⁴And not with you alone, He affirms, am I making this oath-sealed covenant, ¹⁵but with those also who are not with us here today,^d as well as with those who stand with us today in the presence of the LORD our God.

¹⁶"For you know how we lived in the land of Egypt; you recall the nations through whose territory you passed on your way here; ¹⁷you saw their detestable things, their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, that were among them. ¹⁸Let there not be among you a man or a woman, a family or a tribe, whose heart is even now turning from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those peoples. Let there not be among you any root which could produce such poison and wormwood; ¹⁹as when a man, upon hearing the terms of this sworn covenant, congratulates himself in his heart, thinking, 'I am safe, even though I persist in my stubborn way.'^e This would mean destruction of the watered (land) and the dry. ²⁰The LORD will not agree to forgive him, but His anger and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse written in this book will cleave to him; the LORD will blot

a) Ch. 29,30 belong together and constitute the fourth discourse, a supplementary appeal to the nation not to fail now in her significant undertaking to build for herself a new world and a new life under God.

b) This verse breaks into the narrative to say that Israel lacks the spiritual insight to discern the significance of all that the LORD is doing for her.

c) Those completing the desert journey were fully as well clad and as well shod as those who started it 40 years before. What had been worn out had been liberally replaced. d) Future Israelites.

e) The covenant is not magic. Such an idolatrous course, even after entering the covenant, can only bring destruction to land and people. This is Moses' way of showing Israel how impossible it will always be for her to worship any but the LORD God.

out his name from under heaven. ²¹He will set him apart from all the tribes of Israel for evil, according to all the curses of the covenant written in this book of the law. ²²Then the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, shall say, when they see the plagues of this country and the diseases which the LORD has inflicted upon it — ²³the whole land brimstone and salt, a burning waste, not sown, producing nothing, no vegetation coming up in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the LORD overturned in His anger and indignation — ²⁴indeed, all the nations will wonder and say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? Why this great, hot anger?' ²⁵And the answer will be, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out from the land of Egypt; ²⁶they went and served other gods and bowed down to them, gods whom they had not known and whom He had not given them. ²⁷The anger of the LORD blazed out against that land, bringing upon it every curse written in the book of the law; ²⁸the LORD plucked them up from off their land in anger, in fury, and in great wrath, and flung them into another land as you see them today.'^f

²⁹The secret things belong to the LORD our God; but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may practice all the words of this law.^g

30 "IT SHALL BE WHEN YOU HAVE experienced all these things, the blessings and the curses which I have laid before you, and you recall them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God shall have driven

you, ²and you return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice, according to all that I command you, both you and your children, with your whole heart and your whole soul, ³then the LORD your God will restore your fortune and have compassion on you, gathering you out from among the peoples where the LORD your God shall have scattered you. ⁴Yes, even if you are scattered to the ends of the heavens, the LORD your God will gather you and fetch you from there; ⁵and the LORD your God will bring you back to the land of your fathers so that you shall possess it,^h He will grant you prosperity and make you more numerous than your fathers were. ⁶The LORD your God will circumcise your heartⁱ and the heart of your offspring, and you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you will live. ⁷The LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hated and persecuted you. ⁸But you must again obey the voice of the LORD and practice all His commandments which I now lay upon you. ⁹The LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in the work of your hands, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the produce of your soil; for the LORD will again delight in your prosperity, as He took delight in your fathers; ¹⁰if, indeed, you listen to the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

¹¹"For this command which I am enjoining upon you today is not too difficult for you; neither is it far-off. ¹²It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up for us to heaven and bring it down to make us hear it, so

f) Keep in mind that these warnings are given as the people face the Jordan to enter the promised land.
g) They and we must live by what He has taught. In this chapter, Moses adds his own appeal to what had been written in the book of the law. The experiences in Egypt and in the desert are abiding proofs of God's solicitude for His people. Each man's apostasy will bring ruin, not merely on himself, but also on the nation.

h) Israel had her choice, blessings or curses. When she chose the latter she suffered the penalty, which was exile. In the goodness of God, she will be given a second chance.

i) In Hebrew psychology the seat of thought, the intellect, was the heart. A circumcised heart was an open mind, receptive to the Spirit; it would be moved by the touch of God upon it to love Him, Ch. 10:16; Jer. 4:4; Rom. 2:29.

we may do it?' ¹³Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the seas for us and bring it to us to make us hear it, so we may do it?' ¹⁴No, the word is very near you, on your lips and in your heart in order that you may do it.¹

¹⁵"See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, ¹⁶in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, so that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land which you are about to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I announce to you now that you shall certainly perish; you shall live only briefly in the land, which after crossing the Jordan, you will make your own. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse: Therefore choose life, so that you may live, you and your children, ²⁰to love the LORD your God, to obey His voice, and to cling to Him; for that is your life and your length of days, that you may dwell upon the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

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31 THEN MOSES WENT AND SPOKE these words to all Israel. ²He said to them, "I am now 120 years old and am no longer able to go out and come in, and the LORD has told me, You are not to cross the Jordan. ³The LORD your God will Himself cross over before you; He will destroy the nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them; Joshua, too, will be crossing before you, as the LORD promised. ⁴The LORD will do to them as He did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their country, when He destroyed them. ⁵The LORD will hand them over to you, and you must

dispose of them in agreement with the whole commandment which I have ordered you. ⁶Be strong and courageous; have no fear, nor be at all in dread on their account; for it is the LORD your God who is going with you; He will neither fail you nor forsake you."

⁷Moses then called Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you will go with this people into the land which the LORD swore to their fathers to give them; and you shall make them inherit it. ⁸The LORD is the One who goes before you, and He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you; be not afraid or dismayed."

⁹When Moses had written this law, he gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰He also gave them the command, "At the end of every seven years, in the year of release, at the feast of booths,^k ¹¹when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the sacred place which He shall choose, you must read this law in the hearing of all Israel. ¹²Call the people together, men, women, children, and the foreigner who lives in your community, that they may hear and may learn to revere the LORD your God, and be careful to practice all the words of this law; ¹³likewise that their children, who have not known it, may hear it and learn to revere the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land you will be crossing the Jordan to make your own."

¹⁴The LORD then said to Moses, Behold, the time for your death is approaching; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, so that I may commission him. So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting. ¹⁵In the tent the LORD appeared in a pillar of cloud; and the pillar of cloud remained by the door of the tent. ¹⁶The LORD said to Moses, Soon you will be sleeping with your fathers, and this people

j) The way of salvation is the law of God, given for Israel's redemption. It is the simple revelation of God's way for her; now she knows it and must respond to it.

k) The 15th day of the 7th month, Sept.-Oct., a thanksgiving for every harvest, including grapes and olives.

will play the harlot, following the gods of the strangers of the land among whom they are about to come; they will forsake Me, breaking the covenant I made with them. ¹⁷My anger will then blaze out against them; I will turn from them and abandon them; they will be devastated; many calamities and troubles will come upon them. In that day they will cry out and say, "Have not these afflictions come upon us because our God is no longer among us?" ¹⁸But at that time I will withdraw My face from them because of the sins they have committed in turning to other gods. ¹⁹Now, therefore, write this song, and teach it to the Israelites; put it on their lips, that the song may be a witness for Me against the Israelites. ²⁰I shall bring them into the land that flows with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers to give them; and they will eat, and be filled and grow fat. They will turn to other gods, serve them, despise Me and abandon My covenant. ²¹Then, when all calamities and afflictions have come down on them, this song, a living reminder to their children, shall be a witness for Me against them; for I know the thoughts they are forming, even now before I bring them into the land which I promised on oath. ²²So Moses wrote this song at that time and taught it to the Israelites.

²³And He charged Joshua the son of Nun, saying, Be strong and of great courage; for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land which I swore to give them, and I will personally be with you.

²⁴When Moses had completed the writing of the words of this law in a book to its finish, ²⁵he gave this order to the Levites, the bearers of the ark of the covenant of the LORD ²⁶"Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you. ²⁷For I know how rebellious and stiff-necked you are; indeed, while I am still alive with

you, you are defiant toward the LORD, and how much worse it will be after my death! ²⁸Assemble before me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to bear witness against them. ²⁹For I know that after my death you will deal very corruptly and abandon the way I have enjoined upon you; adversity will befall you in the days to come, when you will do wrong in the sight of the LORD, vexing Him with your handiwork."

³⁰Then Moses spoke the words of this song in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel until they were ended.

32 ¹"GIVE EAR, YE HEAVENS, AND I will speak;

let the earth listen to the words of my lips.

²May my instruction drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as dew upon the young grass and showers upon the green herbs.

³For the name of the LORD I will proclaim.

Praise our God for His greatness!

⁴The Rock,^m how perfect are His works, for all His ways are just!

A God, faithful and true, fair and righteous is He!

⁵His unregenerate offspring have dealt corruptly toward Him, a twisted and crooked race.

⁶Is this your repayment to the LORD, you foolish and wisdom-lacking folk? Is He not your Father, who formed you, who created and established you?

⁷Think back on the days of old; reckon the years, generation after generation.

Ask your father that he may show you, your elders that they may tell you.

⁸When the Most High gave the nations their heritage, when He separated the sons of men, He set the boundaries of the peoples in accord with the number of the sons of Israel.

1) The entire chapter reflects Israel's genius for exalted expression in poetry.

m) The word Rock is a frequent title for God; see II Sam. 23:3, Is. 17:10, Ps. 31:3.

⁹For the portion of the LORD is His people,
Jacob His allotted heritage.

¹⁰He found them in a desert land,
in a howling waste of wilderness;
He encircled them and tended them
with care,

He guarded them as the apple of
His eye.

¹¹As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovering
over its young,
spreading its wings to catch them
and bearing them on its pinions,ⁿ

¹²so the LORD alone was guide to them,
and no strange god was with Him.

¹³He made them ride upon the earth's
high places

and they ate the fruits of the fields.

He let them suck honey from the crags
and oil from flinty rocks;

¹⁴curds from the herd and milk from
the flock,

rams of Bashan, too, and he-goats,
with the finest of the wheat,
and you drank the foaming blood of
grapes.

¹⁵Then Jeshurun grew fat and kicked,^o
— yes, you grew fat, became plump
and sleek!

Then he rejected God who made him
and treated with scorn the Rock of
his salvation.

¹⁶They provoked Him to jealousy with
strange gods;

they angered Him with abominations.

¹⁷They sacrificed to demons, the
no-Gods,
gods who were altogether strange to
them,

new comers, lately arrived were they,
before whom your fathers had never
stood in awe.

¹⁸You were unmindful of the Rock who
begot you,
and you forgot the God who gave
you being.

¹⁹When the LORD saw it, He spurned
them,
provoked by His sons and daughters.

²⁰I will hide My face from them,
He said,

and see what their end will be;
for a perverse generation are they,
children who know nothing of
loyalty.

²¹They have provoked Me to jealousy
with their false gods,
vexed Me with their worthlessnesses.

So I, I will stir them to jealousy with a
worthless people^p
and provoke them with a foolish
nation.

²²For by My wrath a fire is kindled,
and it blazes to the depths of the
underworld;

it consumes the earth and its produce,
scorching the bases of the hills.

²³I will heap calamities upon them
and shoot all My arrows against them.

²⁴Wasted by famine, they shall be
devoured
by burning fever and deadly
pestilence.

The teeth of wild beasts I will set free
against them,
with the venom of creatures that
crawl in the dust.

²⁵Outdoors, the sword shall bereave
them,
indoors it will be terror
for both the young man and the maid,
for the babe at the breast and for the
graybeard.

²⁶I might have said, I will blow them
away;

I will make the memory of them to
cease among mortals,

²⁷had I not suspected the taunt of
the foe,

if their adversaries misconstrue it,
declaring, "It was our hand that
triumphed,
and not the LORD who has done
all this."

²⁸For they are a nation of unsound
mind,

and insight has passed them by.

²⁹If they had wisdom, they would
understand this
and see to discern their end.^q

³⁰How could one chase a thousand
and two put ten thousand to flight

n) Moses as shepherd had watched the training of eaglets, thrust out of their nest, hurled from the sheer rock; then the mother swooping down as they struggled, bearing them up, letting them go again, to catch them; so repeatedly. So God trained Israel — and still trains us.

o) Jeshurun is a name used for Israel, with the root meaning upright — so, the upright one — but here used sarcastically.

p) A people that worships false gods.

q) Wisdom in the O.T. is spiritual insight, a man of unsound mind is a man who lacks such wisdom.

were it not that their Rock had
sold them,
and the LORD had delivered
them up?^r

³¹For their rock is not our Rock,
our foes themselves so concluding.

³²For their vine comes from the vine
of Sodom^s

it derives from the vineyards of
Gomorrhah;

their grapes are grapes of poison,
their clusters, too, are bitter.

³³The venom of serpents is their wine,
the pitiless poison of cobras.

³⁴Is it not laid up in store with Me,
sealed off in My storehouse?

³⁵Mine is the vengeance and the
retribution

against the time when their foot
shall slip.

For the day of their disaster is at hand,
and their hour of doom hastens
on apace.

³⁶For the LORD will vindicate His
people
and for His servants He will show
compassion,

when He sees that their strength is gone
and that both bond and free are
no more.

³⁷Then He will say, Where now are
their gods,
the rock in which they sought refuge,

³⁸who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their drink
offerings?

Let them arise to your help,
and let them be a shelter over you.

³⁹See now that it is I; I am He,
and there is no God beside Me;

I put to death, and I bring to life,
I crush, and I heal,

and from My hand there is none to
deliver.

⁴⁰For I lift up My hand to heaven,
and swear that, as I live forever,

⁴¹I will whet My flaming sword;
My hand shall lay hold on judgment;

I will wreak vengeance on My foes
and repay those who hate Me.

⁴²I will make My arrows drunk with
blood,

and My sword shall devour flesh
with the blood of the slain and the
captives,

from the long-haired heads of the foe.

⁴³Praise His people, O ye nations;
for the blood of His servants He
will avenge,

inflicting retribution on His adversaries
and granting mercy to His land,
His people."

⁴⁴Then Moses came and recited all
the words of this song in the hearing
of the people, he and Joshua the son
of Nun. ⁴⁵And when Moses had fin-
ished reciting all these words to all
Israel, ⁴⁶he said to them, "You must
take to heart all these words wherewith
I admonish you today, so that you may
enjoin upon your children carefully to
live up to all the words of this law.
⁴⁷For this is not a meaningless word
for you; it is your life, and by this
word you shall lengthen your days in
the land which upon crossing the Jor-
dan you will take in possession."

⁴⁸The LORD also said to Moses that
day, ⁴⁹Ascend now this mountain of
the Abarim,^t Mount Nebo, in the land
of Moab, opposite Jericho, and look out
over the land of Canaan, the land I am
giving the children of Israel for their
possession. ⁵⁰You are to die on the
mountain which you ascend and be
gathered to your people, as Aaron your
brother died on Mount Hor and was
gathered to his people; ⁵¹because you
broke faith with Me among the Israel-
ites at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh,
in the wilderness of Zin; for you did
not revere Me among the people of Is-
rael. ⁵²You may see the land lying be-
fore you, but you shall not enter it, the
land I am giving to the people of
Israel.

33 THIS THE BLESSING^u WHICH
Moses, the man of God, pro-

r) So it was not the foe, but Israel's own God, who defeated them. The LORD is storing up all the evils for use against Israel.

s) The pleasures which the foes enjoy are like those of Sodom and Gomorrhah.

t) The mountain range east of the Jordan of which Mount Nebo is a peak.

u) This is one of three examples of Hebrew poetry that provide a remarkable picture of the tribes of Israel in times of vast historic and religious significance. The others are: the Song of Deborah, Judges 5, and the blessing of Jacob, Gen. 49.

nounced upon the people of Israel before his death. ²He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned upon us from Seir; He shone forth out of Mount Paran from the midst of ten thousands of saints, with flames of fire at His right hand."^v ³Yes, He loves His people, and all His saints are in Thy hand. They followed in Thy steps; they accepted Thy word.

⁴"Moses commanded a law for us, a possession for the congregation of Jacob. ⁵The LORD became King in Jeshurun when the heads of the people were assembled, the tribes of Israel together.

⁶"Let Reuben live and not die out; but let his men be countable. ⁷And this regarding Judah: "Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him to his people; let his hands suffice him: give him help against his foes."

⁸Then he said of Levi, "Grant Thy Thummim and Thy Urim" to the godly one, to Levi, whom Thou didst test at Massah, contending with him at the waters of Meribah; ⁹who said of his father and his mother 'I do not regard them'; his brothers, too, he disavowed and ignored, as well as his children. For he observes Thy word and keeps Thy covenant.^x ¹⁰He teaches Thy judgments to Jacob and Thy laws to Israel. He brings the savor of sacrifice to Thy nostrils and whole burnt offerings to Thy altar. ¹¹Bless, O LORD, his might, and accept the work of his hands. Smite the loins of those that rise against him and of those who hate him, that they appear no more."

¹²Of Benjamin he said, "He is the beloved of the LORD" and dwells beside Him securely. The LORD encircles him perpetually and makes His dwelling place between his shoulders."^z

¹³Of Joseph he said, "Blessed of the LORD be his land with the choicest gifts of heaven and from the deep that couches beneath; ¹⁴with the lavish fruits of the sun and the rich yield of the moon. ¹⁵Choice produce let there be on the ancient mountains and abundance on the everlasting hills, ¹⁶with all the gifts of the earth and its fullness, and the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush.^a Let this come on the head of Joseph, upon the crown of this prince among his brothers. ¹⁷May his firstling bullock show splendor, with horns that match those of the wild ox; with them let him thrust the peoples to the ends of the earth. Such are the myriads of Ephraim; such, too, are the thousands of Manasseh."^b

¹⁸Of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, when you go abroad,^c and you, Issachar, in your tents at home. ¹⁹They invite peoples to their mountain, and there they offer sacrifices of righteousness; for they draw abundance from the seas and hidden treasures from the sands."^d

²⁰Of Gad he said, "Blessed be He who enlarges Gad!^e Like a lion he lurks and tears an arm as well as the skull. ²¹He provided the best for himself, for that was the commander's portion; he went with the chiefs of the nation and did the righteous will of the LORD; he executed His judgments for Israel."

²²Of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's whelp that makes his leap from Bashan."²³And of Naphtali he said, "Naphtali, abounding in favor and filled with the blessing of the LORD, possess the lake and the South!"

²⁴And this regarding Asher, "Blessed among the sons be Asher; may he be the favored of his brothers and be dip-

^v) Verses 1-5 present the view of the Song of Deborah, that Israel learned to know God at Sinai. ^w) In the high priest's possession, used in finding God's will. The Levites were highly regarded as the ministers of the LORD, serving Him in every way prescribed for them. To them goes the superlative blessing.

^x) Meaning the Levite. ^y) Here Benjamin receives encouraging mention.

^z) In the land of Benjamin, the temple was located. ^a) See Ex. 3:2-4.

^b) Ephraim and Manasseh were the chief tribes of the northern kingdom, and Joshua was an Ephraimite.

^c) Zebulun growing wealthy through trade with peoples on the Mediterranean, see Gen. 49:13, and Issachar may have shared some of it.

^d) Treasures from the sand may refer to sand used in making glass.

^e) Gad was strong in war and gave great help to the other tribes in the conquest of Canaan, receiving God's blessing in return.

ping his foot in oil.^f ²⁶May your bolts be iron and bronze, and your strength be equal to your days.^g

²⁶"There is none like the God of Jeshurun,^h who rides along the heavens to your help in His majesty upon the clouds.ⁱ ²⁷The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. It was He who drove out the enemy from before you, as He said to you, Destroy! ²⁸So Israel dwelt securely, the fountain of Jacob secluded, in a land of grain and wine, while his heaven drops dew. ²⁹Blessing is yours, O Israel! Who is like you, a people redeemed by the LORD, the shield of your help, the sword of your exaltation! Cringing, your enemies shall come to you, and you shall trample on their high places."

34 AND MOSES WENT UP FROM THE plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole country, Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, the whole area of Judah as far as the Western Sea, ³including the Negeb,^j the circuit of the Jordan with the plain of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.^k ⁴Then the LORD said to him, This is the land of which

I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, I will give it to your descendants. I have given you this view of it, but you shall not go over there.

⁵Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab in agreement with the LORD's word. ⁶And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor, and to this day no man knows the location of his grave. ⁷When he died, Moses was 120 years old; his eye was not dimmed, nor had his vigor abated. ⁸The children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, which completed the period of weeping in the mourning for Moses.

⁹Now Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands on him. Therefore the people listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰Not again has a prophet arisen in Israel equal to Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.^l ¹¹None equaled him for all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, his whole court, and all his land, ¹²and for the mighty power and the great terror which Moses worked in the sight of all Israel.

f) Asher would have abundance of olive oil in Galilee, where olives were plentiful.

g) These blessings and those of Jacob, Gen. 49:3-27, were considered in the distribution of the land among the tribes.

h) Jeshurun — Righteous one. It is an endearing term applied to Israel as a people; but used sarcastically, ch. 32:15.

i) Striking poetic expressions picturing a period of peace, prosperity and bliss in Israel, because Israel's God is great, and her faith in Him has made her great.

j) Negeb is the common Hebrew term for the south, around Beer-sheba; the name is still in use today. k) Mt. Nebo afforded a magnificent view of the land which was the object of Moses' ministries. And he did have a visit in the Promised Land with Christ at His transfiguration.

l) Moses the great, unique at birth, unique in religious history, unique in the law, unique in death, trained Joshua to take his place, so that Moses might become dispensable. So did Jesus train His disciples against His ascension. So should all useful persons train others to take their place. Success without a successor is failure.

THE BOOK OF

JOSHUA

1406 B. C.

1 NOW AFTER THE DEATH OF MOSES the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua^a son of Nun, the assistant of Moses: ²Moses My servant has died;^b so now arise, pass over this Jordan,^c you and this whole nation of Israel, to the land which I give them. ³Every place on which the sole of your foot shall tread I have given you, as I said to Moses.^d ⁴Your territory will be from the desert^e and yonder Lebanon^f as far as the great river, the river Euphrates,^g including all the land of the Hittites^h even to the great western sea.ⁱ ⁵None will hold out before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, I shall be with you. I will never fail you, and I will not forsake you. ⁶Be resolute and strong; for you will enable this people to inherit the land which I vowed^j to their fathers to give them. ⁷Only be very resolute and strong,^k to keep practicing the whole Law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not depart from it to the right or to the left, so that you may prosper everywhere you go. ⁸This book of the Law must never depart from your mouth; you must meditate on it day and night,

so that you may keep living in accord with all that is written in it; for then you will make your way successful, and then you will prosper. ⁹Have I not commanded you? Be resolute and strong! Be not afraid, and be not dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you everywhere you go.

¹⁰Then Joshua ordered the officers of the people, ¹¹"Pass through the midst of the camp, and thus command the people, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, because within three^l days you will be crossing this Jordan to enter and possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you for your own.'"

¹²To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, ¹³"Remember the proposal^m with which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, 'The LORD your God is settling you here. He is giving you this land.' ¹⁴Your women folk, your children, and your possessions may stay in the land, which Moses has given you on the other side of the Jordan;" but you must go over before your kinsmen, armed, with all your valiant men; and you must help them ¹⁵until

a) Joshua means the same as Jesus — Jehovah is salvation. b) The priesthood was hereditary, but the leadership of Israel was an earned office [Num. 27:15-23].

c) Descender—a swift river running from the slopes of Mt. Hermon through Lake Galilee to the Dead Sea, 1300 feet below sea level. d) They must work together with God (Deut. 11:24).

e) The Desert of Sin at the southeastern end of Canaan.

f) A mountain range forming the northern boundary of Canaan.

g) Israel's dominion did not extend to the Euphrates until the reign of David and Solomon.

h) One of the seven peoples who occupied Canaan. i) The Mediterranean. j) Gen. 15:17, 18.

k) The LORD had promised to give them this land, but they must show courage to face hardship and war and must steadfastly obey His Law. l) When the spies returned to camp after three days' hiding, the Israelites moved from Acacia to the Jordan, where they remained for three days.

m) Num. 32:20-27.

n) On the other side of the Jordan from the later viewpoint of Palestine, therefore Transjordan. There those unable to fight would enjoy safety and the produce of conquered lands.

the LORD gives them rest such as you have and they also have possession of the land which the LORD your God gives to them. Then you may return to the land which you possess, and you may occupy what Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan eastward."

¹⁶They replied to Joshua, "All that you have commanded us we shall do, and everywhere you send us we shall go. ¹⁷As we have obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as He was with Moses. ¹⁸Everyone who rebels against your authority and does not obey your decrees in all that you command him will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous."

1406 B.C.

2 THEN JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN sent two men from Acacia^o secretly to spy. "Go," he said, "survey the land, and Jericho^p in particular." So they went, and coming to the house of the harlot whose name was Rahab, they stayed there. ²But it was reported to the king^r of Jericho, "Men have come here this night from the Israelites to spy out the land." ³Then the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, "Bring out the men who came to you into your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land." ⁴Now the woman had taken the two men to hide them. "Yes, the men did come to me," she replied, "but I did not know where they came from. ⁵However, at dusk, when the gate was to be closed, they went away. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, so you may catch up with them." ⁶She had taken them^s up to the roof and had hidden them in the flax stalks,^t which she had laid out there. ⁷Meanwhile the men pursued them along the Jordan road as far as the fords; and they closed the gate as soon as the pursuers went out after them.

⁸Before they fell asleep, she went up to them on the roof ⁹and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given you this country, that the fear of you has come upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt with terror because of you. ¹⁰For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea^u when you came out of Egypt and also what you did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you destroyed." ¹¹We heard it, and our courage melted away; no one is confident against you any longer, because the LORD your God is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. ¹²So now, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have treated you kindly, you too will show kindness to my father's house. Besides, give me a pledge of your good faith that ¹³you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all that belong to them and save us from death."

¹⁴Then the men said to her, "If you do not expose our mission, we shall treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives the land to us; or may we die in your place."

¹⁵She then let them down through the window with a rope; for her house was on the side of the wall, so that she actually lived on the wall. ¹⁶She said to them, "Go into the mountains, or your pursuers will apprehend you. Remain there for three days until your pursuers return; then you may go your way."

¹⁷The men said to her, "We may be released from this oath that you made us swear ¹⁸unless, when we come into the land, you tie this piece of scarlet cord in the window by which you let us down and assemble your mother, father, brothers, and all your relatives at your house." ¹⁹Should anyone go out through the doors of your house into the street, his blood is on his own

o) Acacia trees. p) City of the moon, or fragrant place; Jericho was situated in a fertile plain.

r) The numerous kings mentioned in the Book of Joshua were local chiefs, each a vassal of one of the larger rulers. s) The spies. t) Three- or four-foot lengths of uncured flax.

u) This had occurred forty years earlier, but the report of it had been widely circulated and had left a deep impression. v) Numbers 21:21-35.

w) The blood-red cord meant life for all believers; none who joined Rahab perished in the destruction of Jericho. To some of us this is a symbol of the redemptive blood of our Saviour.

head, and we are innocent; but with regard to anyone who is with you in the house, his blood is on our head if a hand is raised against him. ²⁰But if you expose this mission of ours, we shall be released from the oath which you made us swear."

²¹"Let it be according to your terms," she replied. After she dismissed them, they left; and she fastened the scarlet cord in the window.

²²They went out and came to the mountains where they stayed for three days until their pursuers returned. Their pursuers had hunted them all along the road, but they did not discover them; so the two men started back. ²³They^x came down from the mountains and, after they crossed over, they came to Joshua son of Nun and reported all their findings to him. ²⁴They announced to Joshua, "The LORD has put the whole land in our hands, and all its inhabitants are faint-hearted before us."

1406 B. C.

3 EARLY IN THE MORNING JOSHUA got up, he and all the Israelites, and marched from Acacia to the Jordan, where they encamped before they made the crossing. ²After three days the officers passed through the camp ³and ordered the people, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God with the Levite priests bearing it, leave your places and follow it; ⁴so that you may know the way to go, because you have never walked this path before. But keep a distance of three thousand feet between it and yourselves; do not get nearer to it."^y

⁵Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves,^z because tomorrow the LORD will do marvelous things in your presence." ⁶To the priests Joshua said, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and go on ahead of the people." So they took up the ark

of the covenant and went on ahead of the people.

⁷The LORD said to Joshua: Today I shall begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so that they may know that, as I was with Moses, I shall be with you.^a ⁸Give orders to the priests who take up the ark of the covenant, "When you come to the water at the edge of the Jordan, stand still there!"

⁹So Joshua said to the Israelites, "Come near and hear the words of the LORD your God." ¹⁰Joshua further said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you and that He will assuredly expel for you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite. ¹¹Behold! The ark of the covenant of the LORD of the whole earth is going before you into the Jordan. ¹²Choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each tribe.^b ¹³When the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, who is LORD of the whole earth, come to rest in the water of the Jordan, the water of the Jordan will be cut off, and the water upstream will stand as a wall."

¹⁴As the people set forth from their camps to cross the Jordan, the priests who bore the ark of the covenant formed the van. ¹⁵As soon as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped into the water at the edge^c — for the Jordan overflows its banks during the harvest season^d — ¹⁶the water flowing down from above stood still; it rose as a wall for a great distance as far as Adam,^e the city beside Zarethan; and the part flowing down to the sea of the Arabah,^f the Salt Sea, was completely cut off; so the people crossed opposite Jericho. ¹⁷The priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, and all Israel

x) The two spies.

y) The sanctity of the ark was thus maintained, while the people were led to realize that the LORD Himself was guiding them and overcoming the insurmountable obstacles which stood in their way. z) Ex. 19:10. a) Moses had been similarly exalted at the crossing of the Red Sea. b) See ch. 4:2-10. c) Not until their feet were above the water, ready to step down, was the water cut off. The faith of the priests was severely tested.

d) In April, when the barley harvest begins, the Jordan is at its height; none can then wade across it. The Jordan there — now Damieh — is narrowest. July, 1927, an earthquake dammed the river for 21 hours; in 1267 a fallen bank held it 16 hours.

e) Adam was about 20 miles north of the Jericho ford. f) Sea of the Plain.

passed over on dry ground, until the whole nation had completed the crossing of the Jordan.^g

1406 a. c.

4 WHEN THE WHOLE NATION HAD finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua: ²Choose twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, ³and give them this order: Take up twelve stones here in the midst of the Jordan where the priests' feet were standing; bring them with you, and place them in the camp where you spend the night. ⁴So Joshua called together the twelve men whom he had appointed from the Israelites, one man from each tribe, ⁵and said to them, "Go into the middle of the Jordan in front of the ark of the LORD your God, and each of you lift a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the Israelite tribes, ⁶so that this may be a symbol to you. Later, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean to you?' ⁷you will tell them, 'The waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it entered the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off, and these stones will always serve the Israelites as a memorial.'"

⁸The Israelites did as Joshua ordered; they lifted from the center of the Jordan twelve stones for the number of the Israelite tribes, as the LORD had told Joshua, and bringing them to the camp, they deposited them there. ⁹Then Joshua piled up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan where the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.¹

¹⁰The priests who bore the ark stood in the middle of the Jordan until everything had been accomplished which the

LORD had ordered Joshua to say to the people, in accordance with all that Moses had ordered Joshua;¹ then the people promptly crossed over. ¹¹When all the people had completed the crossing, the ark of the LORD and the priests passed over in the sight of the people.^k ¹²The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the Israelites, as Moses had charged them. ¹³About 40,000 armed troops crossed over before the LORD for the battle on the plains of Jericho. ¹⁴On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the eyes of all Israel, and they revered him through all his life as they had revered Moses.

¹⁵The LORD said to Joshua: ¹⁶Order the priests who bear the ark of the testimony¹ to ascend from the Jordan. ¹⁷So Joshua ordered the priests, "Climb up from the Jordan." ¹⁸When the priests, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, climbed up from the middle of the Jordan and their feet stepped on dry ground, the water of the Jordan returned to its place, overflowing its banks as before.

¹⁹The people moved up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the eastern edge of Jericho.^m ²⁰At Gilgal Joshua set up the twelve stones, which they had taken from the Jordan. ²¹Then he said to the Israelites, "In the future when your children ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?' ²²inform them by saying, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.' ²³For the LORD your God had dried up the water of the Jordan before you until you crossed, just as He did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed. ²⁴Consequently, all the nations of the earth will know that

g) As God sent a great east wind to open a wide path in the Red Sea for Israel (Ex. 14:21,22), so He could cause a great upheaval or a tremendous landslide to dam the Jordan waters. His physical miracles witness to His directing of natural forces for His definite purpose.

h) God has made children on the question plan; it is ours to answer them with God in mind. He also wants memorials provided, to remind all His children of His wondrous ways.

i) When the Book of Joshua was written, the two pillars of stones were still standing: 12 stones in Gilgal and 12 in the Jordan. The 12 stones placed in the center of the Jordan might be visible during the 10 months when the Jordan does not overflow its banks.

j) Deut. 31:7,8. k) Included were the children, the aged and infirm, even their herds and flocks, all of which was not a matter of minutes but of many hours.

l) Tables of the Law inside the ark which set forth the conditions by which the LORD pledged Himself to prosper Israel. m) The district of Jericho.

the hand of the LORD is mighty, and you will revere the LORD your God always."

1406 B. C.

5 WHEN ALL THE AMORITE KINGS west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings by the seaⁿ heard that the LORD had dried up the water of the Jordan before the Israelites until they had crossed, their courage melted away, and they no longer had confidence against the Israelites. ²At this time the LORD said to Joshua: Make stone knives and circumcise the Israelites for the second time. ³So Joshua made stone knives and circumcised^o the Israelites at the Hill of Foreskins.

⁴Now this is the reason why Joshua circumcised all the people: the males who had come out of Egypt, all the soldiers, had died in the wilderness along the way during the migration from Egypt. ⁵Although all the people who had come out were circumcised, those born in the desert along the way during the migration from Egypt had not been circumcised.^p ⁶The Israelites traveled in the wilderness for forty years until death came to the whole nation, to the soldiers, who had come out of Egypt and had not obeyed the voice of the LORD, to whom the LORD vowed that they should not see the land which He had vowed to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁷So He appointed their children in their place, and these Joshua circumcised because they were uncircumcised, since they did not circumcise them along the way.^q

⁸When the whole nation had been circumcised, they stayed in their places in the camp until they were healed. ⁹And the LORD said to Joshua: Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt^r from you. So the name of this

place is called Gilgal^s even to this day. March, April, 1406 B. C.

¹⁰The Israelites camped at Gilgal, and on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, they observed the Passover^t on the plains of Jericho. ¹¹On the very next day after the Passover, they ate what was raised on the land, unleavened bread and parched grain. ¹²The manna ceased the day after they ate what was raised on the land; there was no more manna for the Israelites, but they subsisted on the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

¹³When Joshua was by Jericho, he looked up and saw a Man standing opposite him with a drawn sword in His hand. Joshua went up to Him and said, "Are You with us or with our enemies?"

¹⁴No, He replied, It is I; as Captain of the LORD's host^u I now have come. Then Joshua, falling prone upon the ground, prostrated himself, and said to Him, "What has my LORD to say to His servant?"

¹⁵The Captain of the LORD's host said to Joshua: Remove your shoes from your feet, because the place upon which you are standing is holy.^v And Joshua did so.

1406 B. C.

6 NOW JERICHO WAS CLOSED IN AND secured because of the Israelites; no one went out, and no one came in. ²Then the LORD^w said to Joshua: Behold, I have delivered Jericho, her king and her soldiers, into your hand. ³March around the city with all the men of war, encircling it once. Do this for six days. ⁴Seven priests shall each carry a ram's-horn trumpet before the ark. On the seventh day, go around the city seven times, while the priests blow their horns. ⁵When you hear the blare of the trumpets in a long blast on the rams' horns, let all the people

n) Mediterranean Sea. o) See Gen. 17:9-14. p) The LORD's judgment against the Israelites affected their children, too; circumcision, the symbol of the covenant relationship with the LORD, had been withheld from them.

q) See footnote (p) on vs. 5. r) The taunt of the Egyptians that the LORD was leading the Israelites into the desert to destroy them (Ex. 32:12).

s) Suggested by the Hebrew verb, to roll away. t) Forty years after the first Passover.

u) Of the angels, ready to support the Hebrew army; see II Kings 6:16,17.

v) This place was hallowed by the presence of a divine Messenger. As in Ex. 3:2-6 and in Judges 6:11,16, the Angel proves to be the LORD Himself, so here God manifested Himself, the Son of God, we have every reason to believe.

w) In the person of His Messenger of ch. 5:14,15.

give a mighty shout of joy; then the wall of the city will collapse^x so that the people may attack, each one moving straight ahead.

⁶So Joshua the son of Nun summoned the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests each carry a ram's-horn trumpet before the ark of the LORD."

⁷And to the people he said, "Advance, and march around the city; let armed men advance ahead of the ark of the LORD." ⁸When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests who carried the seven rams' horns before the LORD^y advanced and kept blowing their horns, while the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

⁹The armed men were marching ahead of the priests, who were blowing the horns, and the rear guard followed the ark; they were marching and blowing their horns. ¹⁰But in commanding the people, Joshua said, "Do not shout, nor let your voices be heard, nor let a word leave your mouth, until the day in which I say to you, 'Shout!' Then shout!"

¹¹The ark of the LORD moved around the city, encircling it once; then they returned to the camp and stayed there. ¹²In the morning Joshua got up early, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. ¹³The seven priests who carried the seven rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went forward, blowing on the horns. The armed men went ahead of them, and the rear guard followed the ark of the LORD. They marched and blew their horns. ¹⁴They encircled the city once on the second day and returned to the camp.^z They did this for six days, ¹⁶Then on the seventh day they got up

early at dawn and went around the city seven times, according to procedure; only on that day they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶The seventh time around, when the priests blew their horns, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, because the LORD has given you the city!" ¹⁷The city and all that is in it are a devoted portion^a to the LORD. Only Rahab the innkeeper and all who are with her in the house will be spared, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. ¹⁸But keep yourselves from the devoted portion, lest in devoting it, you might take some part of it^b and so place the camp of Israel in the devoted portion and bring affliction upon it. ¹⁹All the silver and gold, and all the bronze and iron, are set apart for the LORD. They shall go into the treasury of the LORD."

²⁰The people shouted as the horns were blown. When the people heard the blare of the trumpets, they shouted with a loud acclaim; the walls collapsed.^c The people attacked the city, each moving in straight ahead, and they captured the city. ²¹Then with the sword they destroyed everything in the city as a devoted portion, both men and women, young and old, and oxen, sheep, and donkeys.^d ²²Joshua said to the two men who had explored the land, "Enter the innkeeper's house, and conduct her from there with all who are with her, just as you pledged to her." ²³So the young spies went in and conducted Rahab away with her father, mother, brothers, and all who were with her, her whole family, and they gave them refuge outside the camp of Israel.^e

²⁴They burned the city and everything in it; but they deposited the sil-

x) Excavations indicate that the walls of Jericho collapsed as though destroyed by earthquake.

y) The ark symbolized His presence.

z) The men and boys of Jericho would doubtless shout mocking remarks from the walls at the marching men, apparently taking such useless daily exercise.

a) Retractions were imposed on all the loot of Jericho as Canaan's first fruits, not applied elsewhere (Deut. 20:10-18). What could or should not be destroyed was to be devoted to the use of the Lord. This was in keeping with the rule that the first fruits belong to the LORD (Ex. 23:19).

b) A suggested alternative reading: else you might covet and take some part of it.

c) The part of the wall in which Rahab lived must have stood firm.

d) To prevent alien elements from affecting Israel, radical measures were taken. These measures were justified on religious grounds in that the natives had proved their incorrigibility before God (Romans 1:18-32), and that they were classified according to the concept of the devoted portion - Cherem, which was that part of the increase of Israel which belonged to God, either for His exclusive use, or for complete destruction.

e) Rahab's family, being included in the forfeiture, could not at once be in contact with the Israelite camp.

ver and gold and the things of bronze and iron into the treasury of the house of the LORD.^f ²⁵Joshua spared Rahab the innkeeper, her father's household, and all who belonged to her, and she has dwelt in Israel to this day,^g because she hid the messengers whom Joshua had sent to explore Jericho.

²⁶"Accursed before the LORD is the man who rebuilds this city of Jericho,"^h declared Joshua at that time. "He will found it at the price of his first-born, and he will set up its gates at the cost of his young son."ⁱ

²⁷The LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

1406 B. C.

7 THE ISRAELITES, HOWEVER, SECRETLY violated the devoted portion when Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took something from it;^j so the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel.

²Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven east of Bethel, after saying to them, "Go up and explore the land." The men went up and explored Ai. ³When they returned to Joshua, they said to him, "Do not send all the people; let two or three thousand men go up and strike at Ai; do not employ the whole people up there because the people of Ai are few."^k ⁴So about 3,000 of the people went up there; but they fled from the men of Ai, ⁵who killed about 36 of them and, pursuing them from their gates to the quarries, killed more on the way down; so that the hearts of the people of Israel melted and became like water.

⁶Joshua tore his clothes, fell on his face before the ark of the LORD, and remained there until evening with the elders of Israel. They put dust on their heads. ⁷Then Joshua said, "Alas, O

LORD God, why didst Thou have this people cross the Jordan and put us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Oh, that we had been content to dwell on the other side of the Jordan! ⁸O LORD, what shall I say, after Israel has retreated from her enemies? ⁹The Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it; they will surround us and cut off our name from the land. Then what wilt Thou do for Thy great Name?"

¹⁰Rise up, the LORD said to Joshua, why have you fallen on your face?

¹¹Israel has sinned and has transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. They have even taken something from the devoted portion and stolen it. They have been deceitful and have put it with their own belongings. ¹²The Israelites will not be able to prevail against their enemies; they will retreat from them, because they have come under the law of the sacred portion. I shall not be with you any more, unless you get rid of that devoted thing, which is among you. ¹³Rise up, consecrate the people. Say to them, "Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, because the LORD God of Israel has said: A devoted thing is among you, Israel; you will not be able to prevail against your enemies, until you remove that devoted thing which is in your midst. ¹⁴In the morning you will come near by tribes. The tribe which the LORD indicates by lot will come near by clans. The clan which the LORD indicates by lot will come near by households. The household which the LORD indicates by lot will come near by its individual male members.^l ¹⁵He who is indicated by lot as having the devoted thing, shall be burned with it and with all that belongs to him, for he has violated the covenant of the LORD and has done a disgraceful thing in Israel."

f) Jericho, the first city taken in Canaan, came under the law of the first fruits; it must be dedicated to God.

g) When the Book of Joshua was written, Rahab's descendants had been admitted into the nation. She became an ancestress of Jesus (Matthew 1:5).

h) The refortification of Jericho was forbidden, but its resettlement took place in accordance with Joshua's allotment to Benjamin (ch. 18:21).

i) See I Kings 16:34 for a fulfillment of this curse.

j) All Israel becomes guilty because of Achan's sin. This illustrates the concept of collective relationship, which is basic to Paul's understanding of the atonement.

k) This was a fatal underestimate; see ch. 10:2.

l) Thus locating individuals by family relationships, as we do by state, town, street, and house number.

¹⁶Joshua arose early in the morning and had Israel come near by tribes. The tribe of Judah was indicated by lot. ¹⁷Then he convened the clans of Judah, and by lot He indicated the Zerahite clan. Next he convened the Zerahite clan by its male members, and Zabdi was indicated by lot. ¹⁸Finally, he convened his household by its individual male members, and the lot fell upon Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah. ¹⁹Joshua said to Achan, "My son, ascribe glory to the LORD God of Israel, and offer praise to Him. Then tell me what you have done; do not conceal anything from me."

²⁰"Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel," Achan answered Joshua, "and this is what I have done. ²¹When I saw a beautiful robe from Shinar^m among the spoils, together with 200 silver dollars and a bar of gold worth 500 dollars, I coveted them and took them. They are buried in the ground in my tent with the money underneath."

²²Joshua dispatched couriers, who ran to Achan's tent. The robe was there, buried in his tent with the money beneath it. ²³They took them from the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the Israelites, and they set them down before the LORD. ²⁴Joshua then took Achan the son of Zerah with the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent, and all that belonged to him, and, together with all Israel, he brought them to the valley of Achor.

²⁵"Why did you bring calamity upon us?" said Joshua. "May the LORD bring calamity upon you today." Then all Israel stoned them and cremated them.ⁿ

²⁶They piled a large heap of stones^o upon them, which is there to this day; and the LORD ceased being angry. Consequently the name of this place is called the Valley of Achor^p to this day.

m) Hebrew name for Babylonia.

n) Since Deut. 24:16 prohibits the execution of children for their father's sin, Achan's children must have been with him in, or agreeable to, his wrongdoing.

o) Such memorials still mark the graves of criminals in the east. p) Valley of trouble.

q) Bethel was about a three hours' journey west of Ai.

r) Joshua led his main force into the valley within sight of the city, and there they spent the night.

1406 B. C.

8 THE LORD SAID TO JOSHUA: Neither fear nor be distressed! Take all the soldiers with you. Arise, and attack Ai. See how I have put into your hands the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his territory. ²You will do to Ai and her king as you did to Jericho and her king. However, you may take her loot and her cattle for yourselves. Now put an ambush behind the city.

³Joshua and all the soldiers arose to attack Ai. Joshua selected 30,000 valiant fighters, whom he sent forth at night. ⁴In giving them orders, he said, "You are going to ambush the city from behind. Be not too far from the city, and all of you be ready. ⁵I and all the people with me will approach the city, and when the Ai-ites come out to engage us as before, we shall flee from them. ⁶They will come after us until we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say, 'They are fleeing from us as before.' When we flee from them, ⁷you in the ambush will rise up and take the city; the LORD your God has put it in your hands. ⁸When you have taken the city, set it on fire. Do what the LORD says; observe that I have given you the orders."

⁹When Joshua sent them away, they went to the place of ambush, waiting west of Ai between Bethel and Ai.^q

Joshua spent that night with the troops, and ¹⁰he got up early in the morning. When he had mustered the troops, he and the elders of Israel led them toward Ai. ¹¹When all the soldiers who went with him drew near the city, they came within sight of it, but camped north of it where a valley lay between them and Ai. ¹²Now Joshua had taken 5,000 men and had appointed them to wait in ambush between Bethel and Ai, west of the city. ¹³So the people were in this position, the main camp lying north of the city while the ambush lay west of it. But that night Joshua passed through the center of the valley.^r

¹⁴When the king of Ai saw this, he

quickly aroused the men of the city, and he and all the people went out to meet Israel in battle at an indicated place near the plain; but he did not know that there was an ambush behind the city. ¹⁵When Joshua and all Israel were attacked by them, they fled toward the desert, ¹⁶and all the forces of Ai joined in pursuit of them; but as they pursued Joshua, they were being drawn away from the city. ¹⁷Therefore, no troops remained in Ai or in Bethel^s who did not go after Israel; they left the city open and they pursued her.

¹⁸Then the LORD said to Joshua: Hold out the spear in your hand toward Ai; for I have put it in your hands. So Joshua held out the spear in his hand^t toward the city. ¹⁹Those lying in ambush arose quickly from their place and ran when he stretched out his hand; and when they came to Ai, they captured it and quickly set it on fire. ²⁰When the men of Ai looked back, the smoke from the city was going up into the sky, and there was no place for them to scatter for refuge when those, who had been fleeing, turned against their pursuers. ²¹When Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city and that smoke went up from it, they turned and attacked the men of Ai. ²²Meanwhile the others came out of the city to engage them, so they were trapped in the middle of Israel between the troops on one side and those on the other side; and they fought until none were left, and none had escaped. ²³However, they captured the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴When Israel had slain all the inhabitants of Ai on the field in the desert where they had pursued them, all Israel returned to Ai and wielded the sword against it. ²⁵All who fell in battle that day numbered 12,000 men and women, the whole population of Ai. ²⁶Joshua did not lower his hand with which he

held out his spear, until they had destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. ²⁷But the cattle and spoils of this city Israel took for herself, according to the order of the LORD, which He had issued to Joshua. ²⁸So Joshua burned Ai and made it an everlasting heap of destruction, as it is to this day; ²⁹and he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening.^u At sunset,^v Joshua gave the order, and they took his corpse from the tree, threw it down by the gate of the city, and raised a large pile of stones over it, which remains until this day.

³⁰Then Joshua built an altar for the LORD God of Israel at Mount Ebal,^w ³¹as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the Israelites, as it is written in the book of the Law of Moses, an altar of uncut stones, which no iron tool had touched.^x They made an offering to the LORD upon it and performed the sacrifice of thanksgiving. ³²There he wrote on stones^y before the Israelites a copy of the Law of Moses which he had written. ³³All Israel with its elders, officers, and judges were standing on either side of the ark in front of the Levitical priests who carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, immigrants^z as well as the native-born, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half in front of Mount Ebal,^a as Moses the servant of the LORD had previously commanded that the people of Israel should be blessed.

³⁴Afterwards he read all the words of the Law, both the blessings and the curses, according to all that was written in the book of the Law. ³⁵There was nothing of all that Moses had commanded^b which Joshua did not read before the whole assembly of Israel, including the women, the children, and the foreigners who went with them.

1406-1405 B.C.

9 WHEN ALL THE KINGS WEST OF the Jordan learned of this, those in

s) Probably by treaty Bethel was an ally of Ai and stood by in the event of another attack by Israel. It was conquered with Ai.

t) A prearranged signal relayed to the men waiting in ambush.

u) After he had been killed (ch. 10:26). v) Deut. 21:22, 23.

w) See Deut. 27:12 ff. x) Ex. 20:25; Deut. 27:5. y) On stones prescribed in Deut. 27:2-8.

z) An evangelic note in the Old Testament, non-Israelites included in the covenant privileges. They could merge completely with the Israelites, if they would accept the God of Israel as their God. a) The Israelites could travel from Ai to this place in two days.

b) Deut. 27:11-28:10. Israel was a people of closely knit families, their households sharing their instructions and interests.

the mountains, on the sea plain, and all along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, ²were united to fight against Joshua and the Israelites for their common cause.^c ³The inhabitants of Gibeon^d also heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai, ⁴and they too proceeded with a stratagem. Certain ones went forth as delegates; they loaded old sacks on their donkeys and old wineskins, tattered and mended. ⁵The sandals on their feet were worn and patched; the garments they had on were threadbare, and their food was dry and crumbled. ⁶They came to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the Israelites, "We have come from a distant land; now therefore make a treaty with us."^e

⁷The Israelites replied to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live nearby, so how can we make a treaty with you?"^f

⁸"We are your servants,"^g they said to Joshua.

Then Joshua asked them, "Who are you, and where did you come from?"

⁹"Your servants have come from a very distant land on account of the fame of the LORD your God," they replied to him, "for we have learned of His record and of all that He did in Egypt ¹⁰and of all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroath. ¹¹So our elders and all the inhabitants of our land said to us, 'Take provisions for the journey with you; go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; now therefore make a treaty with us."'"

¹²"This is our bread. It was warm when we provided ourselves with it at our homes on the day we set out to come to you; but now, see how dry and crumbly it is! ¹³These wineskins were new

when we filled them; see how they are torn! Our clothes and sandals are worn out because our journey has been so very far."

¹⁴The men handled some of their provisions; but they did not consult the LORD.^h ¹⁵So Joshua made peace with them; he made a treaty to spare them,ⁱ and the chiefs of the congregation swore an oath to them. ¹⁶Three days after they had made the treaty with them, they learned that they were their neighbors, who lived in their vicinity. ¹⁷Then the Israelites broke camp and came to their cities on the third day. Their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁸However, the Israelites did not attack them, for the chiefs of the congregation had sworn an oath to them in the name of the LORD God of Israel.^j But the whole congregation murmured against the leaders. ¹⁹Then all the chiefs said to the whole gathering, "We have sworn an oath to them by the LORD God of Israel; so now we may not touch them. ²⁰This is what we shall do to them. We shall spare them, lest wrath be upon us on account of the oath which we swore to them." ²¹So the officers said to them, "Let them live." They became woodcutters and water carriers for the whole community, as the officers had told them.

²²Joshua summoned them and said to them, "Why did you deceive us, saying, 'We live very far away from you,' though you dwell in our neighborhood? ²³Henceforth you will be accursed because you will never be released from servitude; you will be woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."^k

²⁴They replied to Joshua, "It has been made perfectly clear to your servants that the LORD your God ordered Moses His servant to give you the whole land and that you should destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you. We

c) For their mutual defense. d) One of the major cities of central Palestine, inhabited by Hivites.

e) Israel was permitted to make treaties with nations located outside of Canaan (Deut. 20:10-18).

f) To safeguard them from idolatry, the Israelites were not permitted to affiliate with the other nations in Canaan (Deut. 7:1-5). g) Oriental fashion, to ingratiate themselves with the Israelites.

h) By using the Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28:30; Num. 27:21).

i) The alliance between Israel and Gibeon agreed that Israel would not attack Gibeon but would defend it (cf. ch. 10:6,7).

j) Although the Gibeonites obtained this oath by deception, the leaders of Israel would not trifle with an oath made in His Name.

k) To protect themselves from their idolatrous influences, Joshua made the Gibeonites serve in the worship of God. Thus Israel was never adversely affected by the Gibeonites.

were terrified for our lives on account of you, so we did this thing. ²⁵Now see, we are in your hands. Do whatever seems good and just in your sight to do to us."

²⁶He treated them accordingly and saved them from the hands of the Israelites, so that they did not kill them. ²⁷So on that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD to this day at whatever place He might choose.¹

1406-1405 B. C.

10 WHEN ADONIZEDEK,^m THE KING of Jerusalem,ⁿ heard that Joshua had captured Ai and had destroyed it, that he had done to Ai and her king as he had done to Jericho and her king and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made an agreement with Israel and were already with them, ²he was very fearful because Gibeon was a city as one of the royal cities,^o larger than Ai, and all its men were valiant fighters. ³Therefore, Adonizedek, the king of Jerusalem, sent word to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, ⁴"Come over and help me; let us attack Gibeon because she has made an agreement with Joshua and the Israelites." ⁵So the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon, together with all of their troops, joined forces and moved up, making camp at Gibeon. Then they fought against it.

⁶The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal. "Do not forsake your servants," they said. "Come to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites who in-

habit the mountains have united against us."⁴ ⁷So Joshua went up from Gilgal together with all his soldiers and valiant warriors. ⁸Now the LORD said to Joshua: Be not afraid of them because I have delivered them into your hand; no one will stand before you.⁵

⁹Joshua caught them by surprise by marching all night from Gilgal,⁶ ¹⁰and the LORD threw them into panic before Israel and thus administered a sound defeat to them at Gibeon; then pursuing them down the slope of Beth-horon⁷ they engaged them at Azekah and at Makkedah. ¹¹As they fled from Israel down the slope of Beth-horon to Azekah, the LORD cast large stones upon them from the sky, and they died. More died from the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

¹²Now Joshua spoke to the LORD on the day that He delivered up the Amorites to the Israelites; and he said before the eyes of Israel,

"O sun, wait in Gibeon!

Wait in the valley of Ajalon, O moon!"⁸

¹³The sun waited and the moon stood still, while a nation took vengeance on its enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jasher,⁹

"The sun stood still in the midst of the sky

And did not hasten to set for a whole day?"¹⁰

¹⁴There was not another day like that before or after it, when the LORD responded to a man's voice, because the LORD was fighting for Israel.

¹⁵Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal; ¹⁶but these five kings fled, hiding themselves in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷However, the information came to Joshua, "The

1) The LORD indicated to Israel where they were to erect altars for His worship. The Gibeonites helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after the exile (Neh. 7:25). At Gibeon David erected a tabernacle (1 Chron. 21:29). Solomon received a message from God in a dream at Gibeon (1 Kings 3: 5-15; 9:2).

m) "Lord of righteousness." n) "City of peace." o) No king was in residence there (ch. 9:11).

q) See note on ch. 9:15.

r) This was the most formidable alliance that Israel had yet encountered in Canaan.

s) The distance was more than twenty miles and uphill all the way.

t) Upper and lower Beth-horon were separated by a slope of more than two miles, descending 700 feet.

u) From Joshua's position, west of Gibeon in the early morning, the sun would have been in the east over Gibeon and the moon in the west over the valley of Ajalon.

v) A compilation in poetic form of the heroic deeds of Israel's notable leaders.

w) There is no question about the omnipotence and authority of God at whose command the earth, rotating at a speed of 1000 miles per hour, would immediately stand still; but there is a question about the significance of having this quoted from The Book of Jasher, a book of poetry in which marvelous achievements were sung with oriental exultation.

five kings who hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah have been found." ¹⁸"Roll large boulders to the mouth of the cave," said Joshua, "and station men by it to guard them. ¹⁹Do not stand there yourselves; pursue your enemies; cut off their rear; do not let them enter their cities; for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand." ²⁰When Joshua and the Israelites had finished slaughtering them in a huge battle in which they wiped them out — only those who fled had escaped from them by entering the fortified cities — ²¹all the people returned peacefully to Joshua at the camp in Makkedah; and no one dared to say a word against any of the Israelites.

²²Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring me these five kings out of it." ²³They did so, bringing to him these five kings from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. ²⁴When these kings had been brought to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the officers of the armed forces who had accompanied him, "Come up, and put your feet on the necks of these kings." They went up and put their feet upon their necks.^x ²⁵Then Joshua said to them, "Be not afraid or dismayed! Be resolute and strong, for so the LORD will treat all your enemies with whom you go to war." ²⁶Afterward, Joshua struck the captives and slew them, then hung their bodies on five trees, where they were suspended until evening. ²⁷At sundown, Joshua issued the order, so they took their bodies down from the trees and threw them in the cave where they had hidden themselves. Over the mouth of the cave they put large boulders, which remain there until this day.

²⁸That same day Joshua captured Makkedah, and, ravaging it and the king with the sword, he destroyed both of them together with all the in-

habitants, none of whom were spared. He treated the king of Makkedah as he had treated the king of Jericho.

²⁹Then together with all Israel, Joshua passed from Makkedah to Libnah, which he attacked. ³⁰The LORD also delivered it and its king into the hand of Israel. Joshua ravaged it and all its inhabitants with the sword; none of them were spared. He treated the king as he had treated the king of Jericho. ³¹Then together with all Israel, Joshua passed from Libnah to Lachish. After making camp there, he attacked it, ³²and the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel. Joshua captured it on the second day^y and wielded the sword against it and all its inhabitants just as he did to Libnah. ³³Then Horam king of Gezer^z came to help Lachish; but Joshua fought against him and his troops until he had not a man left. ³⁴Joshua together with all Israel moved from Lachish to Eglon. After making camp there, he attacked it. ³⁵On that same day, he captured it and wielded the sword against it. He destroyed all the inhabitants that day, as he had done with Lachish. ³⁶Joshua together with all Israel moved from Eglon to Hebron and attacked it. ³⁷When they captured it, they ravaged it with the sword, its king, its suburbs and all their inhabitants, sparing no one, as they had done to Eglon. They destroyed it and all its inhabitants.

1405-1404 B. C.(a)

³⁸Then Joshua, together with all Israel turned back to Debir and attacked it. ³⁹When they had captured the city, its king, and all its suburbs, they wielded the sword against them, destroying all its inhabitants; they spared no one. They treated Debir and its king as they had Hebron and Libnah and their kings.

⁴⁰Joshua conquered the whole country, the mountains, the southland,^b the sea plain, the foothills, and all their kings. He spared no one but destroyed every breathing creature, as the LORD God of Israel had ordered.^c ⁴¹From

t) An eastern custom, demonstrating complete dominance.

y) Lachish was the best fortified city in the Amorite league.

z) Apparently Joshua never conquered Gezer; for it remained a Canaanite stronghold long after his time (ch. 16:10; Judg. 1:29).

a) The datings between 1406 and 1400 are approximate; but definitely in that period.

b) The Negeb. c) When man works harmoniously with God, there is no limit to his achievements.

Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, Joshua overcame them and from the entire territory of Goshen^d to Gibeon. ⁴²He captured all these kings and their lands in one campaign, for the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. ⁴³Then Joshua together with all Israel returned to their camp at Gilgal.

1404-1403 B. C.

11 WHEN JABIN KING OF HAZOR heard these things, he sent to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, ²and to the kings in the mountains to the north, in the desert south of Chinneroth, on the sea plain, and in the uplands of Dor to the west — ³the Canaanites in the east and in the west, the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the mountains, and the Hivites at the base of Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. ⁴They came forth in mass with all their troops, as numerous as the sand on the seashore, with an immense number of horses and chariots.^e ⁵When all these kings had made an agreement, they came and camped together by the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶Be not afraid of them,^f the LORD said to Joshua. For tomorrow at this time I shall deliver them all, slain, to Israel; you must hamstring their horses^g and burn their chariots. ⁷Then Joshua with all the soldiers came upon them by surprise at the waters of Merom and attacked them. ⁸When the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, they defeated them and pursued them as far as the greater Sidon,^h Misrephoth-maim,ⁱ and the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they kept on killing them until none were left. ⁹Joshua treated them as the LORD had said; he

hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots.

¹⁰Then Joshua turned back, captured Hazor,^j and slew its king with the sword; for Hazor had been the head of all these kingdoms. ¹¹He destroyed every living being in it with the sword, no breathing creature survived, and he burned Hazor. ¹²When Joshua had captured all the cities of these kings and the kings themselves, he ravaged them with the sword as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. ¹³However, Israel did not burn any city which stood upon a hill,^k except Hazor, which alone Joshua burned. ¹⁴The Israelites took all the spoils of these cities together with the livestock, but they massacred every person with the sword until they had annihilated them; they did not spare a soul. ¹⁵What the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, Moses commanded Joshua; and Joshua carried it out without deviating in any respect from all that the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁶Joshua took this whole land:^l the mountains, all the southland, the whole land of Goshen, the sea plain, the desert, the mountains of Israel and its plains ¹⁷from Mount Halak,^m which stands opposite Seir, as far as Baalgadⁿ in the valley of Lebanon at the base of Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and put them to death.

¹⁸Joshua made war against these kings for a long time.^o ¹⁹There was not a city which made a peace treaty with the Israelites, except the Hivites living in Gibeon. They took them all in war, ²⁰because their determination to wage war with Israel came from the LORD, in order that Israel might destroy them without showing mercy; then they

d) A city in the hill country of Judah.

e) Josephus' figures may be exaggerated, but he tells of 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 20,000 war chariots (Antiquities V 1:12). The Israelites had only infantry.

f) This army was larger than that of the five Amorite kings, which Israel had conquered in the south.

g) By cutting their leg tendons, the horses would no longer be fit for military service. Israel must not develop cavalry (Deut. 17:16; II Samuel 8:4), lest they should trust in horses for their help, rather than in God (Isa. 31: 1, 3).

h) Sidon on the coast north of Tyre, a metropolis of Phoenicia.

i) Literally, "Burnings by the sea"; probably the site of smelting pits or salt basins.

j) Hazor was later recaptured by the Canaanites (Judg. 4:1-3).

k) Cities built on mounds formed by the ruins of earlier cities could be securely fortified because of their elevation. Joshua did not destroy them, because they were excellent sites for Israelite settlement. l) See ch. 10:41.

m) "Bare mountain." n) The site of a shrine for Gad, the god of fortune.

o) Altogether seven years.

might be annihilated, just as the LORD commanded Moses.

²¹At that time, Joshua went forth and annihilated the Anakim^p throughout the mountain regions, including Hebron, Debir, Anab, and all the mountain country of Judah and Israel.^q He destroyed them along with their cities. ²²There were no Anakim left in the land of the Israelites, except those who remained in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

²³Joshua took over the whole land, in accordance with all the LORD had said to Moses. Then Joshua granted it for a permanent possession to Israel, to each tribe its share;^r and the land had rest from war.^s

1406 B. C.

12 THESE ARE THE KINGS OF THE land on the east side of the Jordan^t whom the Israelites had defeated and whose land they acquired from the Arnon valley to Mount Hermon, including all the desert to the east: ²Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, whose dominion extended from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley and the middle of the valley over the half of Gilead which reaches to the Jabbok valley, the border of the Ammonites, ³including the desert to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward and to the Arabah or Salt Sea eastward toward Beth-jeshimoth and southward to the slopes of Pisgah; ⁴the territory of Og king of Bashan, one of the surviving Rephaim,^u who inhabited Ashtaroth and Edrei, ⁵whose dominion extended from Mount Hermon, Salecah, and all Bashan to the Geshurite and Maacathite border and over the half of Gilead, which reaches to the border of Sihon king of Heshbon. ⁶When Moses,

the servant of the LORD, and the Israelites had defeated them, Moses, the servant of the LORD,^v granted this territory to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁷These are the kings of the land on the west side of the Jordan, whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which stands opposite Seir.^w (To the tribes of Israel, to each according to its share, Joshua granted this land, ⁸the mountains, the maritime plain, the desert, the foothills, the wilderness, and the southland, all of which had been inhabited by the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites): ⁹the king of Jericho, the king of Ai which is near Bethel, ¹⁰the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, ¹¹the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, ¹²the king of Eglon, the king of Gezer, ¹³the king of Debir, the king of Geder, ¹⁴the king of Hormah, the king of Arad, ¹⁵the king of Libnah, the king of Adullam, ¹⁶the king of Makkedah, the king of Bethel, ¹⁷the king of Tappuah, the king of Hopher, ¹⁸the king of Aphek, the king of Lasharon, ¹⁹the king of Madon, the king of Hazor, ²⁰the king of Shimron-meron, the king of Achshaph, ²¹the king of Taanach, the king of Megiddo, ²²the king of Kedesh, the king of Jokneam in Carmel, ²³the king of Dor in the uplands of Dor, the king of Goyim in Gilgal,^x ²⁴the king of Tirzah: thirty-one kings in all.

1399 B. C.

13 WHEN JOSHUA HAD BECOME OLD with the passing of years, the LORD said to him: You have grown old with the passing of years, and still

p) These were the giants feared by Moses' spies (Num. 13:33).

q) Later Hebron and Debir were recaptured by the Anakim. Caleb finally conquered them (ch. 15:14).

r) As determined by lot (Num. 34:13).

s) Although large scale conflict ended, local resistance continued for a long time. However, Joshua accomplished what the LORD had commanded; the domination of the nations in Palestine was ended and that of the Israelites had begun. It remained for each tribe individually to exterminate the remaining elements of resistance (Ex. 23:28-33).

t) Transjordan. u) Men of unusually large stature, who were an aboriginal race of Palestine and of the country east of Jordan. Despite their formidable size, they were often victims of conquest (Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:10-12, 20:23).

v) A phrase often repeated, for only as God's servant could Moses lead to victory.

w) From north to south.

x) This Gilgal is not to be identified with either the Gilgal near Jericho or the one near Bethel. It was probably located south of Carmel, 42 miles north of Jerusalem.

much land remains to be taken. ²The land remaining is the whole territory of the Philistines and all that the Geshurites,³ which is considered Canaanite,² from Shihor^a next to Egypt north to the region of Ekron. There are five Philistine principalities,^b the Gazite, the Ashdodite, the Ashkelonite, the Gittite, and the Ekronite, besides the Avvim^c to the south. Then there is all the land of the Canaanites from Mearah, which belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek near the border of the Amorites,^d and the land of the Gebalites,^e and all Lebanon eastward from Baalgad at the base of Mount Hermon to the entrance of Hamath.^f ⁶All those who live in the mountains from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim, that is, all the Sidonians, I will drive out for the sake of the Israelites; allot it to Israel now, as I have commanded you. ⁷Distribute^g this land for a permanent possession to the nine tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁸With the other half tribe of Manasseh the Reubenites and Gadites had received their portion which Moses granted them on the eastern side of the Jordan, because Moses the servant of the Lord had already granted it to them. ⁹It extended from Aroer, on the edge of the Arnon valley, and the city near the center of the valley, across the whole plain between Medeba and Dibon, ¹⁰including all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, to the border of the Ammonites, ¹¹and Gilead and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites and all Mount Hermon, all Bashan to Salekah; ¹²all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei and was one of the surviving Rephaim.

Moses had defeated and driven out these peoples, ¹³but the Israelites did not drive out the Geshurites nor the Maacathites; so Geshur and Maacath live in the midst of Israel to this day.

¹⁴Only to the tribe of Levi he did not grant a heritage; the sacrifices to the Lord God of Israel were their portion, as He had told them.^h

¹⁵Moses had made a grant to the tribe of the Reubenites by families. ¹⁶To them went the territory from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley, and the city in the center of the valley, across the whole plain beyond Medeba ¹⁷to Heshbon, with all the cities on the plain: Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baalmeon, ¹⁸Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mepha-ath, ¹⁹Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill which is in the valley, ²⁰Bethpeor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Bethjesimoth — ²¹all the cities of the plateau, and the whole kingdom of Sihonⁱ king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, whom Moses defeated together with the commanders of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the vassals of Sihon, who lived in the land. ²²The Israelites also slew with the sword Balaam the diviner, son of Beor, among those who were killed by them.^j ²³The boundary of the Reubenites was the Jordan. All this was the heritage of the Reubenites for their families, including both the cities and their suburbs.

²⁴Moses had made an assignment to the tribe of Gad, to the Gadites for their families. ²⁵Their territory included Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is opposite Rabbah, ²⁶from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the

y) A small tribe in the desert near the Egyptian border.

z) Although this area was currently held by the Philistines, it was originally Canaanite territory and thus part of Israel's domain.

a) Shihor usually refers to the Nile, but here it applies to the brook of Egypt.

b) Philistia was a confederacy of five city-states.

c) The Avvim were a pre-Canaanite people who had survived the Philistine conquest of western Palestine. d) Apparently some Amorite people had settled north of Palestine, while their nation dwelt east of the Jordan. e) Gebal is the ancient Byblus.

f) The northern domain of the Canaanites extended north of Sidon to Aphek on the coastal plain and to the entrance of Hamath, located on the river Orontes in the Lebanon valley. The gorge between Lebanon and Hermon is believed to be the entrance of Hamath.

g) Although the conquest of Canaan was not yet complete, the distribution of the land gave the Israelites a sense of success which might spur them on as tribes to finish their task.

h) Num. 18. i) That is, the whole southern portion of the kingdom of Sihon. See vs. 27.

j) Num. 31:8.

boundary of Debir; ²⁷and in the valley^k Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, the Jordan and its area up to the end of the Sea of Chinnereth^l on the eastern side of the Jordan. ²⁸This became the heritage of the Gadites for their families, both the cities and their suburbs.

²⁹Moses had also made an assignment to the half tribe of Manasseh for its own families.^m ³⁰Their territory extended from Mahanaim over all Bashan, the whole kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and included all the tent dwellings of Jair which are in Bashan, being sixty settlements. ³¹Half of Gilead, Ashtaroth and Edrei, cities in the kingdom of Og in Bashan, went to the descendants of Machir the son of Manasseh, to half of the Machirites for their families. ³²These were the allocations that Moses made on the plains of Moab across the Jordan, east of Jericho. ³³But Moses did not grant a heritage to the tribe of Levi, because, as he told them, the LORD God of Israel is their heritage.

1399 B.C.

14 THESE ARE THE HERITAGES which the Israelites received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the paternal heads of the tribes of Israelⁿ allotted to them ²by the lot of heritage, as the LORD had ordered by the ministry of Moses for the nine and a half tribes. ³For Moses had granted the heritage of the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan; but he had not granted to the Levites a heritage among them ⁴because the descendants of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, accounted for two tribes.^o Therefore they did not grant an allotment in the land to the Levites, except cities to live in and

their pasture lands for their herds and flocks. ⁵The Israelites did as the LORD had commanded Moses, when they distributed the land.

⁶Certain ones from Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal; and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite^p said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses, the man of God, concerning you and me, at Kadesh-barnea.^q ⁷I was forty years of age when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back a report to him according to my convictions. ⁸My kinsmen who went up with me disheartened the people, but I followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly. ⁹On that day Moses said under oath, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be a heritage for you and for your descendants forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.'^r ¹⁰Now the LORD has sustained me, as He said, these forty-five years,^s since the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel was traveling in the desert. Today I am eighty-five years old. ¹¹Yet I am still as strong as I was the day when Moses sent me out; I am as strong now as I was then, for war, and for going and coming.^t ¹²So, give me this mountain region, as the LORD said that day. Although you heard that day that the Anakim were there and their cities were fortified with stone, we hope that the LORD will be with me, and I shall oust them, as the LORD said."

¹³Joshua then blessed Caleb the son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron for a heritage. ¹⁴So it came about that Hebron has been the heritage of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite until this day; it was because he followed the LORD God of Israel wholeheartedly. ¹⁵Hebron was formerly the city of

k) The Jordan valley. l) Lake of Galilee.

m) Lots were cast by tribes at Moses' direction (Num. 26:55, 56).

n) Num. 34:16-29. o) Compare ch. 18:1-7.

p) Kenaz is an Edomite tribe. Caleb is associated with Judah [Num. 13:6; 34:19] because the Kenizzite and Judahite strains were blended by marriage. But cf. I Chron. 2:4, 5, 18, 19; 4:13-15.

q) Num. 13 and 14; Deut. 1:34-38.

r) As a spy, Caleb had in 1444 B.C. visited the Anakim (Deut. 1:28). Then Moses promised him the region he had visited (Deut. 1:36).

s) 45 years after 1444 B.C. brings this date to 1399 B.C.

t) We have here no "Thus says the LORD," but expression of strong and healthy feeling. God had marvelously preserved Caleb.

Arba, named after one who had been great among the Anakim. Then the land had rest from war.

1399 B. C.

15 THE PORTION THAT WENT TO the tribe of Judah for their families extended to the border of Edom in the wilderness of Zin in the Negeb on the southern end. ²Their southern boundary^u ran from the edge of the Salt Sea at the south bay ³southward to the slopes of Scorpion Pass, then through Zin south of Kadesh-barnea, curving back to Karka through Hezron and Addar, ⁴then past Azmon, and along the brook of Egypt out to the sea. This will be your southern border. ⁵Their eastern border was the Salt Sea to the mouth of the Jordan. Their boundary on the north runs from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan ⁶up to Beth-hoglah, then north of Beth-arabah up to the stone of Bohan^v son of Reuben, ⁷on to Debir in the valley of Achor, then turning north to Gilgal^w opposite the slopes of Adummim which are on the south side of the valley. Further the border passes along to the waters of En-shemesh and ends at En-rogel. ⁸Then the border runs up the valley of the son of Hinnom to the south side of the Jebusites, which is Jerusalem, up to the top of the mountain which faces the valley of Hinnom,^x on the west, at the edge of the valley of Rephaim to the north. ⁹Then the border curves around from the top of the mountain to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, then on to the cities of Mount Ephron where it curves around Baalah, which is Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁰Then the border turns westward from Baalah to Mount Seir,^y running past the north side of Mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, and on down to Beth-she-mesh, then through Timnah ¹¹to the

north side of Ekron around Shikkeron past Mount Baalah on to Jabneel and out to the sea. ¹²The western border is the shore line of the Great Sea. This is the border of the tribe of Judah surrounding the territory belonging to their families.

¹³According to the LORD's instruction to Joshua, he gave Caleb son of Jephunneh an allotment among the Judahites, namely the City of Arba, the father of Anak, which is now Hebron. ¹⁴So Caleb^z ousted from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the offspring of Anak. ¹⁵From there he went to the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher.

¹⁶"To whoever attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it," announced Caleb, "I will give Achsah my daughter for a wife." ¹⁷Othniel, a Kenizzite and relative^a of Caleb, captured it; so he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife. ¹⁸Upon her arrival, she persuaded him to ask for a field from her father. And when she dismounted from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What is your desire?"

¹⁹"Give me a blessing," she said, "and since you have given me dry southland, give me water springs, too." So he gave her the upper and lower springs.

²⁰This is the heritage of the tribe of Judah^b for their families. ²¹The cities of the Judah tribe from the frontier on the border of Edom on the south were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²²Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵Hazor-hadattah, Keriath-hezron, which is Hazor, ²⁶Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, ²⁸Hazar-shual, Beer-sheba, Biziothiah, ²⁹Baalath, Iim, Ezem, ³⁰Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, ³¹Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah,

u) The southern border of Judah was identical with the southern border of Canaan (Num. 34:1-5). v) An unidentified site which commemorated a hero from the tribe of Reuben.

w) Not the Gilgal which was the site of Israel's first camp in Canaan (ch. 4:19). It is the Geliath of ch. 18:17.

x) Later, human sacrifice was practiced in this valley in the worship of Moloch (II Kings 23:10; II Chron. 28:3; 33:6; Jer. 7:31). The Hebrew "Ge-Hinnom" became the Greek "Gehenna," the place of eternal torment (Matthew 5:29, 30). y) Not the Mount Seir in Edom.

z) Joshua had previously exterminated the Anakim and destroyed their cities (ch. 11:21-23).

a) According to Judges 1:13, Othniel was a son of Caleb's younger half brother.

b) Judah's territory included four distinct regions: the Negeb in the south, the maritime plain in the west, the mountainous central area, and the desert in the east.

³²Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. In all there were twenty-nine^c cities with their suburbs.

³³On the sea plain, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴Zanoah, Engannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶Sharaim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim: fourteen cities and their suburbs.

³⁷Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, ³⁸Dilean, Mizpeh, Joktheel, ³⁹Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, ⁴⁰Cabbon, Lahmam, Chitlish, ⁴¹Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah—sixteen cities and their suburbs.

⁴²Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³Iphtah, Asnah, Nezi, ⁴⁴Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah—nine cities and their suburbs.

⁴⁵Ekrone with its villages and suburbs; ⁴⁶all the towns between Ekron and the sea, all that were by the side of Ashdod with their suburbs.

⁴⁷Ashdod with its villages and suburbs, Gaza with its hamlets and suburbs, as far as the brook of Egypt and the coast of the Great Sea.

⁴⁸In the mountains, Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, ⁴⁹Dannah, Kiriath-sannah, which is Debir, ⁵⁰Anab, Eshtemoah, Anim, ⁵¹Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—eleven cities and their suburbs.

⁵²Arab, Dumah, Eshan, ⁵³Janum, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴Humtah, Kiriath-arba, which is Hebron, and Zior—nine cities and their suburbs.

⁵⁵Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷Kain, Gibeah, and Timmah—ten cities and their suburbs.

⁵⁸Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon—six cities with their suburbs.

⁶⁰Kiriath-baal, which is Kiriath-jear-

im, and Rabbah^d—two cities and their suburbs.

⁶¹In the desert, Beth-arabah, Mid-din, Secacah, ⁶²Nibshan, the City of Salt, and Engedi—six cities and their suburbs.

⁶³However, Judah was not able to expel the Jebusites who inhabit Jerusalem, so they live with Judah in Jerusalem to this day.^e

1399-1398 B. C.

16 THEN THE LOT OF THE DESCENDANTS OF JOSEPH came up. (Its border runs) from the Jordan opposite Jericho^f to the waters of Jericho in the east and through the desert^g from Jericho to Beth-el in the mountains. ²From Beth-el (Luz)^h it runs on to the territory of the Archites at Ataroth ³and westward down to the territory of the Japhletites, on to the territory of lower Beth-horon, to Gezer, and it ends at the sea.ⁱ

⁴Manasseh and Ephraim, the descendants of Joseph, received a heritage. ⁵This is the territory of the Ephraimites, which belongs to their families. The border of their heritage runs from Ataroth-addar on the east to Upper Beth-horon^j ⁶and on out to the sea. Michmethath is on the north. Then on the east the border curves round to Taanathshiloh, and eastward to Janoah, ⁷then down from Janoah past Ataroth^k to Naarah, and after touching at Jericho,^l it goes out to the Jordan.

⁸The border runs from Tappuah west along the river Kanah and out to the sea. This is the heritage of the tribe of the Ephraimites for their families.

⁹There are also the separate cities located within the heritage of the Manassites, which belong to the Ephraimites, all these cities and their suburbs.

g) In the following passage, the differences between the number of cities listed and the totals cited are due to inclusion or exclusion of suburbs or hamlets.

h) The location of Rabbah is unknown, but it is not to be identified with the Rabbah of ch. 13:25.

i) Although Jerusalem was located in the territory of Benjamin (ch. 18:28), Judah conquered and burned it after Joshua's death (Judg. 1:8). But apparently the Jebusites rebuilt it, because later the Benjamites were unable to oust them (Judg. 1:21). Jerusalem was not finally conquered by the Israelites until the time of David (II Samuel 5:6-10). f) Jericho itself was not included

j) The desert of Beth-aven east of Beth-el.

k) The name of Beth-el was formerly Luz (Gen. 28:19; Josh. 18:13; Judg. 1:23).

l) The Mediterranean.

m) In describing the southern border of the tribes of Joseph, upper Beth-horon is mentioned in vs. 5 and lower Beth-horon in vs. 3. These places were closely situated.

n) Not the Ataroth mentioned in vss. 2, 5. 1) Specifically, at the waters of Jericho. See vs. 1.

¹⁰However they did not expel the Canaanites living in Gezer;^m so to this day the Canaanites live in the midst of Ephraim; but they have become bond servants.

1399-1398 B. C.^r

17 THEN THERE WAS THE LOT FOR the tribe of Manasseh, because he was the first-born of Joseph. To Machir, the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war, Gilead and Bashan had been allotted; ²also for the families of the rest of the Manassites, namely, the Abiezrites,ⁿ Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Hephherites, and Shemidaite — these were the families of the male descendants of Manasseh the son of Joseph.

³Zelophehad the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh,^o had no sons but only daughters. These were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴They met with Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the officers, and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our kinsmen."^p So they gave them an inheritance among their father's kinsmen as the LORD said. ⁶Thus there turned out to be ten portions of Manasseh, besides the territory of Gilead and Bashan on the other side of the Jordan, ⁶because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance among his sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the other Manassites.

⁷The border of Manasseh runs from Asher to Michmethath, which lies east of Shechem; then it goes southward to the inhabitants of En-Tappuah. ⁸The territory of Tappuah belongs to Manasseh, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belongs to the Ephraimites. ⁹The border runs down the river

Kanah and to the south of it. The cities here, among the cities of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the border runs along the north side of the river and ends at the sea. ¹⁰The south side belongs to Ephraim, the north side to Manasseh, and the sea is their border. They extend to Asher in the north and to Issachar in the east. ¹¹In Issachar and Asher, Manasseh owns Beth-shean with its villages, Ibleam with its villages, the inhabitants of Dor^q with its villages, the inhabitants of En-dor with its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach with its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo with its villages — the third city is Naphath. ¹²The Manassites could not take possession of these cities because the Canaanites were determined to live in this territory. ¹³Although the Israelites were strong enough to make the Canaanites servants, they could not expel them completely.

¹⁴The Josephites said to Joshua, "Why did you give us an inheritance consisting of one lot — one portion — seeing that we have such a large population because the LORD has thus far blessed us?"

¹⁵"If you have such a large population," replied Joshua, "go up to the forest and clear a place for yourselves in the region of the Perizzites and Rephaim, since the mountains of Ephraim are not sufficient for you."

¹⁶"The mountains are not sufficient for us," said the Josephites, "but all the Canaanites who live in the lowlands, both in Beth-shean and its villages and in the valley of Jezreel, have iron chariots."^s

¹⁷Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You have a large population and great strength. You shall not have only one portion." ¹⁸The mountain country will be yours. Although it is forest, you

m) Gezer was conquered by the king of Egypt, who gave it to Solomon as a dowry (I Kings 9:16).

n) Gideon's clan (Judg. 6:11, 24).

o) Joshua's conquest of Palestine occurred around 1400 B.C. About 350 years must have elapsed between the lifetimes of Manasseh and Zelophehad's daughters. It is therefore notable that Zelophehad's genealogy is in accord with the estimated chronology of current archeologists.

p) Num. 27:1-11; 36:5-13.

q) Dor is specifically identified as Naphath-dor, near the west coast, 9 miles north of later Caesarea.

r) Again the datings are approximate; but we know that further conquests and distributions took place between 1400 and 1395 B.C., and much effort was involved.

s) The chariots were wooden and plated with iron.

t) Joshua encourages them to make full use of what they were given; he does not give them an additional allotment.

will clear it, and it will be yours in its entirety, because you will expel the Canaanites, even though they have iron chariots and are strong."

1398-1397 B.C.

18 THE WHOLE ISRAELITE CON-
gregation assembled at Shiloh^u where they set up the tabernacle;^v for the region that lay about them had been conquered. ²There remained seven tribes among the Israelites to whom their inheritance had not been distributed. ³So Joshua said to the Israelites, "How long will you fail to go out and take possession of the land, which the LORD God of your fathers has given you? ⁴Select three men from each tribe,^w and I shall commission them to go throughout the land to make a description of it^x to determine their inheritance. Then they will return to me. ⁵They will divide it into seven portions. Judah's boundaries remain in the south and the territory of the house of Joseph in the north.^y ⁶Make a description of the land in seven portions, and bring it to me. I shall cast lots for you here, in accordance with the decree of the LORD your God. ⁷There is no portion for the Levites among you because the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance.^z Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance which Moses, the servant of the LORD, granted them on the east side of the Jordan."

⁸When the men stepped forward to go, Joshua charged them to make a description of the land. "Go throughout the land, and make a description of it. Then return to me here, and I shall cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh." ⁹The men departed and traveled throughout the land, recording a description of it with regard to its cities and the seven portions. After-

ward they returned to Joshua at the camp in Shiloh. ¹⁰When Joshua cast lots for them at Shiloh before the LORD, he distributed the land to the Israelites, according to their divisions.

¹¹The lot for the families of the Benjamin tribe came up. Their allotted territory lies between the Judahites and the Josephites. ¹²On the north side, their border runs up from the Jordan to the northern slope of Jericho, then westward into the mountains, and it ends at the desert of Bethaven. ¹³From there it runs toward Luz, which is Beth-el, to its southern slope, where it descends past Ataroth-adar to the mountain which is south of Lower Beth-horon. ¹⁴Then the border veers and curves westward south of the mountain, which faces Beth-horon on the south. It ends at Kiriath-baal, which is Kiriath-yearim, a Judahite city. This is the western side. ¹⁵The southern side runs from the edge of Kiriath-yearim where the border goes westward to the spring of the Waters of Nephthoah. ¹⁶Then it descends to the base of the mountain by the valley of Ben-Hinnom,^a which is north of the valley of Rephaim. It continues down the valley of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusites, and on down to En-rogel. ¹⁷Then veering northward, it goes to En-shemesh and to Geliloth opposite the rise of Adummim, then down to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, ¹⁸where it passes on to the slope facing the Arabah on the north. It then descends to the Arabah, ¹⁹where it passes on to the northern slope of Beth-hoglah and ends at the north bay of the Salt Sea, at the southern end of the Jordan. This is the southern border, ²⁰and the Jordan forms its border on the eastern side. This is the inheritance of the Benjamites with its borders enclosing their families.

u) The tabernacle had been standing at Gilgal. Shiloh was a strategic site in the hill country for defensibility, and central for all the tribes.

v) Israel was more than a nation; it was a religious congregation. Its national shrine was the tent where the people met with God (Ex. 29:42-46). w) From the seven remaining tribes.

x) Arability, water, timber, and terrain were the features noted in the description; so that equitable distribution of the land might be made.

y) Allotments made to Judah and the house of Joseph in the south and north respectively were not to be altered.

z) The Levites were thus scattered throughout Israel to minister to the religious life of all the people.

a) A place near Jerusalem where in idolatrous times children were offered to Moloch (II Chron. 28:3; 33:6). Josiah destroyed it (II Kings 23:10).

²¹The cities which belong to the Benjamites for their families are Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, ²²Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Beth-el,^b ²³Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba — twelve cities with their suburbs. ²⁵Gibeon, Ramah, Beer-oth, ²⁶Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸Zela, Haeleph, the Jebusite (which is Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath-jearim^b — fourteen cities and their suburbs. This is the inheritance of the Benjamites according to their families.

1397-1396 B.C.

19 THE SECOND LOT CAME UP FOR Simeon, for the tribe of the Simeonites, for their families. Their inheritance lay inside the heritage of the Judahites.^c ²Included in their heritage are Beer-sheba, Sheba, Moladah, ³Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴Eltolad, Beth-ul, Hormah, ⁵Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, ⁶Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuh-en — fourteen cities with their suburbs. ⁷Ain Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan — four cities with their suburbs; ⁸and also all the villages around these cities as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the southland. This is the heritage of the tribe of Simeon for its families.

⁹The heritage of the Simeonites was part of the Judahite portion. Since the allotment of the Judahites was too large for them, the Simeonites received their inheritance inside the heritage of Judah.

¹⁰The third lot came up for the Zebulunites, for their families. The territory of their heritage goes as far as Sarid.^d

¹¹Their border goes up westward to Mareal and touches at both Dabbeseth and the river which is by Jokneam. ¹²From Sarid it turns eastward toward the sunrise to the region of Chisloth-tabor ¹³where it goes on to Daberath, then up to Japhia. It moves on from there eastward toward the sunrise to Gath-hepther and Eth-kazin,

then on to Rimmon where it veers to Neah. ¹⁴The border then turns northward to Hannathon and ends at the valley of Iphtahel. ¹⁵Included are Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem^e — twelve cities with their suburbs. ¹⁶This is the inheritance of the Zebulunites for their families — these cities with their suburbs.

¹⁷The fourth lot came up for Issachar, for the Issacharites for their families. ¹⁸Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹Remeth, Engannim, Enhad-dah, and Beth-pazzez. ²²Their border also touches at Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh and ends at the Jordan — sixteen cities with their suburbs. ²³This is the inheritance of the tribe of the Issacharites for their families — the cities with their suburbs.

²⁴The fifth lot came up for the Asherite tribe for their families. ²⁵Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Bet-en, Achshaph, ²⁶Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal. In the west it takes in Carmel and Shihor-libnath. ²⁷It turns eastward to Beth-dagon and reaches to Zebulun along the valley of Iphtah-el northward to Beth-emek and Neiel. Then it goes further north to Kabul. ²⁸Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, and as far as Greater Sidon, ²⁹where it turns to Ramah and on to the fortified city of Tyre,^f then it turns to Hosah and ends at the sea. Included are Mahalab, Achzib, ³⁰Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob — twenty-two cities with their suburbs. ³¹This is the inheritance of the Asherite tribe for its families—these cities with their suburbs.

³²The sixth lot came up for the Naphtalites for their families. ³³Their border runs from Heleph, from the oak in Za-anannim, through Adami-nekeb and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, ending at the Jordan. ³⁴Then the border turns

b) Comp. Josh. 15:6, 61, where Beth-arabah is given to Judah; Josh. 18:13, where Beth-el is given to Benjamin; and Josh. 15:60; 18:14, where Kiriath-jearim is given to Judah, each a town on a boundary line that made them partly located in one tribe and partly in another tribe.

c) Simeon lost its identity when Israel divided into two kingdoms. The southern kingdom included Benjamin mostly and Judah, into which Simeon had been merged, and most of Levi. Compare Gen. 49:7.

d) Although not included in the territory of Zebulun, Sarid, whose exact location is not yet known, was a central point on Zebulun's southern border. The course of the border westward and eastward from Sarid is described in vss. 11 and 12, respectively.

e) Modern Beit-Lahm, 7 miles northwest of Nazareth. f) Not the famous Phoenician Tyre.

westward to Aznoth-tabor, going from there to Hukkok. It touches Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and Judah^g at the Jordan in the east. ³⁵The fortified cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷Kedesh, Edrei, Enhazor, ³⁸Yiron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh^h — nineteen cities with their suburbs. ³⁹This is the inheritance of the Naphtalite tribe for their families — the cities with their suburbs.

⁴⁰The seventh lot came up for the Danite tribe for their families. ⁴¹The territoryⁱ of their inheritance included Zorah, Eshta-ol, Ir-shemesh, ⁴²Sha-alabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, ⁴⁶and Me-jarkon and Rakkon, with the territory by Joppa. ⁴⁷When the territory of the Danites was lost to them, they went up and fought against Lesh-chem. They captured it and ravaged it with the sword; they took possession of it and lived in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan, their ancestor. ⁴⁸This is the inheritance of the tribe of the Danites for their families—these cities with their suburbs.

⁴⁹When they had determined the inheritance of the land by territories, the Israelites granted to Joshua the son of Nun an inheritance amongst theirs. ⁵⁰In accordance with the command of the LORD, they granted him the city he requested, namely, Timnath-serah in the mountains of Ephraim. He built up the city and lived in it.

⁵¹These are the inheritances which Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the ruling elders granted by

lot to the tribes of the Israelites in Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the meeting tent. Thus they completed the allocation of the land.

1396 B. C.

20 THE LORD SAID TO JOSHUA: ²Say to the Israelites, "Establish the cities of refuge, concerning which I spoke to you through Moses,¹ ³so that the manslayer who has killed a person accidentally, without premeditation, may resort there. These will be your refuge from the blood avenger. ⁴Should one resort to one of these cities and, standing at the gate of the city, declare his case at a hearing of the elders of the city, they shall receive him into the city among themselves to give him refuge, and he will live with them. ⁵Even though the blood avenger comes after him, they shall not deliver the manslayer over to him; because he killed his neighbor without premeditation and without hating him beforehand. ⁶He may live in this city until they both appear before the assembly for the trial and until the death of the one who is high priest at the time. Then the manslayer may return to his own city and his own home, even to the city from which he fled."

⁷They set apart Kedesh^k in Galilee in the mountains of Naphtali, Shechem in the mountains of Ephraim, and Kiriat-arba (which is Hebron) in the mountains of Judah. ⁸Across the Jordan east of Jericho, they provided Bezer on the desert plateau from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh.¹

⁹These were the appointed cities for every Israelite and for the alien staying

g) Judah here does not refer to the tribe of Judah but probably to Havvoth-jair, 60 cities in Gilead east of the Jordan. These cities were possessed by Jair, a Manassite on his grandmother's side — hence his inheritance with Manasseh — but a Judahite on his grandfather's side, and lineage normally followed the male line. For this reason Havvoth-jair may have been also known as Judah (Deut. 3:14; 1 Kings 4:13; 1 Chron. 2:3-5,21,22).

h) Not the Beth-shemesh in Issachar (vs. 22), from which the Canaanites were not expelled (Judg. 1:33).

i) Some of the northern cities of Judah and the southern cities of Ephraim were ceded to Dan. Even so it was inadequate for their number, so that half of them migrated northeastward, forming the Dan territory (Judg. 18).

j) Num. 35:9-34; Deut. 19:1-13. Justice was thus assured to the accidental homicide, and the community was protected from the wanton murderer. This procedure replaced the custom, according to which the manslayer resorted to an altar of the LORD (Ex. 21:12-14; 1 Kings 1:50-53; 2:28-34). The most primitive method of dealing with a criminal was unrelenting revenge (Gen. 4:14, 15). k) Judge Barak's home town (Judg. 4:6).

l) One city in each of the north, central, and south zones on both sides of the Jordan was selected (Deut. 4:41-43).

among them; so that anyone who had killed a person accidentally might flee there and not be put to death by the hand of the blood avenger until he had appeared before the assembly.

1396 B. C.

21 THE CHIEF ELDERS OF THE Levites appeared before Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief elders of the tribes of Israel. ²This was in Shiloh in the land of Canaan.

"The LORD gave a command^m through Moses," they said to them, "to grant us cities to live in and their pastures for our herds."ⁿ ³So, in accordance with the instruction of the LORD, the Israelites granted these cities and their pastures to the Levites out of their own inheritances.

⁴The lot for the Kohathite families^o came up. It comprised thirteen cities from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, for the Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest. ⁵Ten cities from the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half tribe of Manasseh went up by lot to the rest of the Kohathite families. ⁶Thirteen cities from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, went by lot to the Gershonite families. ⁷To the Merarite families went twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. ⁸The Israelites granted to the Levites these cities and their pastures by lot, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

⁹From the tribes of the Judahites and Simeonites, they granted these cities specified by name. ¹⁰They were for the Aaronites from the Kohathite branch of the Levites, because the first lot was theirs. ¹¹They granted them Kiriath-arba — (Arba was) the father of Anak — with its surrounding pastures. It is now called Hebron^p and is in the mountains of Judah. ¹²However, they had granted the fields of the city and its suburbs to Caleb the son of Je-

phunneh for his property. ¹³To the descendants of Aaron the priest, they granted the city of refuge for the manslayer, Hebron with its pastures, Libnah with its pastures, ¹⁴Jattir with its pastures, Eshtemoa with its pastures, ¹⁵Holon with its pastures, Debir with its pastures, ¹⁶Ain with its pastures, Juttah with its pastures, and Bethshemesh with its pastures — nine cities from these two tribes. ¹⁷From the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pastures, Geba with its pastures, ¹⁸Anathoth^q with its pastures, and Almon with its pastures — four cities. ¹⁹The total number of cities with their pastures for the descendants of Aaron the priest was thirteen.

²⁰Then cities from the tribe of Ephraim were allotted to the Kohathite branch of the Levites for the remaining Kohathites. ²¹They granted to them the city of refuge for the manslayer, Shechem with its pastures in the mountains of Ephraim, Gezer with its pastures, ²²Kibzaim with its pastures, and Beth-horon with its pastures — four cities.

²³From the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh with its pastures, Gibbethon with its pastures, ²⁴Aijalon with its pastures, and Gath-rimmon with its pastures — four cities. ²⁵From the half tribe of Manasseh, Taanach with its pastures, and Gath-rimmon^r with its pastures — two cities. ²⁶There was a total of ten cities with their pastures for the other Kohathite families.

²⁷To the Gershonite branch of the Levites went the city of refuge for the manslayer, Golan with its pastures in Bashan and Be-eshterah with its pastures, from the half tribe of Manasseh — two cities. ²⁸From the tribe of Issachar, Kishion with its pastures, Daberrath with its pastures, ²⁹Jarmuth with its pastures, and En-gannim with its pastures — four cities. ³⁰From the tribe of Asher, Mishal with its pastures, Abdon with its pastures, ³¹Helkath with its

^m) Num. 35:1-8.

ⁿ) The Levites did not occupy these cities exclusively, but only such living quarters as they required. ^o) For the genealogy of Levi, see Ex. 6:16-25.

^p) "Union" — probably because four villages were consolidated. Mamre was one of them. They were about 20 miles south of Jerusalem. ^q) Famous as Jeremiah's birthplace.

^r) Gath-rimmon was a city in Dan (vs. 24). Ibleam may have stood here originally. See Bileam (1 Chron. 6:70).

pastures, and Rehob with its pastures — four cities. ³²From the tribe of Naphtali, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Kedesh in Galilee with its pastures, Hammoth-dor with its pastures, and Kartan with its pastures — three cities. ³³The total cities of the Gershonites for their families were thirteen and included their pastures.

³⁴To the remaining Levites, the Merarite branch, they granted from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pastures, Kartah with its pastures, ³⁵Dimnah with its pastures and Nahalal with its pastures — four cities. ³⁶From the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with its pastures, Jahazah with its pastures, ³⁷Kedemoth with its pastures, and Mepha-ath with its pastures — four cities.^a ³⁸From the tribe of Gad, the city of refuge for the manslayer, Ramoth in Gilead with its pastures, Mahanaim with its pastures, ³⁹Heshbon with its pastures, and Jazer with its pastures — four cities in all. ⁴⁰All these cities were for the Merarites, the remaining branch of the Levites, by their families. Their allotment was comprised of twelve cities.

⁴¹All the Levite cities were within the holdings of the Israelites and numbered forty-eight cities with their pastures. ⁴²These are the cities, each city with its surrounding pastures. So it was with all these cities.

⁴³The Lord gave Israel the whole land which He promised their fathers to give them. They took possession of it and lived in it. ⁴⁴The Lord gave them peace on every side, according to all that He had promised their ancestors. None of their enemies could withstand them, because the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hands. ⁴⁵Of all the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel, not one failed; they were all fulfilled.^t

1399 B. C.

22 JOSHUA SUMMONED THE REUBENITES, THE GADITES, AND THE

half tribe of Manasseh, ²and said to them, "You have observed all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, and you have obeyed me in all that I have ordered you. ³You have not forsaken your kinsmen, though it has been a long time, even to this day, and you have obediently kept the commandment of the Lord your God. ⁴Now the Lord your God has given peace to your kinsmen, as He had promised them; so depart now, and go to your own tents^u in the land that you possess, which Moses the servant of the Lord granted you on the other side of the Jordan. ⁵Only be very careful to obey the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you. Love the Lord your God; walk in all His ways; observe His commandments; cling to Him and be steadfast with your whole heart and soul." ⁶After blessing them, Joshua discharged them, and they went to their tents.^v

⁷Moses had made a grant to half the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan; so Joshua made a grant to the other half among their kinsmen on the west side of the Jordan. Joshua also sent them^v to their tents when he had blessed them.

⁸"When you return to your tents," he said to them, "with your great wealth and very many cattle, with silver and gold, bronze and iron, and countless garments, share the spoils of your enemies with your kinsmen."

⁹The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh departed from the Israelites in Shiloh in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, the land which belonged to them; for they had taken possession of it, according to the Lord's command through Moses. ¹⁰When they came to the district of the Jordan which is in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh built an altar there near the Jordan, a large altar to draw attention.

^a) Vss. 36, 37 are similar to I Chronicles 6:63, 64.

^t) Although Canaanites still remained in the land, their strength was so diminished that they would have been powerless to defend themselves against complete extermination, had this been Israel's concerted purpose. ^u) Their permanent homes east of the Jordan.

^v) The Manassites of Bashan.

¹¹The Israelites were told, "The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar in the land of Canaan in the district of the Jordan on the side of the Israelites."

¹²When the Israelites heard this, their whole congregation assembled at Shiloh, to march against them in war.

¹³Then the Israelites sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest into the land of Gilead to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

¹⁴Ten men accompanied him, one from each ruling house in every tribe in Israel, and each was the chief of his house, ruling over the tribes of Israel.

¹⁵When they came to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead, they said to them,

¹⁶"The whole congregation of the LORD inquires, 'Why have you committed this transgression against the God of Israel, turning away from the LORD now, by building an altar' in rebellion against Him? ¹⁷Have we not had enough of the sin of Peor, from which we have not yet rid ourselves and because of which a plague fell upon the congregation of the LORD,^y

¹⁸that today you have turned away from the LORD? Since you have rebelled against the LORD today, tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel.^z ¹⁹Now if the land of your possession is unclean,^a cross over to the land which the LORD possesses, where His tabernacle stands, and take possession among us. But neither rebel against the LORD nor against us, by building any altar for yourselves, besides the altar of the LORD our God. ²⁰Did not Achan^b the son of Zerah commit a transgression against the devoted portion, so that anger fell upon the whole congregation of Israel? That man did not die alone because of his wickedness."^c

²¹In reply, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh

said to the tribal leaders of Israel, ²²"The Mighty One, God the LORD, the Mighty One, God the LORD, Himself understands, and may Israel itself understand. Do not spare us today, if in rebellion or transgression against the LORD ²³we built the altar to turn away from the LORD. If it was to put burnt offerings and food offerings upon it and to perform the sacrifices of thanksgiving upon it, may the LORD Himself bring retribution. ²⁴It was because of concern that we did this. 'Hereafter,' we said, 'your descendants may say to ours, "What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel?' ²⁵The LORD made the Jordan a boundary between you, the Reubenites and the Gadites, and ourselves. You have no portion with the LORD."^c Thus your descendants might make our descendants cease revering the LORD. ²⁶So we said, "Let us build ourselves an altar, not for burnt offering nor for sacrifice, ²⁷but for a testimony between you and us, and between our descendants after us, for the perpetual performance of the service of the LORD in His presence with our burnt offerings, sacrifices, and thank offerings; so your descendants will not say to ours hereafter, 'You have no portion in the LORD.'" ²⁸So we said, "If it ever occurs, that they say this to us or to our descendants hereafter, then we shall reply, 'See the design of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, though neither for burnt offering nor sacrifice. It is a testimony between ourselves and you.'" ²⁹Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD and turn away from Him this day by building an altar for burnt offerings, food offerings, and sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God, which is in front of His tabernacle."^c

³⁰Phinehas the priest, the leaders of the congregation and the chiefs of the tribes of Israel which were with him, heard the words which the Reubenites,

w) Each of the nine and a half western tribes was represented by a delegate.

x) The building of this second altar would have violated the law of Deut. 12:1-14, had it been for sacrifices. It should have been called a monument.

y) Num. 25:1-9. The moral and spiritual effects of that incident still infected Israel and were the cause of chronic defection throughout its history.

z) The concept of collective responsibility for individual failure greatly influenced the religious thought of Israel and of the New Testament church.

a) All lands not sanctified by the manifest Presence of God were considered unclean. b) Ch. 7. c) At this time the official altar stood at Shiloh (ch. 18:1).

the Gadites, and the Manassites spoke, and they seemed reasonable to them. ³¹So Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the Manassites, "Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed this transgression against the LORD. Consequently, you have spared the Israelites from the hand of the LORD."

³²Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites in the land of Gilead to the Israelites in the land of Canaan; and they gave them a report on the matter. ³³It seemed reasonable to the Israelites; so they praised God and did not order the troops to march against them to destroy the land, in which the Reubenites and the Gadites lived.

³⁴The Reubenites and the Gadites named the altar: "A witness between us that the LORD is God."^d

1395 B. C.

23 AFTER A LONG TIME, THE LORD gave Israel peace with all their enemies in the surrounding area. Joshua was old and ripe with age, ²so he summoned^e all Israel, its elders, chiefs, judges, and officers,^f and said to them, "I am old and ripe with age. ³You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these nations in your behalf, for the LORD your God is the One who has fought for you. ⁴Besides all the nations which I have cut down from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west, I have allotted to you those nations remaining within the inheritances which belong to your tribes.^g ⁵The LORD your God Himself will push them back and expel them for you, and you may take possession of their land, as the LORD your God promised you. ⁶Be very resolute in observing and practicing every precept in the book of the Law of Moses. Do not turn from it to the right or left.

⁷"Do not associate with those nations which are still among you; neither take thought of the names of their gods, nor swear by them, and do not serve them or pay homage to them, ⁸but cling to the LORD your God as you have until this day.^h ⁹The LORD has thrust great and powerful nations out of your way, and to this day none withstands you. ¹⁰One of you put a thousand to flight because the LORD your God Himself fought for you, as He has promised. ¹¹Be very careful to love the LORD your God, ¹²for if you turn away and join with the rest of these nations which are still among you, intermarrying with them and associating together, ¹³be very sure that the LORD your God will not continue to drive back these nations in your behalf. They will become a trap and a snare to you, a whip in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good country which the LORD your God gave you.

¹⁴"Today I am going the way of all the earth; and you know with all your hearts and souls that not one of all the good promises which the LORD your God made to you has failed. They all came to pass for you; not one of them has failed. ¹⁵But just as every good promise which the LORD your God made to you has come to pass for you, so He will carry out every warning upon you until He has destroyed you from this good land which He has given you. ¹⁶Should you break the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, to follow and serve other gods and to pay homage to them, the LORD will burn with anger against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land which He gave you."ⁱ

1394 B. C.

24 JOSHUA CALLED TOGETHER ALL the tribes of Israel at Shechem.^j When he had summoned the elders of

d) This altar of testimony is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. It had been built west of the Jordan and near it; see vs. 11.

e) Joshua summoned the officials either to Timnath-serah, where he resided (ch. 19:50), or to Shiloh, where the tabernacle stood.

f) All those summoned were elders; some were tribal leaders, some were judges, and some were civil officials. g) Ch. 13:2-6. h) National faithfulness is specially in view.

i) Lev. 26:14-26; Deut. 28:15-68; 29:16-28.

j) Shechem was a historic site. Here the LORD first promised Canaan to Abram (Gen. 12:6, 7); here Jacob destroyed the idols which his retinue brought from Mesopotamia (Gen. 35:2-5); here the Law of Moses was officially put in force in the land of Canaan (ch. 8:30-35).

Israel, the chiefs, the judges, and the officers, they stood before God,² and Joshua addressed the people: "This is what the LORD God of Israel says: Long ago your ancestors lived beyond the river.^k Terah was the father of Abraham and Nahor;^l but they served other gods.³ So I took your ancestor Abraham from beyond the river and led him through the whole land of Canaan,^m and I multiplied his offspring by giving him Isaac.ⁿ Then to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau.^o I gave Esau the mountains of Seir to possess,^p but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.^q Then I sent Moses and Aaron and brought a plague upon Egypt, with what I did among them;^r afterwards I brought you out.^s When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, you came to the sea,^t and the Egyptians chased your fathers in chariots and on horseback to the Red Sea.^u You cried out to the LORD, and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians. Then He caused the sea to cover them and drown them.^v Your own eyes saw what I did to Egypt. Thereafter you lived in the desert for a long time,^w until I brought you to the land of the Amorites, living across the Jordan. When they fought against you, I delivered them up to you, and you took possession of their land, as I destroyed them for you.^x

⁹"When Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, rose up and fought^y against Israel, he sent for Balaam son of Beor to put you under a curse.¹⁰ But when I would not listen to Balaam, he blessed you, and I delivered you from his hand.^x Then you crossed the Jordan, and when you came to Jericho, the inhabitants of Jericho, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites fought against you.

But I delivered them into your hands.¹² I sent the wasp ahead of you, and it drove out before you the two kings of the Amorites without your sword or bow.^y I gave you a land for which you have not labored; you have settled in cities which you have not built; and you eat of orchards and olive trees which you have not planted.

¹⁴"Now then, revere the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and truth. Reject the gods which your ancestors served beyond the river and in Egypt,^z and serve the LORD.¹⁵ However, if it seems wrong in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose today whom you will serve — whether the gods whom your fathers served beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. Nevertheless, I and my house, we shall serve the LORD.¹⁶

¹⁶The people replied, "May it never be that we shall forsake the LORD to serve other gods; ¹⁷because it was the LORD our God Himself who brought us and our ancestors from the land of Egypt, the place of bondage, and because He performed these great miracles before our eyes, protecting us throughout our whole journey, from all the peoples through whom we passed. ¹⁸Furthermore, the LORD drove out before us the Amorites and all the peoples, the men of the land. We, too, shall serve the LORD, for He is our God."

¹⁹Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for God is holy;^b He is an ardent God^c and will indulge neither your rebellions nor your sins. ²⁰If you forsake the LORD and serve other gods, He will turn away and punish you and destroy you, despite the fact that He has been good to you." ²¹"Not so," the people replied to Joshua, "for we will serve the LORD."

k) The Euphrates.

l) Terah had three sons (Gen. 11:27), but only Abraham and Nahor are mentioned here because they were the ancestors of Israel—Nahor as grandfather of Rebekah (Gen. 22:20-23), and great-grandfather of Rachel and Leah, the patriarchs of Israel (Gen. 29:10, 16). m) Gen. 13:17. n) Gen. 21:1-3. o) Gen. 25:21-26. p) Gen. 36:6-8. q) Gen. 46. r) Ex. 7:14-12:36.

s) Ex. 14:1. t) Literally 'sea of sedge,' because of its profuseness of seaweeds. u) Ex. 14:5-31. v) Num. 21:21-35. w) Num. 22:6, 11. Compare Deut. 2:9; Judg. 11:25. x) Num. 22:24. y) The wasp was the dreadful power of God that defeated Sihon and Og (Compare Ex. 23:27-30). z) Lev. 17:7; Ezek. 20:7; 23:3, 8.

a) Worship begins at home. There Joshua himself was priest at the family altar.

b) By this Joshua implies that the requirements for serving the LORD are definite and inflexible.

c) Ex. 20:5.

²²"You yourselves are witnesses that you have chosen to serve the LORD," said Joshua to the people. "We are witnesses," they replied.

²³"Now then, turn away from the other gods, which are around you,^d and give your hearts to the LORD God of Israel." ²⁴So the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the LORD our God and obey His voice."

²⁵On that day Joshua made a covenant with the people, and he laid down statutes and decrees for them in Shechem. ²⁶He wrote these precepts in the book of the Law of God, and, taking a large stone, he set it up there beneath the oak tree which was sacred to the LORD.^e ²⁷Then Joshua said to all the people, "This stone shall be with us for a testimony; for it has heard all the messages of the LORD, which He has spoken to us. It will be with you for a testimony, lest you deny your God." ²⁸Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his own heritage.

²⁹After these events, Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died. He was a hundred and ten years of age.^f ³⁰They buried him in the grounds of his inheritance, in Timnath-serah, which is in the mountains of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

³¹Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and of the elders who lived after him and who knew everything that the LORD had done for Israel.^g ³²They buried the bones of Joseph,^h which the Israelites brought from Egypt, at Shechem, in a portion of the field which Jacob had bought for about 200 dollars from the descendants of Hamor, who was the father of Shechem.ⁱ Now it was the inheritance for the descendants of Joseph.

³³Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him on the hill that was given to his son Phinehas in the mountains of Ephraim.

d) The gods of the heathen natives still living in Canaan. Ch. 24:31 implies that they were not practicing idolatry during the administration of Joshua. e) See note on vs. 1. f) As no date of his birth is given, nor is there any indication of his age on any previous occasion of which we have a date, we do not know in what year he died, as we know it of Caleb. His blessing Caleb suggests that he was older than Caleb (ch. 14:13). g) Moses, to render himself dispensable, had trained Joshua to be his successor; but Joshua and the elders were so busy conquering the Canaanites, they failed to raise a generation to take their place as worshipers and servants of God. h) Gen. 50:24, 25; Ex. 13:19. i) Gen. 33:19.

THE BOOK OF

JUDGES

1394-1390 B.C.

1 AFTER THE DEATH OF JOSHUA, IT came about that the Israelites inquired of the LORD, "Who of us shall march first to fight the Canaanites?" **2**The LORD said: Judah shall go up. See, I have delivered the land into his hand.^a **3**Then Judah said to Simeon, his brother, "Come up with me into my allotment, so that we may fight the Canaanites together; then I will march with you into your allotment." So Simeon went with him. **4**Then Judah went up, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand. At Bezek they defeated the enemy, who suffered ten thousand casualties; **5**for they met Adoni-bezek at Bezek,^b fought him, and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. **6**Adoni-bezek tried to escape, but after pursuit they caught him and severed his thumbs and his big toes. **7**Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off gleaned leftovers under my table; as I have done, so God has requited me." They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

8The men of Judah also attacked Jerusalem, and upon capturing the city, they destroyed it with the sword and burned it. **9**Afterward the Judahites went down and fought the Canaanites living in the hill country, in the south, and in the lowland. **10**Then Judah marched against the Canaanites at Hebron. (Prior to this time Hebron

was called Kiriath-arba).^c In the ensuing battle they defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.^d **11**Then they marched against Debir, which had been called Kiriath-sepher.^e **12**Caleb said, "Whoever attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher, him I will give my daughter Achsah in marriage." **13**Now Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, took it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. **14**When she came to him, she persuaded him to ask her father for a field.^f As she alighted from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" **15**She said to him, "Give me a wedding present. You have given me the dry land of the south; give me with it also water springs." Then Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

16The descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, left the city of palm trees,^g joined the children of Judah in the wilderness of Judah, south of Arad, and lived among the people there.^h **17**Judah went with Simeon, his brother, and they defeated and utterly destroyed all the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath. They therefore named the place Hormah.ⁱ **18**Judah also took Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, and the communities surrounding these towns.

19The LORD was with Judah; so he took possession of the hill country, but he was unable to expel the inhabitants

a) They would consult by means of the Urim and Thummim [Num. 27:21, etc.].

b) Located in Ephraim's territory. c) City of Arba, the father of Anak. d) Sons of the giant Anak.

e) City of the book; a library may have been there. f) Or, the field, indicating a choice field.

g) Jericho. h) Among the Amalekites [I Sam. 15:6]. i) Destruction.

of the valley because they had iron chariots. ²⁰Hebron they gave to Caleb, as Moses had said, and he drove out the three sons of Anak.

²¹Benjamin failed to drive out the Jebusite dwellers in Jerusalem; so that the Jebusites live with the Benjamites in Jerusalem to this day.^j ²²The family of Joseph went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them. ²³When the house of Joseph sent men to spy on Bethel, which before this was called Luz, ²⁴the spies saw a man come out of the city, and they said to him, "Show us, please, the entrance to the city, and we will deal kindly with you."

²⁵When he showed them the entrance to the city, they destroyed the city with the sword; ²⁶but the man and all his family were permitted to move into the land of the Hittites, where he built the city of Luz, so called to this day.

²⁷Manasseh did not expel the people of Beth-shean and its suburbs, nor of Taanach and its suburbs, nor the people of Dor and its suburbs, nor those of Ibleam and its suburbs, nor those of Megiddo and its suburbs; for the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. ²⁸After Israel became strong and established, the Canaanites were permitted to stay in the land, but they were compelled to pay tribute.^k

²⁹Ephraim, too, failed to expel the Canaanites but permitted them to live among his people in Gezer. ³⁰Neither did Zebulun expel the people of Kitron and the people of Nahalol; these Canaanites were allowed to live among them in the land as tribute-paying subjects. ³¹Asher did not expel the Acco people, either, or the people of Sidon, of Ahlab, of Achzib, of Helbah, of Aphik, or of Rehob. ³²The Canaanites were allowed to stay in the land, and the Asherites lived among them.^l

³³Neither did Naphtali expel the natives of Beth-shemesh nor of Beth-anath; he lived among the native Canaanites. However, the natives of Beth-

shemesh and of Beth-anath became their tribute-paying subjects. ³⁴The Danites, too, were unable to possess the valley and were driven into the hills by the Amorites. ³⁵Even though the Amorites were determined to dwell in Har-heres,^m in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, the Joseph tribe suppressed them, so that finally the Amorites were forced to pay tribute. ³⁶The border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Scorpion Pass, from Selaⁿ on and upward.

2 THE ANGEL^o OF THE LORD CAME up from Gilgal to Bochim and said: I moved you up out of Egypt, and I have brought you into the land which I promised your fathers by oath, and I said: I will not break My covenant with you through eternity. ²But you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land; their altars you are to break down. But you have not listened to My voice. What is this you have done? ³Wherefore I also say to you: I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be your adversaries, and their gods shall be a snare to you. ⁴When the Angel of the LORD had spoken these words to all the Israelites, the people lifted up their voices and wept. ⁵So they named that place Bochim; and there they sacrificed to the LORD.

⁶When Joshua had dismissed the Israelites, every one went away, each to possess his inheritance. ⁷The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD, which He had done for Israel. ⁸Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died when he was 110 years old. ⁹They buried him within the borders of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, which lies in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

¹⁰When that generation were gathered to their fathers,^p there arose an-

j) David expelled them [II Sam. 5:7ff]. k) Or were made to serve.

l) To let Canaanites live among them, continuing their pagan ways, was contrary to divine orders; "lived among them" suggests a pagan majority; it proved ruinous.

m) Mount Heres. n) The rock; possibly the cliff city of Petra in Edom.

o) He speaks as God, or in His Name. We like to think of Him as the Son of God.

p) Or, joined their fathers in death.

other generation which neither knew the LORD, nor the work which He had done for Israel. ¹¹The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they served the Baals.^q ¹²Having forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, they ran after other gods, the gods of the surrounding peoples, and worshiped them; thus they angered the LORD. ¹³When they turned their face away from the LORD, to serve the Baals and the Ashtaroth,^r ¹⁴the anger of the LORD was kindled against the Israelites, and He handed them over to plunderers, who plundered them; He surrendered them to their enemies around them, so that they could no longer defend themselves. ¹⁵Wherever they went, the LORD's hand was against them for punishment, as the LORD had spoken and as the LORD had sworn to them. They were in great distress.

¹⁶Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, who saved them from those who plundered them. ¹⁷However, they did not listen to their judges but went astray in seeking and worshiping other gods; they turned from the way of their fathers, who had walked after the LORD and obeyed His commands, but they failed to do so. ¹⁸Each time when the LORD gave them a judge, the LORD was with the judge and saved them from the power of their enemies throughout the judge's life. The LORD showed compassion for the people because of their groaning over the oppression that crushed them. ¹⁹But at the judge's death, they would turn back^s and behave worse than did their fathers, in serving and worshiping other gods. They would forego none of their habitual practices or their stubborn ways.

²⁰When the LORD's indignation was kindled against Israel, He said: Because this nation has violated the covenant into which I entered with their

fathers and they have not heeded My voice, ²¹I also will no longer expel from their presence the nations which Joshua left when he died, ²²to test Israel through them and to see whether or not they would hold to the LORD's way and walk in it as their fathers did. ²³So the LORD permitted those nations to remain; He did not destroy them at once nor deliver them into the power of Joshua.

3 THESE ARE THE NATIONS WHICH the LORD left, to test by them the Israelites who had not known^t any of the wars in Canaan; ²so that the generations of the Israelites who had experienced no wars might become versed in the arts of war: ³the five princes of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, Sidonians, and Hivites who occupied Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon to the entrance of Hamath. ⁴These nations were left to test Israel to see if they would obey the commands which the LORD had commanded their fathers through the ministry of Moses. ⁵So the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; ⁶they took their daughters to themselves for wives, and they gave their own daughters to their sons and served their gods. ⁷The Israelites did what was evil in the LORD's sight and forgot the LORD their God; they served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. ⁸Then the LORD's indignation was kindled against Israel, and He gave them over into the power of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, whom the Israelites served for eight years.

⁹When the Israelites cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a savior^u for the Israelites, who delivered them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰The Spirit of the LORD came upon him; he judged Israel and went out to battle. The LORD handed Cushan-rishathaim king of Aram^v over to

q) The nature gods of the Canaanites. Baal means master, owner, lord.

r) Ashtaroth is plural of Ashtoreth, the Phoenician goddess Astarte, "the abomination of the Sidonians" [1 Kings 11:5, 33].

s) Even under a righteous judge, the nation practiced heathen worship; at the death of a judge, they became more intensely idolatrous. Even outward appearance of Jehovah worship was then abandoned. t) Those who had not engaged in the wars. u) Deliverer. v) Mesopotamia.

him. ¹¹The land enjoyed peace for forty years; then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

1341-1323 B.C.

¹²Again the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel because of their apostasy in the sight of the LORD. ¹³He confederated with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, advanced, defeated Israel and captured the palm city.^w ¹⁴For eighteen years the Israelites served Eglon king of Moab.

1323-1243 B.C.

¹⁵But when the Israelites cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a left-handed Benjamite, by whom the Israelites usually sent their taxes to Eglon king of Moab. ¹⁶Ehud made for himself a two-edged sword, a foot and a half long, girded it under his clothes upon his right thigh. ¹⁷He then presented the taxes to Eglon king of Moab, a very fat man. ¹⁸When he had presented the taxes, he dismissed the people who had carried them. ¹⁹But at the Gilgal quarries he himself turned back and said, "I have a secret message, O king." He ordered, "Silence." All his attendants then withdrew, ²⁰and Ehud approached King Eglon, who was sitting alone in the cool upper room, which he had made for himself. Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." As the king arose from his seat, ²¹Ehud reached out his left hand, drew his sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into the king's belly, ²²so that the hilt followed the blade, and the fat closed upon the hilt; he did not withdraw the sword from the belly, and the contents burst out. ²³Then Ehud went out the back way, shut the doors of the upper room, and locked them.

²⁴After he had left,^{*} the king's attendants came and noticed that the doors of the upper room were locked; so they said, "Surely he is relaxing in the cool room." ²⁵They waited until

they were embarrassed, and still the doors of the upper room did not open; therefore they took the key, opened them, and found their master lying dead on the floor. ²⁶While the attendants were hesitating, Ehud escaped to Seirah by way of the quarries. ²⁷Going through the hill country of Ephraim, he blew his trumpet, and the Israelites joined him down from the highlands with him as their leader. ²⁸He said to them, "Follow me, for the LORD has delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hands." They followed him and seized the fords of the Jordan, opposite the Moabites, and permitted no one to pass over. ²⁹At that time they killed 10,000 Moabites, all healthy and vigorous men; not a man escaped. ³⁰Thus was Moab subdued that day by the forces of Israel, and the land had peace eighty years.

³¹After him came Shamgar⁷ the son of Anath, who killed 600 Philistines with an oxgoad; he also saved Israel.

4 AFTER EHUD DIED, THE ISRAELITES again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, ²and the LORD handed them over to Jabin² king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The captain of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-goiim.^a ³The Israelites cried to the LORD; for he had 900 iron chariots, and he oppressed the Israelites mightily for twenty years.

⁴Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, judged Israel at that time. ⁵She would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, where the Israelites came to her for judgment. ⁶She sent for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-Naphtali, and said to him, "Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded: Go to Mount Tabor, and take with you 10,000 men of Naphtali and of the Zebulun tribe? ⁷I will direct Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude to the brook

y) Jericho. x) Probably through a little used passageway.

y) Shamgar seems to have followed Ehud during the latter part of the 80 years' period, so that his period is to be reckoned within those 80 years.

z) In Joshua 11:1 and Judges 4:23, 24, Jabin is named king of the Canaanites; like "Pharaoh," it seems to be a title rather than a name.

a) "Harosheth"—carving; "goiim"—Gentiles; a place noted for carving.

Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand."^b

⁸Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you refuse to go with me, I will not go."

⁹She said, "I will certainly go with you; but the journey on which you are going will not be to your honor, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went back with Barak to Kedesh, ¹⁰and Barak ordered Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, where 10,000 men followed him; and Deborah went with him.

¹¹Now Heber the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, and he had pitched his tent as far as the oak of Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh. ¹²They informed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor; ¹³so Sisera gathered his 900 iron chariots and all his allies from Harosheth-goiim to the brook Kishon.

¹⁴Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with his ten thousand men. ¹⁵The LORD^c confused Sisera and all his chariots and all his soldiers before Barak with the edge of the sword, and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled on foot. ¹⁶But Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-goiim, and all the troops of Sisera were slain by the edge of the sword, so that not one was left. ¹⁷Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

¹⁸Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Come in, my master, turn in with me; have no fear." He entered her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. ¹⁹He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink; for I am

thirsty!" So she opened a bottle^d of milk and gave him a drink, then covered him again. ²⁰He said to her, "Stand in the door of the tent, and if any one comes making inquiry of you and says, 'Is there any man here?' you shall say, 'No!'" ²¹But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and a hammer in her hands, approached him softly, and drove the peg into his temple, so that it pierced through into the ground, and he died without awakening from his deep sleep. ²²And look, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man you are seeking."^e He entered into her tent and saw Sisera dead with the tent peg through his temple. ²³Thus God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the Israelites, ²⁴and the hand of the Israelites pressed ever heavier on Jabin king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.^f

1223-1183 B.C.

5 THAT DAY DEBORAH AND BARAK the son of Abinoam sang this song: ²"For the leaders taking the lead in Israel, for the people offering themselves willingly, praise the LORD! ³Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes.^g I will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁴"LORD, when Thou didst go forth out of Seir, when Thou didst march out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped; yes, the clouds dropped water. ⁵The mountains quaked at the presence of the LORD, even yonder Sinai, at the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁶"In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were deserted; travelers walked the byways. ⁷The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased until I, Deborah, arose, arose a mother in Israel.^h ⁸They chose new gods, and war was in the gates. Was there seen a shield or a spear among 40,000 in Israel?

⁹"My heart is toward the governors:

b) God is ever in control of the godly and of the ungodly.

c) The LORD, not Barak or Deborah, did the confounding, in spite of iron chariots.

d) The skin of a goat. e) Jael obeyed Israel's God rather than custom.

f) A far northern part of Canaan. g) She addresses all rulers of the earth.

h) Her sons and daughters were the godly of Israel, whom she spiritually and politically nurtured.

of Israel; you who offered yourselves willingly among the people. Praise the LORD! ¹⁰You who ride on white donkeys, you who sit on rich carpets, and you who walk by the way, tell of it. ¹¹To the measures of musicians in the places of drawing water, they shall rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts of His rulers in Israel. Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates.

¹²"Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song! Arise, Barak, and lead away your captives, you son of Abinoam! ¹³Then He set the remnant to rule the nobles; He made the LORD's people rule for me as heroes. ¹⁴Those of Ephraim moved into the valley; after you, Benjamin, among your people. Out of Machir came down governors and out of Zebulun they who carry the marshal's staff. ¹⁵The princes of Issachar were with Deborah; as was Issachar, so was Barak. Into the valley they rushed forth at his heels.

"Among the divisions of Reuben there were great deliberations. ¹⁶Why did you stay among the sheepfolds, listening to pipings for the flocks? Among the divisions of Reuben there were great deliberations of heart. ¹⁷Gilead remained beyond the Jordan. And Dan, why did he remain by the ships? Asher dwelt at the seashore, and by its bays he remained. ¹⁸Zebulun is a people that risked their lives unto death; so also Naphtali upon the high places of the field.

¹⁹"The kings came, they fought; the kings of Canaan fought in Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; money they did not obtain. ²⁰From heaven the stars fought; in their courses they fought against Sisera. ²¹The brook Kishon swept them away, that ancient brook, the brook Kishon. March on, my soul, with strength! ²²Then the horses' hoofs stamped by reason of the prancings, the prancings of their mighty ones.

²³"Curse Meroz, says the Angel of the LORD, curse bitterly its inhabitants; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD as

heroes. ²⁴Blessed above women shall Jael be, the wife of Heber the Kenite; above women in the tent shall she be blessed! ²⁵Water he asked; milk she gave him. In a lordly bowl she brought him cream. ²⁶Her hand she put to the tent peg and her right hand to the workman's hammer; she hammered Sisera; she smashed his head; yes, she pierced and struck through his temple. ²⁷At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay; at her feet he sank, he fell. Where he sank, there he fell down dead.

²⁸"Through the window she looked out; she peered, the mother of Sisera. Through her lattice she called, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?' ²⁹The wisest of her ladies answered her; in fact, she returned answer to herself, ³⁰'Are they not finding, are they not dividing booty? A girl or two for every man; some loot of dyed garments for Sisera, of dyed garments embroidered, two dyed garments embroidered for the neck of the spoiler?' ³¹So, LORD, let all Thy enemies perish. But they who love Him are as the sun rising in his strength." And the land had peace forty years.

1183-1176 B.C.

6 THE ISRAELITES DID WHAT WAS evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian¹ for seven years. ²The rule of the Midianites was so oppressive that the Israelites made living quarters in mountain caves and forts because of the Midianites.

³When the Israelites had sown their fields, the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the natives of the East would come up and attack them. ⁴They¹ encamped in the land and ruined the produce of the soil as far as Gaza, so that nothing edible, no sheep, no ox, or donkey remained for the Israelites. ⁵They came in crowds thick as grasshoppers, with their cattle, their camels, and their tents to destroy the land; ⁶so that the Israelites were impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD. ⁷And so it

i) Israel's persistent enemy, although descended from Abraham by Keturah.

j) These people were habitual marauders.

was, when the Israelites cried to the LORD because of the Midianites, ⁸the LORD sent them a prophet^k with this message, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I brought you up from Egypt, and I brought you forth out of the house of bondage; ⁹I delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you; I drove them out from before you, and I gave you their land. ¹⁰I said to you, I am the LORD your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But you have not listened to My voice."

¹¹Then the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak in Ophra,^l which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press^m to hide it from the Midianites. ¹²When the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, He said to him: The LORD is with you, you mighty hero!

¹³Gideon said to Him, "My master, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His wondrous works, which our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has rejected us; He has delivered us into the hand of the Midianites." ¹⁴Then the LORDⁿ turned toward him and said: Go in this your strength and save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent you? ¹⁵He said to Him, "O LORD, with what shall I save Israel, considering that my family ranks lowest in Manasseh and I am the youngest in my father's house?" ¹⁶The LORD answered him: I am with you, and you shall destroy the Midianites one and all.^o ¹⁷Then he said to Him, "If I have found favor in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is Thou who talkest with me. ¹⁸Do not leave here, please, till I come back, bring out my gift, and

lay it before Thee." And He said: I will stay until you come back.

¹⁹Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened cakes from a bushel of meal; the meat he put in a basket, the broth he put in a pot, and he brought it out to Him under the oak and placed it before Him. ²⁰But the Angel of the LORD said to him: Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. This he did. ²¹Then the Angel of the LORD held out the end of the staff in His hand, touched the meat and the unleavened cakes, and fire went up out of the rock that consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes. Then the Angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

²²When Gideon realized that He was the Angel of the LORD, Gideon said, "Alas, O LORD God! For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face."^p ²³But the LORD said to him: Peace to you! Have no fear; you shall not die. ²⁴Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and he called it Adonai-shalom,^q and to this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵That night the LORD said to him: Take your father's bullock, the second bullock, the seven year old; tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, cut down the shame images^r beside it; ²⁶build an altar to the LORD your God upon the top of this stronghold; arrange it properly; take the chosen bullock, and offer it as a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the shame images which you shall cut down. ²⁷Then Gideon took ten of his men servants and did as the LORD had instructed him; but as he feared his father's household and the men of the city, he did not do it during the day; he did it at night.

²⁸When the townsmen got up early next morning, the altar of Baal was broken down, the shame images beside

k) Probably Phinehas, the high priest. l) A village in the half tribe of Manasseh, west of Jordan.

m) The wine press was dug to a level lower than the surrounding ground.

n) As at the burning bush near Sinai, the Angel of the LORD is identical with the LORD. We believe He is the Son of God. o) A figure of speech signifying total destruction.

p) Gideon's distress of mind, here indicated, is due to imperfect information concerning God.

q) The LORD is peace. r) A stump on each side of the Baal altar, one with the secret parts of a woman and the other of a man carved on it; by it the Baal worshipers committed lewdness in the name of religion. Temple prostitution was a sacred part of Baal ritual.

it cut down, and the second bullock had been offered upon the newly built altar. ²⁹They said one to another, "Who has committed this deed?" Upon inquiring and questioning, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash has committed this deed." ³⁰The townsmen then said to Joash, "Bring your son out-drods that he may die; because he has broken down Baal's altar and has cut down the shame images beside it." ³¹Joash said to all who stood facing him, "Will you strive for Baal? Will you champion his cause? Whoever takes up for him shall be put to death this morning; if he is a god, let him strive for himself because someone has broken down his altar." ³²So they named him Jerubbaal^a that day, saying, "Let Baal strive against him," because he had broken down his altar.

³³Now all the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the natives of the East drew together; they passed over and camped in the Valley of Jezreel. ³⁴Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon;^c he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called up to follow him. ³⁵He sent messengers throughout Manasseh too, and they joined him. He also sent messengers to Asher, to Zebulun, and to Naphtali, and they came up to join them.

³⁶Gideon then said to God, "If Thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as Thou hast said, ³⁷look, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; and if there is dew on the fleece only and the surrounding ground is dry, then I will know that Thou wilt save Israel by my hand, even as Thou hast spoken." ³⁸And it was so. When he got up early next morning, he pressed the fleece together and wrung a bowlful of water out of it. ³⁹Then Gideon said to God, "Let not Thine anger be kindled against me, and I will speak but this once; let me make another test, I pray Thee, once more with the fleece; let it alone be dry, and let there be dew upon all the ground around it." ⁴⁰And God did so that night; for the fleece

was dry, and all the surrounding ground was wet with dew.^u

7 THEN JERUBBAAL,^v THAT IS GIDEON, and all the people with him arose early and camped near Enharod.^w The camp of Midian was in the valley, north of Gibeath-moreh. ²And the LORD said to Gideon: There are too many people with you for Me to surrender the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel should become boastful and say: "Our own hand has saved us." ³Now therefore announce in the hearing of the people, "Whoever is afraid and trembling may leave Mount Gilead at once." Then 22,000 men went back, while 10,000 remained. ⁴The LORD said to Gideon: There are still too many people; bring them down to the water's edge, and there I will test them for you. It shall be that he of whom I say: This one shall go with you, shall go with you, and he of whom I say: This one shall not go with you, shall not go. ⁵So he brought the people down to the water's edge; and the LORD said to Gideon: Separate every one who laps^x water with his tongue, as a dog laps, from every one who bends down upon his knees to drink. ⁶There were 300 men who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, but all the rest of the people bent down upon their knees to drink water. ⁷The LORD said to Gideon: By the 300 men that lapped I will save you; I will deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, each to his tent. ⁸He took provisions and trumpets from the people and sent the rest of the men of Israel away each to his tent, retaining only the 300 men.

Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley, ⁹and that night the LORD said to him: Get up, invade the camp; for I have delivered it into your hand. ¹⁰But if you are afraid to invade it, go down to the camp with your servant Purah. ¹¹There you will hear what they are saying, and after that you will have the courage to go

^a) Meaning - against Baal. ^t) He was filled with supernatural courage and wisdom.

^u) How infinitely patient God is with us! ^v) Now Gideon's surname; cf. 8:35.

^w) Fountain, or well of, Harod. ^x) The lapping ones were more alert; while they dipped water to their mouths with cupped hands, they could scan the horizon for enemies.

down against the camp. Then he went down with his servant Purah to the very edge of the camp where the sentries were standing.

¹²Now the Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the natives of the East were camping along the valley, thick as grasshoppers, and their camels were as numerous as the sand on the seashore. ¹³Just as Gideon came near, a guard was telling his comrade a dream: "See! I dreamed that a loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the camp of Midian and bounced so hard against the tent that it collapsed." ¹⁴His comrade responded, "That is nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has delivered Midian and the whole camp into his hand."^y ¹⁵When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship and returned to the camp of Israel. He said, "Up! for the LORD has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand." ¹⁶He divided the 300 men² into three companies and gave trumpets and empty pitchers, with torches inside, to each of them. ¹⁷He told them, "Watch me, and do as I do. When I reach the edge of the camp and blow my trumpet, see that you do as I do; ¹⁸when I and all my men blow our trumpets, you, too, must blow your trumpets all around the camp and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

¹⁹When Gideon and the 100 men with him came to the edge of the camp, the middle watch had just been posted. They blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands. ²⁰The three companies blew the trumpets, smashed the pitchers, held the torches in their left hands and in their right hand trumpets to be blown, and they shouted, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon." ²¹Then every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the men in camp ran, crying out as they fled.

²²When the 300 trumpets were blown, the LORD set every man fighting

the man next to him throughout the camp,^a and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah^b near Zererah and as far as the border of Abel-meholah^c near Tabbath. ²³The men of Israel were then called up out of Naphtali, out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, to pursue the Midianites. ²⁴Gideon also sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, announcing, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize the waters fronting them as far as Beth-barah^d and the Jordan." Then all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they seized the waters as far as Beth-barah and also the Jordan. ²⁵They captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock Oreb, and Zeeb was killed in the wine press of Zeeb. They pursued the Midianites and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond the Jordan.

8 THEN THE MEN OF EPHRAIM SAID to him, "What kind of treatment is this — not calling us when you went to fight against Midian?" They accused him severely, ²but he answered them. "What have I done in comparison with you? Are not the leftover grapes of Ephraim better than the entire crop of Abiezer? ³God has delivered the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, into your hand; so what was I able to do as compared to you?"^e And their anger was abated when he had said that.

⁴When Gideon came to the Jordan, he and his 300 men passed over, weary but continuing their pursuit. ⁵He said to the men of Succoth, "Give, I beg of you, loaves of bread to the people that follow me, for they are exhausted. I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." ⁶But the princes of Succoth said, "Are the persons of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands, that we should give your men bread?" ⁷Gideon answered, "When the LORD delivers Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will thrash your

y) Both the dream and interpretation were inspired by God to increase the confidence of Gideon.

z) Even in working miracles God uses natural means.

a) Complete confusion prevailed in the darkness. At night all swords, of enemy and of friend, look alike. b) The house of the acacia tree. c) The meadow of dancing.

d) House of the ford, probably the Beth-abarah where John baptized.

e) A soft answer turns away wrath [Prov. 15:1].

naked bodies with the thorns and briars of the wilderness." ⁸From there he went up to Penuel and spoke to them in like manner; and the men of Penuel answered him as had the men of Succoth. ⁹He said to the men of Penuel, "When I return safe and sound, I will break down this tower."

¹⁰Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army of about 15,000 men, all that were left of the natives of the East; for the slain numbered 120,000 swordsmen. ¹¹So Gideon went up by the Bedouins' route to the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and he smote the army while they were resting. ¹²Zebah and Zalmunna fled, but he pursued and captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the entire army. ¹³Then Gideon son of Joash returned from the battle by the Heres Pass. ¹⁴He captured one of the young men of Succoth, whom he interviewed and who jotted down for him the names of the princes and the elders of Succoth, 77 men. ¹⁵He then went to the dwellers of Succoth and said, "Take a look at Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, 'Are the persons of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands, that we should give bread to your tired men?'" ¹⁶Then he took the elders of the city and with the thorns and briars of the wilderness he taught the men of Succoth a lesson. ¹⁷He also broke down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

¹⁸To Zebah and Zalmunna he said, "Who were the men whom you killed at Tabor?" They replied, "As you are, so were they. They were like you, each as the son of a king in stature." ¹⁹He said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As surely as the LORD lives, if you had spared their lives, I would not kill you." ²⁰He then said to Jether, his first-born, "Stand up and kill them." But the youth did not draw his sword; he was afraid, for he was still only a lad. ²¹Zebah and Zalmunna

said, "You stand up and fell us; for as the man, so is his power." Gideon arose, killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescents^a which were on the necks of their camels.

²²The men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, you and then your son and then your son's son; for you have saved us from the rule of Midian." ²³But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you; ²⁴but rather I will request that every man give me the earrings of the captives." (They had golden earrings because the men had been Ishmaelites). ²⁵They answered, "We will gladly give them," and when they spread a garment, every man cast the earrings from their captives into it. ²⁶The weight of the golden earrings he had requested was equal to about 17,000 dollars in gold, besides the crescents, the pendants, and the purple clothing that was on the kings of Midian; also the chains that were around the necks of the camels. ²⁷Then Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in the city of Ophrah; and all Israel venerated it, so that it became a snare to Gideon and his family.^b ²⁸Thus was Midian subdued at the hands of Israel, and they never raised their heads again. The land had peace for forty years, during the lifetime of Gideon.

1136 B.C.

²⁹Then Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house.

³⁰Gideon had seventy sons, who were his own offspring through his many wives. ³¹His concubine in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech. ³²Then Gideon the son of Joash died at a ripe old age, and he was buried in the tomb of his father Joash in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

³³As soon as Gideon was dead, the Israelites again turned to the Baals, and they made Baal-berith^c their god. ³⁴The Israelites had no regard for the LORD their God, who had delivered

f) Or, while they were making camp.

g) Moon images or pictures are still Arabian emblems in the Moslem faith.

h) The Urim and Thummim, attached to the breastplate of the high priest, was consulted to learn the will of God. This ephod, handled by lesser men, became an object of worship.

i) Heb.: LORD of a covenant. Sometimes spoken of as El-berith, the god of a covenant, thus prostituting the sacred covenant relationship between God and Israel.

them from the hands of their enemies; ³⁵neither did they show kindness to the family of Jerubbaal in return for all the good he had rendered in behalf of Israel.

1136-1133 B.C.

9 ABIMELECH THE SON OF JERUBBAAL went to Shechem to his mother's relatives and said to the household of his mother's father, ¹"Speak to the men of Shechem, and say to them, Which is better for you, to have seventy sons of Jerubbaal rule over you or to have one man rule over you?" Also remember that I am your own bone and flesh." ³So his mother's brothers^k spoke these words to the men of Shechem in his behalf, and they were inclined to favor Abimelech; for they said, "He is our kinsman." ⁴Then they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of Baal-berith, and with them Abimelech hired lightheaded and foolhardy men who followed him. ⁵He went to his father's house at Ophrah and slew his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerubbaal, upon one stone;¹ but Jotham, the youngest, escaped by hiding himself. ⁶Then all the men of Shechem and of Beth-millo got together by the oak at the Shechem monument and proclaimed Abimelech king.

⁷When it was told Jotham, he climbed to the top of Mount Gerizim. There he raised his voice and shouted to them, "Listen to me, you men of Shechem, so that God may listen to you."^m ⁸Once the trees went out to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!' ⁹But the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I give up my rich oil, with which God and men are honored, to solicit the trees for my promotion?' ¹⁰Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'Come and reign over us!' ¹¹But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I give up my good sweet fruit, to solicit the trees for my promotion?' ¹²The trees then said to the vine, 'Come, reign over us!' ¹³But the vine said to them, 'Should I give up

my wine, which cheers God and me to solicit the trees for my promotion? ¹⁴Then all the trees said to the bramble,ⁿ 'Come and reign over us!' ¹⁵But the bramble said to the trees, 'If you in sincerity anoint me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shadow; but if not, then let fire come out of the brambles, and let it destroy the cedars of Lebanon.'

¹⁶"So now, if you have acted in sincerity and truth in making Abimelech king, and if you have behaved with fairness toward Jerubbaal and his household in accordance with his merit — ¹⁷seeing that my father fought for you and risked his life and delivered you from the power of Midian, ¹⁸where you have rebelled this day against my father's house; you have killed seven of my father's sons upon one stone and you have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother — ¹⁹if you have acted in good faith with Jerubbaal and his family this day, then you may rejoice in Abimelech and let him also rejoice with you. ²⁰But if not, then may fire burst forth from Abimelech, and let it destroy the men of Shechem and of Beth-millo, and may fire burst forth from the men of Shechem and of Beth-millo, and let it destroy Abimelech." ²¹Jotham escaped and fled to Beer; there he lived because he feared Abimelech his brother. ²²And Abimelech ruled over Israel three years.

²³Then God sent an evil spirit to divide Abimelech from the men of Shechem, and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech ²⁴so that retributive justice might come upon Abimelech for murdering the seventy sons of Jerubbaal and upon the men of Shechem^o who had supported Abimelech in murdering his brother. ²⁵The men of Shechem set up ambushes against him^p on the mountain top roads, robbing all who passed that way, and it was reported to Abimelech.

²⁶Meanwhile Gaal son of Ebed came

j) There were other mothers in it, with children of the same father. k) Mostly half brothers.

l) A demagogue incited mass murder. m) One of the few Old Testament parables.

n) Abimelech was that bramble, the worst of Gideon's sons.

o) They were ingrates and got what they deserved. p) The men of Shechem intended to harm Abimelech.

with his kinsmen to reside in Shechem, and the men of Shechem put their trust in him. ²⁷They went out to the field, gathered grapes, trod them out,^q and feasted in the house of their god where they ate and drank and cursed Abimelech. ²⁸Gaal the son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul his lieutenant? Serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him?" ²⁹Oh, that this people were under my rule! Then I would remove Abimelech." And he said to Abimelech, "Increase your army, and come out."^r

³⁰When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, he became very angry. ³¹He sent messengers to Abimelech in Tormah,^s saying, "Observe, Gaal the son of Ebed and his kinsmen have come to Shechem, and they are turning the city against you. ³²Now therefore, get up, you and the people with you, and lie concealed in the field. ³³Rise early in the morning, and as soon as the sun is up, make a sudden attack against the city. When he and his people come out against you, do with them as you shall have opportunity." ³⁴So Abimelech and all the people with him arose during the night and ambushed Shechem in four companies. ³⁵When Gaal the son of Ebed came out and stood in the entrance of the city gate, Abimelech and the people with him arose from their hiding place. ³⁶And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountain." Zebul answered him, "It is the shadow of the mountains that looks to you like men."^t

³⁷When Gaal said again, "See, people are coming down the middle of the mountain, and one company is coming from the direction of the fortune-tellers' oak," ³⁸Zebul said to him, "Where is now your boast, you who said, 'Who is

Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are these not the people you despised? Go out now, and fight them." ³⁹So Gaal went out before the men of Shechem and fought Abimelech. ⁴⁰But Abimelech chased him, so that he fled, leaving many wounded, up to the entrance of the gate.

⁴¹Abimelech stayed at Arumah, but Zebul drove Gaal and his kinsmen away, so that they could not live in Shechem. ⁴²The next day the people went out into the field, and when it was told Abimelech, ⁴³he divided his men into three companies and laid an ambush in the field. When he noticed that the people were coming out of the city, he rose up against them and shattered them. ⁴⁴Then Abimelech and the company with him rushed forward and occupied the entrance of the city gate, while the other two companies attacked all those in the field and slew them. ⁴⁵Abimelech fought against the city all that day, and when he had captured it, he killed the people in it and destroyed the city; after which he sowed it with salt.^u

⁴⁶Hearing of it, all the men in the tower of Shechem entered the vault of the El-berith temple, ⁴⁷and word came to Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered there. ⁴⁸So Abimelech and all the people with him climbed Mount Zalmon, where Abimelech took hold of an axe, cut down a bough from a tree and, laying it on his shoulders, said to his men, "Hurry up; do what you have seen me do!" ⁴⁹All the people likewise cut down each his bough and, following Abimelech, placed them around the tower and set them on fire, so that all those in the tower, about a thousand men and women, perished. ⁵⁰Then Abimelech went to Thebez and captured it; ⁵¹but there was a strong tower in the center of the city, and to it the men and women fled, shut themselves up, and climbed to the tower's top.

q) In the wine press. r) Gaal tried to bluff and was not ready to back it up.

s) A height near Shechem; Abimelech once lived there.

t) Gaal knew too little about warfare to fight successfully; he overreached, which meant death or wounds for many.

u) Made the land sterile and unfit for use; symbolic of utter ruin when strewn on the surface of a conquered and wrecked city.

⁵²Abimelech reached the tower and attacked it. As he pressed on toward the door to set it on fire, ⁵³a woman dropped an upper millstone on his head and broke his skull. ⁵⁴Instantly he called to his armor-bearer and told him, "Draw your sword and kill me, so they may not say of me, 'A woman slew him.'" And his armor-bearer stabbed him, so that he died. ⁵⁵When the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they left each for his home. ⁵⁶Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he committed toward his father in murdering his seventy brothers. ⁵⁷All the wickedness of the men of Shechem, God turned back upon their heads, so that the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal was fulfilled upon them.^v

1133-1110 B.C.

10 AFTER ABIMELECH, TOLA THE son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, who lived in the hill country of Ephraim near Shamir,^w stood up to defend Israel, ²and he judged Israel 23 years. Then he died and was buried in Shamir.

1110-1088 B.C.

³After the death of Tola, Jair^x the Gileadite judged Israel 22 years. ⁴He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkey colts, and they possessed thirty cities, called to this day Havvoth-jair,^y in the land of Gilead. ⁵When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.

1088-1070 B.C.

⁶Then the Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD by serving the Baalim^z and the Ashtaroth,^a the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. They deserted the LORD and did not serve Him. ⁷The LORD's indignation was kindled against Israel, and

He gave them over into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites;^b and at their hands Israel was oppressed and trampled upon that year.^c For eighteen years the Israelites beyond Jordan in the land of the Amorites in Gilead were oppressed. ⁹Then the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sorely distressed.

¹⁰The Israelites then cried to the LORD, "We have sinned against Thee, in that we have forsaken our God and have served the Baalim." ¹¹The LORD answered the Israelites: Did I not save you from the Egyptians, from the Amorites, from the Ammonites, and from the Philistines? ¹²The Sidonians too, and the Amalekites and the Moabites did oppress you; you cried to Me, and I saved you from their power; ¹³yet you have forsaken Me and have served other gods; wherefore I will save you no more.^d ¹⁴Go and cry to the gods which you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress.

¹⁵The Israelites said to the LORD, "We have sinned; do Thou to us whatever seems good in Thine eyes; only deliver us, we pray Thee this day."

¹⁶They put away the strange gods from among them, and they served the LORD, and His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

¹⁷The Ammonites mustered their forces and encamped in Gilead^e while the Israelites assembled and encamped in Mizpeh.^f ¹⁸Then the people and all the princes of Gilead said one to another, "Who will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."^g

11 NOW JEPHTHAH THE GILEADITE was a brave hero, but he was

v) The Ruler of mankind is fair; He pays offenders back in their own coin.

w) A more central part of the country; a more convenient place for a judge to reside.

x) The first judge to come from: east of Jordan. y) Meaning, Jair's villages. Ten communities within the city limits of Jair. z) The plural of Baal.

a) Used in connection with the plural of Baal, a general designation for the female divinities of the Canaanites. b) The Philistines to the west; the Ammonites to the east.

c) The year Jair died. He judged rather than fought.

d) There would be no deliverance without repentance. e) Gilead was located east of Jordan.

f) Heb. — a high place or watch tower, located in Gilead, east of the Jordan, possibly Ramoth-gilead. Jephthah settled there after his victory over the Ammonites.

g) It is not accurate to think of each judge as following another judge who is mentioned earlier; rarely if ever did any judge rule over the whole nation. Eli died 1070 B.C., after 40-years' judgeship during which Jair ruled 22 years, Jephthah 6, Izabab 7, Elon 10, Abdon 8, and Samson 20, obviously much of it simultaneously.

the son of a paramour,^h and Gilead had fathered Jephthah. ²Gilead's wife gave birth to sons, who, when they grew up, expelled Jephthah, saying to him, "You shall not share in the inheritance of our father's estate, for you are the son of another woman." ³So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob,ⁱ where renegades lined up with him, who joined him in banditry.

⁴In time the Ammonites made war against Israel, ⁵and when the Ammonites moved up against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, so we may fight against the Ammonites."^j ⁷But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why do you now come to me, when you are in distress?" ⁸Then the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is the reason we have turned to you, so accompany us; fight against the Ammonites, and be chief over us and over all the inhabitants of Gilead." ⁹Jephthah replied to the elders of Gilead, "If you take me back with you to fight the Ammonites and the LORD delivers them into my hand, shall I really be your chief?" ¹⁰The elders of Gilead answered Jephthah, "The LORD be witness between us^k that we will do as you say."

¹¹Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead; the people made him chief and commander over them, and Jephthah repeated all his words before the LORD in Mizpeh. ¹²Jephthah then sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites to ask, "What do you have against me, that you are making war against my country?" ¹³The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Israel took away my land when he came up out of Egypt, from the Arnon even to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; so I request of you to restore the places peaceably."^l

¹⁴Jephthah again sent the king of the Ammonites messengers, ¹⁵who told him, "Thus says Jephthah, 'Israel took away neither the land of Moab nor the land of the Ammonites; ¹⁶but they came up from Egypt, and Israel went through the desert to the Red Sea and arrived at Kadesh. ¹⁷Then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, "Let me pass, I beg of you, through your land"; but the king of Edom refused. To the king of Moab, too, he sent request, but he would not consent; so the Israelites remained in Kadesh. ¹⁸Later they journeyed through the desert, going around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, until they came to the east side of the land of Moab, and when they arrived on the other side of the Arnon they pitched their camp, being careful not to cross into Moab, for the Arnon was the border of Moab. ¹⁹Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon, and said, "Let us, please, pass through your land to our destination"; but ²⁰Sihon did not trust Israel, nor did he permit Israel to pass through his country. Instead Sihon mustered his people, encamped at Jahaz and fought against Israel.

²¹"Then the LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hands of Israel, so that they were defeated, and Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites and its inhabitants. ²²They possessed all the land of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and from the wilderness to the Jordan. ²³Now that the LORD God of Israel has driven out the Amorites from before His people Israel, are you to occupy the territory? ²⁴Truly, that which Chemosh your god gives you to possess, that you may occupy; but we will possess whatever the LORD our God clears out from before us. ²⁵Are you any better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever

h) The Hebrew word "zonah" could be translated: "keeper of an inn"; thus it is understood by the Targum of Jonathan. She certainly was not the prostitute type we usually think of; else the son would not have been brought up by his father. i) A town near Syria.

j) In their desperate poverty of reliable leaders they sought Jephthah.

k) Indicates the seriousness of their promise, as we might take an oath by placing a hand on a Bible. l) See Num. 21:21-35.

fight against them? ²⁶While Israel dwelled in Heshbon and its towns, in Aroer and its towns, and in all the cities on either side of the Arnon for 300 years, why did you not recover them within that time? ²⁷I therefore have committed no wrong against you, but you are doing me wrong by making war on me. May the LORD, the Judge, decide this day between the Israelites and the Ammonites."

²⁸But the king of the Ammonites did not listen to the entreaty of Jephthah. ²⁹Then the Spirit of the LORD^m came upon Jephthah, so that he marched through Gilead and Manasseh; through Mizpeh in Gilead he marched on to the Ammonites.

1092-1086 B.C.

³⁰Jephthah made a vow to the LORD. He said, "If Thou wilt deliver the Ammonites into my hand, ³¹then whateverⁿ comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in victory from the Ammonites, shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."^o ³²Jephthah then marched into the land of the Ammonites to engage them in war, and the LORD delivered them into his hand. ³³He routed them with heavy casualties from Aroer^p as far as the vicinity of Minnith, through twenty cities, and as far as Abel-cheramim.^q Thus were the Ammonites subdued by Israel.

³⁴Then Jephthah came to Mizpeh to his house. And, see, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances. She was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. ³⁵As soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! You are bending me low; you are plunging me into calamity; for I have

made a vow to the LORD, and I cannot repudiate it." ³⁶She answered him, "My father, you have made a vow to the LORD; do to me according to that which you have vowed to the LORD, for as much as the LORD brought retribution for you upon your enemies, the Ammonites. ³⁷But let me have the privilege of going to the mountains for two months that I may bewail my virginity, I and my companions." ³⁸He said, "Go," and he let her go for two months. She left with her companions to bewail her virginity upon the mountains. ³⁹So at the end of two months she returned to her father, and he did with her according to the vow^r which he had made; she has not mated with a man. Thus it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰for the maidens to go annually to lament^a the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

1092-1086 B.C.

12 THE MEN OF EPHRAIM MOBILIZED, marched to Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites and did not summon us to go with you? We will burn down your house over your head." ²Jephthah answered them, "I and my people had serious conflict with the Ammonites; and when I called to you for help, you refused to come and deliver us out of their hand. ³When I saw that you refused to help us, I took my life in my hands.^t I marched against the Ammonites, and the LORD delivered them into my hand. Why then have you marched to fight against me?"

⁴Jephthah then called up all the men of Gilead and fought Ephraim. The Gileadites defeated the Ephraimites, because they had said, "You are

m) Jephthah was thus equipped with wisdom, courage, and needful direction to conduct a successful war.

n) The Hebrew word *asher* may be rendered either "whoever" or "whatever." "Whatever" seems more in keeping with the spirit of the text.

o) It is assumed that if an object suitable for burnt offering appeared, it would be so offered; if not, it could be dedicated to, and used of, God some other way. Had an unclean animal appeared, it would not have been offered as a burnt sacrifice. Human sacrifices were contrary to the law of God; those were pagan practices. p) A village near the Arnon river. q) Meadow vineyard.

r) He consecrated and devoted her to God in a way consistent with his promise.

s) She remained a virgin, whose life was dedicated to God and she bewailed her virginity. Her girl friends went annually to her retreat, probably going along with her. Nowhere does it say that Jephthah's daughter was committed to the flames.

t) He assumed the responsibility and danger of going to war. cf. I Sam. 19:5.

Ephraimite fugitives,^u you Gileadites in between Ephraim and Manasseh.”

⁵The Gileadites then seized the fords of the Jordan that faced Ephraim, and when an Ephraimite escapee said, “Let me cross over,” the Gileadites would say to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” If he said, “No,” ⁶they would say to him, “Then say Shibboleth.” If he could not pronounce it right and said “Sibboleth” instead, they would arrest him and execute him at the fords of the Jordan. Thus there fell at that time 42,000 Ephraimites. ⁷Jephthah the Gileadite judged Israel six years; then he died and was buried in one of the Gilead cities.

1086-1079 B.C.

⁸After Jephthah, Ibzan of Bethlehem^v judged Israel. ⁹He had thirty sons and thirty daughters, whom he gave in marriage outside his clan, and he brought in thirty daughters from outside for his sons. Ibzan judged Israel seven years; ¹⁰then he died and was buried in Bethlehem.

¹¹After him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel ten years. ¹²Then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

1078-1070 B.C.

¹³After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite^w judged Israel. ¹⁴He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy saddled donkeys. He judged Israel eight years. ¹⁵And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.^x

1110-1070 B.C.

13 ONCE MORE THE ISRAELITES DID evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years.^y

²Now a certain man by the name of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, lived in

Zorah.^z His wife was barren and childless, ³but the Angel of the LORD^a appeared to her, and said: See, you have been barren and childless, but you will conceive and bear a son. ⁴See that you do not partake of wine or strong drink or any unclean food, ⁵for you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall touch his head, for he shall be a Nazarite^b to God from conception. He will begin to rescue^c Israel out of the hands of the Philistines.

⁶The woman went and told her husband, “A Man of God appeared to me, who had the appearance of the Angel of God, very awe-inspiring. I did not ask Him where He came from, and He did not tell me His name. ⁷He said to me: ‘See, you have been barren and childless, but now you will conceive and bear a son. You must not partake of wine or strong drink or any unclean food, for he shall be a Nazarite from the time of conception until his death.’”

⁸Then Manoah petitioned the LORD. He said, “Hear me, O LORD! Send the Man of God again to us, that He may instruct us and tell us what we shall do for the child that is to be born.”

⁹God answered the prayer of Manoah, so that the Angel of God came again to the woman, while she was sitting in the field, her husband not being with her. ¹⁰So the woman ran hurriedly to her husband and said, “Look, the Man who appeared to me the other day has returned.” ¹¹So Manoah got up, followed his wife, and on reaching the Man, inquired, “Are You the Man who spoke to this woman?” The Man said: I am! ¹²Then Manoah said, “When what You said comes true, what shall be the lad’s way of life and his activities?” ¹³The Angel of the LORD said to Manoah: The woman must carry out all my instructions.

¹⁴She must not eat anything made

u) The Gileadites belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. The Ephraimites reproached them as a remnant who fled from their own people and were not fit to be called the brothers of Ephraim and Manasseh, but draft dodgers or military deserters.

v) Not of Bethlehem in Judah, but near Mount Carmel.

w) Abdon was a native of Pirathon, a town in the Mount of the Amalekites, within the Ephraim territory.

x) Either some Amalekites lived there or a memorial was erected there related to Amalek.

y) After Shamgar [ch. 3:31], the Philistines observed peace for a season, but now God commissions them to punish wayward Israel.

z) A town in Judah later given to Dan.

a) This is evidently the One who appeared to Moses, Joshua, Gideon, etc., and none other than the Son of God.

b) The Nazarite demanded a strict, separated life.

c) Samson began the deliverance from the Philistines; it was completed in the days of David.

from grapes, nor any unclean thing, nor shall she drink wine or strong drink; all this she must observe. ¹⁵Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD, "Please, stay with us; we will kill a kid for You." ¹⁶But the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah: Even though I stay with you, I will not eat of your bread. If you want to, you may offer a burnt offering to the LORD. Manoah did not know that the Man was the Angel of the LORD.

¹⁷Then Manoah asked the Angel of the LORD, "What is Your name^d so that we may pay homage to You when Your message comes true?" ¹⁸The Angel of the LORD said: Why do you ask My name, seeing it is Wonderful?^e ¹⁹Then Manoah offered a kid with a meal offering upon the rock to the LORD, and the Angel did wondrously;^f Manoah and his wife looked on as the offering was consumed. ²⁰When the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, the Angel of the LORD ascended in the altar flame. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they threw themselves prone on the ground. ²¹But the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah understood that He was the Angel of the LORD.

²²Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die because we have looked upon God."^g ²³But his wife said, "If the LORD intended to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a meal offering from our hands; neither would He have permitted us to see all this or to hear such things as these."

²⁴The woman bore a son and called his name Samson.^h The child grew up,

and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵The Spirit of the LORD began to move him in Mahaneh-dan,ⁱ between Zorah and Eshtaol.

1095 B.C.?

14 SAMSON WENT DOWN TO TIMNAH^j and noticed a woman at Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. ²When he returned home, he said to his father and mother, "I saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. Now get me her for a wife." ³But his father and mother replied to him, "Is there no woman at all among the girls of our own people or kinsmen, that you must seek a wife among the uncircumcised Philistines?"^k Samson answered his father, "Get her for me; for she pleases me well." ⁴His father and mother did not know that this was the LORD's leading, that He intended an occasion for a quarrel with the Philistines; for at that time the Philistines dominated Israel.

⁵Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah, and when he came to the vineyards of Timnah, a young lion came roaring against him. ⁶Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he tore him apart as one might tear apart a kid of the goats, although he had nothing in his hand.^l But he told neither his father nor his mother what he had done. ⁷Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson well.^m ⁸When he went back later on his way to marry her,ⁿ he turned aside to look at the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees inside the lion's body; it was filled with honey. ⁹He dipped some of it out with his hands

d) Jacob asked [Gen. 32:29ff.].

e) This word comes from the Hebrew word *pele* meaning, it is "Wonderful." It is of interest to note that the Messianic prophecy in Isa. 9:6 uses the same word *pele* to designate Christ the Messiah. It suggests that the Angel is our Lord Christ.

f) The Angel stayed in character; He being Wonderful, performed wondrous things.

g) It was believed that if any man saw God or His Angel, death would ensue. So Gideon thought [ch. 6:22ff.; see also Exod. 33:20 and Deut. 5:26].

h) This name comes from the Hebrew word *Shimshon*, which is derived from the root-word *Shamash*, meaning "to serve." Samson was God's man, prepared from infancy for a great mission. He had his faults and his limited ability, but God used him. i) Camp of Dan.

j) A town near the Israel-Philistine frontier; first assigned to Judah, later given to Dan. See Josh. 19:43.

k) Mixed marriages were forbidden. See Exod. 34:16, Deut. 7:3. This marriage, however, was a link in the circumstance of Israel's liberation.

l) Samson's might was divinely imparted, in agreement with his being a Nazarite.

m) Samson proposed to the girl, and they became engaged.

n) About one year later Samson went to marry the girl; sufficient time had elapsed for nature and the bees to do their work.

and ate it as he went along. Then he joined his father and mother and gave them to eat of what was left; but he did not tell them that he had dipped the honey out of the lion's carcass.

¹⁰His father went down to the woman, and Samson made a feast there, as was the custom among the young men.

¹¹When they met him, they provided thirty companions^a to be with him,

¹²to whom Samson said, "Let me propound a riddle to you;^b if you can solve it before the end of the seven-days' feast and find it out, I will give you thirty linen tunics^c and thirty festal garments." ¹³But if you cannot answer me, then you must give me thirty linen tunics and thirty festal garments." They said to him, "Propound your riddle, so we may hear it."

¹⁴Then he told them, "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet." But for three days they could not solve the riddle.

¹⁵On the seventh day they said to Samson's wife, "Persuade your husband to solve the riddle for us, or we will burn up you and your father's house. Did you call us here to impoverish us?"

¹⁶So Samson's wife wept on his shoulder^d and said, "You evidently hate me; you do not love me; for you have not confided to me the answer of the riddle you propounded to my people." He said to her, "I have not told my father or mother, so should I tell you?" ¹⁷She wept on his shoulder through the days of the feast; and on the seventh day he told her, because she kept pressing him. Then she told the answer to her people; ¹⁸and on the seventh day before the sun went down, the men of the city said to him, "What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion?" He said to them, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have solved my riddle."

¹⁹Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily. He went down to Ashkelon^e and killed thirty men, took their tunics and their robes, and gave them to the men who had solved the riddle. Then, very angry, he went up to his father's house. ²⁰And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.^f

1095-1075 B.C.

15 SHORTLY THEREAFTER, DURING the wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife, taking along a kid.^g He said, "I will go to my wife in her bridal room." But her father refused to let him go in, ²saying, "I thought you hated your wife; so I gave her to your rival. Is not her younger sister better looking than she? Let her be your wife instead." ³Then Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless when I harm the Philistines." ⁴So Samson went and caught three hundred foxes,^h tied them together tail to tail, took torches, and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵Then he set fire to the torches and turned the foxes loose in the grainfields of the Philistines, so that the shocks, the standing grain, and the olive groves were burned.

⁶When the Philistines said, "Who did this?" they replied, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he took his wife and gave her to his rival." The Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire.ⁱ ⁷Samson then told them, "When such is your behavior, I certainly will be avenged of you, and after that I will quit." ⁸So he struck them, hip and thigh, slaughtering many. After that he went to live in the cleft of the Etam rock.^j

⁹The Philistines then went up, pitched their tents, and spread themselves in Judah near Lehi. ¹⁰And the men of Judah said, "Why are you about to attack us?" They answered,

o) Children of the bride chamber and friends of the bridegroom [Matt. 9:15].

p) A form of amusement at a wedding feast.

q) This tunic was under the robe; tunic and robe formed a complete suit.

r) She had no real love for Samson; hers were "crocodile tears."

s) A city on the coast, north of Gaza.

t) The true character of Samson's wife is here revealed. Being unequally yoked together is indeed dangerous [II Cor. 6:14, 15].

u) A token of reconciliation.

v) Samson may also have employed others and have taken days in catching such a large number.

w) Probably to appease Samson and to soften his anger. x) A fortified stronghold.

1095-1075 B.C.

"We are come up to bind Samson and to treat him as he treated us." ¹¹Then three thousand men of Judah^y went down to the cleft of the rock near Etam and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines have dominion over us? What is this that you have done to us?" He answered them, "I am doing to them as they did to me." ¹²They told him, "We have come to bind you and to deliver you into the hands of the Philistines." Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you yourselves will not set upon me."^z ¹³They assured him, "No, we will not kill you, but we will bind you securely and deliver you into their hands." Then they bound him with two new ropes and brought him away from the rock.

¹⁴When he came to Lehi^a and the Philistines shouted against him, the Spirit of the LORD came rushing upon him, and the ropes around his arms became as flax that had been burned with fire; they dropped from his hands. ¹⁵Samson found a fresh^b jawbone of a donkey, and taking it in hand, he killed a thousand men. ¹⁶Then Samson said, "With the jawbone of a donkey, piles upon piles, with the jawbone of a donkey, I have killed a thousand men."^c

¹⁷When he was through speaking, he threw the jawbone out of his hand and called the place Ramath-lehi.^d

¹⁸Then, growing very thirsty, he called out to the LORD, "Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of Thy servant, and now must I die of thirst, or be captured by the uncircumcised?"

¹⁹Then God caused a fissure in a hollow place in Lehi; water came out of it: he drank and his spirit revived, wherefore he called the place En-hakkore,^e and so it is in Lehi to this day.

²⁰Samson judged Israel twenty years during the Philistine period.

16 AS SAMSON WENT TO GAZA AND noticed a prostitute, he went in to her. ²When the Gazites were told that Samson had come to town, they surrounded him and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept quiet all night, saying to themselves, "As soon as daylight comes, we will kill him." ³Samson slept until midnight, then got up, took hold of the doors of the city gate, and the two doorposts, tore them away with the bolt, laid them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill opposite Hebron.

⁴Later he fell in love with a woman by the name of Delilah,^f who lived in the valley of Sorek.^g ⁵The Philistine princes came to her and said, "Induce him to tell you what the secret of his great strength is and in what way we may overpower him and tie him; then we will each give you 1,100 pieces of silver."^h ⁶So Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me, please, wherein lies the secret of your great strength, and how you can be bound to render you helpless." ⁷Samson replied, "If they bind me with seven fresh, wood fiber cords not yet dried, then I shall become weak and be like any other man."

⁸The princes then brought her seven fiber cords which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. ⁹Having men hidden in her room, she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you. Samson!" But he snapped the cords as a strand of rope snaps when it is exposed to fire. So they did not discover the secret of his strength.

¹⁰Delilah said to Samson, "You have deceived me; you have lied to me; but tell me now, please, with what you can be bound." ¹¹He said to her, "If they bind me tightly with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall be-

y) Even his own kinsmen feared Samson, taking 3,000 men to win over one fellow Hebrew.

z) Samson did not desire to kill his own countrymen. a) Probably the Philistine "Alcatraz."

b) A jawbone subjected to the elements becomes brittle and fragile. This one was fresh and strong, still reinforced by the cohesive sinews and cartilage.

c) A triumphal song popular with the Hebrews. See Exod. 15:1-21.

d) Heb. - The high place of the jawbone, located a few miles northwest of Bethlehem.

e) Heb. - Fountain of him who called upon God in prayer.

f) Whether Delilah became Samson's mistress or just a girl friend, she did not love him.

g) A city on the border between Dan and the Philistines.

h) About \$1,000.00 from each of five Philistine princes. Samson was their "public enemy, No. 1."

come weak and be as any other man."¹² So Delilah took new ropes, bound him with them, and said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" Men were waiting in an inside room. But he snapped the ropes from his arms like a thread.

¹³ Then Delilah said to Samson, "Up to now you have fooled me and told me lies; do tell me wherewith you can be bound." He said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web."¹⁴ So she fastened it with a pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He awakened out of his sleep and tore away the pin of the loom with the web. ¹⁵ Then she told him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you do not confide in me? These three times you have deceived me and have not told me wherein the secret of your strength lies." ¹⁶ So it came about after she nagged him daily and kept urging him without stopping until his soul was wearied to death, ¹⁷ that he opened to her his whole heart.¹ He said to her, "No razor has touched my head, for I have been a Nazarite of God from my mother's womb; if I were shaved, I would lose my strength and become weak and be like other men."¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had opened his heart to her, she summoned the Philistine princes, saying, "Come up at once, for this time he has opened his heart to me." Then the Philistine princes came up to her with the money in their hand. ¹⁹ She let him sleep upon her knees and called a man to shave off the seven locks of his head. So she began to control him, for his strength left him. ²⁰ Then she exclaimed, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He awoke out of his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." He did not know that the LORD had departed from him.

²¹ The Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes,¹ took him down to Gaza, bound him in bronze chains, and put him to grinding in the prison. ²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again from the time when it was shaved off.²³

1073 B.C.

²³ The princes of the Philistines got together to offer a special sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and to celebrate. They said, "Our god has delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hand." ²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god and said, "Our god has delivered our enemy into our hand. He was a destroyer of our country and the murderer of many of us." ²⁵ It came about when they were in high spirits, that they said, "Call Samson to amuse us." Samson was brought from the prison, and he amused them. When they stationed him between the pillars, ²⁶ Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me free, so I can feel the pillars on which the house is supported and lean against them."

²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women; all the Philistine princes were there, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof, looking down while Samson made sport. ²⁸ Then Samson called out to the LORD and said, "O LORD God, remember me, I pray Thee; do strengthen me only this once, O God,² that I may at once wreak vengeance upon the Philistines for both my eyes." ²⁹ Samson took hold of the two central columns on which the building rested, one with his right hand and the other with his left; ³⁰ and he said, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then with all his might he bent himself, and the building caved in upon the princes and upon all the people that were in it; so these he killed in dying numbered more than those he killed while he lived.

i) The "web" was the cloth in the loom which Delilah was weaving. The "pin" was the object with which the braided locks were fastened to the "web." She probably wove his hair into the cloth.

j) Samson becomes a traitor to himself and to his God.

k) The secret of his strength lay in his Nazarite vow and not in his long hair, as such. By destroying the symbol, his hair, he abrogated his vow to God, and God in turn abandoned him. See Num. 6:5; Judg. 13:5. l) Blinding was a permanent preventive against visible temptations.

m) Samson probably repented of his folly and renewed his Nazarite vow; consequently his physical strength was restored.

n) Notwithstanding his foolishness and poor judgment, Samson demonstrated his faith in God. He is numbered among the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:32.

³¹His brothers and all his relatives came down, took him away with them, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol^p in his father Manoa's tomb. He had judged Israel for twenty years.

About 1350 B.C.

17 A MAN NAMED MICAH, WHO lived in the highlands of Ephraim, ²said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse in my hearing, that money is in my possession; I took it." His mother said, "Blessed of the LORD shall my son be." ³When he restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother, she said, "I truly dedicate the silver from my hand to the LORD in behalf of my son, so that he may make a molten and an engraved image; so, I return it to you."

⁴After he had restored the money to his mother, she took 200 pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith, who made them into a molten and an engraved image^q for Micah's house.

⁵This man Micah had a shrine for Deity.^r He made an ephod^s and teraphim^t and consecrated one of his sons to be his priest. ⁶In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what, to his view, seemed right.

⁷A young man, a Levite^u of the tribe of Judah, from Bethlehem in Judah, lived there. ⁸The man had left Bethlehem in Judah to find a position,^v and when in his travels he came to the highlands of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, he settled down. ⁹Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" To this he replied, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah; I have come to live where I may secure a position." ¹⁰Micah said to him, "Stay with me! Be to me a father and a priest, and I

will annually pay you ten pieces of silver and give you a suit of clothes and your room and board." ¹¹To this proposal the Levite agreed; he lived with the man, and the young man was as one of his sons. ¹²Micah then consecrated the Levite,^w and he lived in Micah's house. ¹³Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will bless me, since I have a Levite as my priest."

About 1350 B.C.

18 IN THOSE DAYS THERE WAS NO king in Israel, and at that time the Danites looked for an inheritance in which to settle, since until then their inheritance had not been allotted to them among the tribes of Israel.^x ²So the Danites sent five courageous men from their tribe at Zorah and Eshtaol to spy out the land and to explore it. They said to them, "Go and explore the land." They arrived at the highlands of Ephraim, where they lodged in the house of Micah. ³When they neared the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite,^y and turning to him they said, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place, and what have you here?" ⁴He answered them, "Thus and so has Micah done for me; he has hired me, and I have become his priest." ⁵Then they said to him, "Inquire of God,^z we beg of you, so that we may know whether the mission on which we are going will be a success." The priest said to them, ⁶"Go in peace, the journey you are making is pleasing to the LORD."^a ⁷Then the five men left, came to Laish, and observed how the natives lived, quiet and secure^b after the manner of the Sidonians.^c There was no ruler in the land who might in any wise embarrass them. They lived

p) There [ch. 13:25] the Spirit had first empowered him while still young.

q) Used as aids in local worship.

r) Heb. — *Elohim*, an intensive plural noun emphasizing the richness of God's Majesty.

s) Part of the equipment of the sanctuary, possibly an instrument of divination.

t) Images of household gods.

u) Probably of the tribe of Judah by his mother and of the tribe of Levi by his father.

v) Where he might be employed in his Levitical office.

w) This Levite was inaugurated in an office to which only a high priest could ordain a priest.

x) Dan was among the seven tribes not included in the first allotment [Josh. 18:2].

y) His voice was not that of a native Ephraimite. Cf. ch. 12:6.

z) Since the name *Elohim* is used for God, they meant the true God and not a heathen deity.

a) The use of the name *Jehovah* [translated LORD] aimed to suggest that Micah and the Levite worshiped the true God. This designation is never applied but to Him.

b) The Sidonians lived in fortified cities and enjoyed relative peace and security.

c) Probably the people in Laish were colonists from Sidon.

a great distance from the Sidonians,^d and they had no dealings with anyone.

⁸When the spies returned to their tribe at Zorah and Eshtaol, their brothers said to them, "What is your report?" ⁹They answered, "Arise, and let us possess the land; for we have seen it, and it is very good. Will you sit still? Do not delay. Enter the land, and possess it at once." ¹⁰When you go, you will come upon a people whose land offers room in all directions and who are living complacently secure; but God has given it to you, and it will be a place where you shall have no want for anything on earth."

¹¹Six hundred men of the Danite clans from Zorah and Eshtaol then armed themselves with weapons of war and went out. ¹²They pitched their camp in Judah near Kiriath-jearim;^e so this place is called Mahaneh-dan^f until this day; it is behind Kiriath-jearim. ¹³From there they traveled to the highlands of Ephraim until they came to Micah's house. ¹⁴Then the five men, who had gone to spy out and search the country of Laish, said to their fellow tribesmen, "Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod, teraphim,^g and an engraved and a molten image? So decide what you are to do."

¹⁵They then turned aside and went to the house of Micah, where the young Levite lived and inquired after his health. ¹⁶The 600 Danites, who were armed with weapons of war, stood near the entrance of the gate ¹⁷while the spies went inside and took the engraved image, the ephod, the teraphim, and the molten image.

The priest was standing by the entrance of the gate with the 600 men that were armed with weapons of war, ¹⁸while these went into Micah's house and took the engraved image, ephod,

the teraphim, and the molten image. The priest said to them, "What are you doing?" ¹⁹They answered, "Be still; put your hand over your mouth. Go with us, and be to us a father and a priest; is it better for you to be priest in the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?" ²⁰Then the priest felt gladhearted.^h He took the ephod, the teraphim, and the engraved image, and went among the people. ²¹Putting the children, the cattle, and the goods in front of them,ⁱ they turned and moved on.

²²When they had gone some distance from Micah's house, the neighbors of Micah assembled in a group and overtook the Danites. ²³They called to the Danites, who turned their faces and said to Micah, "What ails you, that you follow us with such a large crowd?" ²⁴He replied, "You have taken my god,^j which I made; also the priest, and have gone on your way; now what have I left? How can you say to me, 'What ails you?'" ²⁵The Danites told him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest some of the embittered men in our midst knock you down and kill you and your household."^k ²⁶The Danites then went their way; and when Micah saw that he was outnumbered, he went back home. ²⁷Thus they took what Micah had made and the priest who had served him.

When they reached the quiet and secure people of Laish,^l they attacked them with their weapons of war and burned the city. ²⁸No one delivered them, for they lived to themselves in the valley near Beth-rehob,^m and Sidon was a great distance away. They rebuilt the city, lived in it, ²⁹and named the new city Danⁿ after their ancestor Dan, who had been born to Israel. But

d) Laish was located near the foot of the Lebanon range near the source of the Jordan River.

e) Heb. — Cities of woods. f) Heb. — Camp of Dan. Ch. 13:25 suggests that this camp was in existence during the days of Samson; so the events in chaps. 17 to 21 occurred prior to Samson's judgeship. g) See ch. 17:5.

h) The priest was glad to get a call to a larger parish; but neither they nor he had a right to those articles.

i) Sent ahead so that the rear could be protected against attack.

j) A paraphrase might read, "You have taken the symbols which I made of my god."

k) The attitude here is far from divine teaching.

l) Living in a fortified city in an isolated place, they felt no need for posting guard.

m) Heb. — House of a street, a town in northern Palestine inhabited by Syrians.

n) Located at the northern extremity of Israel's possession. "From Dan to Beersheba" means "from the northern to the southern extremity."

previously the city's name was Laish.

³⁰The Danites set up the engraved image^o in their midst, and Jonathan^p the son of Gershom, the son of Moses,^q and his two sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the captivity of the land. ³¹They used the engraved image, which Micah had made, as long as God's house was located in Shiloh. 1360 B.C.

19 IN THOSE DAYS WHEN THERE was no king in Israel, a certain Levite, living as an outsider in the highlands of Ephraim, took a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. ²His concubine played him false^r and moved back to her father's house in Bethlehem of Judah for four months. ³Then her husband arose, and, taking his servant and a pair of donkeys, he went to the concubine's house to speak endearing words to her, so as to win her back. When she introduced him to her father, he was overjoyed to meet him.^s ⁴His father-in-law, the damsel's father, detained him; so he remained with him three days. They ate and drank and spent the nights there.

⁵On the fourth day they got up early in the morning to leave; but the damsel's father said to his son-in-law, "Refresh yourself with a bite of bread, and afterward you may go." ⁶So they sat down and ate and drank together. Then the girl's father said to the man, "Be content to stay all night, I beg of you, and let your heart be merry."^t ⁷When the man rose to go, his father-in-law urged him so strongly that he stayed another night. ⁸On the morning of the fifth day he arose early to leave, but the damsel's father said, "Refresh yourself, I beg of you, and stay until evening," so they ate another meal together. ⁹When the man got up to leave with his concubine and servant, the damsel's father said, "Look, the day is drawing to a close; please stay all night. Rest here tonight, so that you may be re-

freshed, and in the morning you can rise early for your journey home."

¹⁰But the man would not stay that night; he got up and went on his way toward Jebus^u (which is Jerusalem) with his two saddled donkeys and his concubine.

¹¹When they arrived at Jebus about sunset, the servant said to his master, "Please, let us turn aside here and lodge in the city of the Jebusites."^v ¹²His master replied, "We will not turn aside into this city of foreigners, for they do not belong to Israel; but we will move on to Gibeah."^w ¹³He further said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near one of the places ahead and spend the night, either in Gibeah or in Ramah."^x ¹⁴As they continued their journey, the sun went down at Gibeah, a town of Benjamin.

¹⁵They turned aside into Gibeah to lodge and sat down in the town square; but nobody took them along home with him for the night. ¹⁶Then at eventide, see, an old man, also from the highlands of Ephraim, but then living in Gibeah, came from his work in the field. The natives of the place were Benjamites. ¹⁷Looking up, he saw the traveler in the town square, and the old man said, "Where are you going, and from where have you come?" ¹⁸He answered him, "We are traveling from Bethlehem in Judah to the highlands of Ephraim, which is my home. I am returning from a visit to Bethlehem in Judah and am now on my way to the house of the LORD," but no one has offered to take us in for the night. ¹⁹We have ample straw and fodder for our donkeys and plenty of bread and wine for me, for your handmaid, and for the young man who accompanies your servant; there is no shortage of anything." ²⁰Then the old man said, "Peace to you! Let me take care of all your wants," but do not stay in the street." ²¹So he took him into his

o) They erected a formal place of worship where the priest could officiate.

p) Jonathan was the young Levite, descendant of Gershom, son of Moses.

q) The name Manasseh, correctly translated here in the KJV, is a modification of the name Moses.

r) Deserting her bed and board was sometimes reason for the designation "harlot," as the Hebrew here intimates.

s) The girl's father was anxious to bring about a reconciliation.

t) A town of the Jebusites, first known as Salem [Gen. 14:18], later as Jerusalem.

u) A town north of Jebus near Mount Ephraim. v) A town near Gibeah. w) At Shiloh.

x) Oriental hospitality; the guest may keep his provisions for the rest of the journey.

house, gave fodder to the donkeys, and, after washing their feet, they ate and drank.

²²While they were enjoying themselves, certain perverted men of the city surrounded the house and, pounding on the door, called out to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who entered your house, that we may rape him."

²³Then the master of the house went out to them and said, "No, my brothers, do not commit such a wicked act, I beg of you. Now that this man is my guest, do not commit this shameful crime. ²⁴I will bring out my virgin daughter and his concubine; ravish them, and do as you please with them, but commit no such wanton crime on this man."^y ²⁵The men, however, would not listen to him; so the man seized his concubine and brought her out to them.^z They raped her and abused her all night until morning, and at daybreak they let her go. ²⁶When morning dawned, she fell down at the entrance of the house^a where her master lodged and lay there until daylight. ²⁷When her master got up in the morning, opened the doors of the house, and stepped out to go on his way, he found his concubine at the entrance of the house with her hands upon the threshold. ²⁸He said to her, "Arise, let us be on our way"; but there was no answer. He then placed her on the donkey and started on his way home. ²⁹When he arrived home, he drew his knife, and, taking hold of his concubine, he cut her up, limb by limb, into twelve pieces and distributed her throughout the borders of Israel.^b ³⁰Then every one who saw it said, "Nothing like this has ever happened or been seen since the day when the Israelites came up out of the land of Egypt. Think it over, take counsel, and speak up."^c

1360 B.C.?

20 THEN ALL THE ISRAELITES from Dan to Beersheba, with the land of Gilead, mustered, and the congregation was assembled as one man before the LORD at Mizpeh.^d ²There the leaders of the whole nation, all the tribes of Israel, 400,000 infantrymen with swords, presented themselves in the congregation of God's people. ³The Benjamites heard that the Israelites were on their way to Mizpah. The Israelites said, "Tell us how this wickedness came about."^e ⁴Then the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered, "I came with my concubine to Gibeah, a town of Benjamin, to lodge; ⁵but during the night the men of Gibeah, with evil intentions toward me, surrounded the house, planning to kill me; but they raped my concubine, so that she died. ⁶I then took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the tribes of Israel; for they committed a lewd and wanton deed in Israel. ⁷Sons of Israel, now that you are all here, express your mind and counsel!"

⁸Then all the people stood up as one man^f and said, "None of us will go to his tent, none of us will return home. ⁹This we will do to Gibeah: we will march against it by lot. ¹⁰We will take ten men of every hundred from all the tribes of Israel, a hundred of every thousand and a thousand out of every ten thousand to supply food for the army, so that when they reach there, they may suitably deal with Gibeah in Benjamin for all the lewdness they have committed in Israel." ¹¹So all the men of Israel united against the city as one man.

¹²The tribes of Israel sent men throughout the entire tribe of Benjamin, announcing, "What wickedness is this that has occurred among you? ¹³Now deliver into our hands the per-

y) Though surprising to us, to the host this seemed the lesser of two evils; see Gen. 19:8, Lot's daughters. z) The man forced his concubine to go out, thereby saving his own body.

a) Indicates the extensive abuse heaped upon her.

b) The crime was so abominable that the people would not believe it, had they not seen evidence.

c) A dramatic way of arousing the people to action. d) Or, Ramoth-Gilead.

e) They wanted the details.

f) Unanimity of purpose was evidenced.

verted fellows in Gibeah, so that we may put them to death and thus remove this crime from Israel." But the Benjamites would not listen to the demands of their fellow Israelites.¹³ ¹⁴Instead, the Benjamites gathered from the other cities to Gibeah to march in battle against the Israelites. ¹⁵On that day the Benjamites of the other cities were counted, 26,000 swordsmen besides 700 chosen men of Gibeah. ¹⁶Among all these there were 700 left-handed sharpshooters who could sling a stone at a hair without missing.

¹⁷The men of Israel were also counted, 400,000 swordsmen besides the Benjamites, mighty men of war, ¹⁸who marched to Bethel^h to inquire of God, "Who shall first engage the Benjamites in battle?" The LORD answered: Judah shall go first.¹ ¹⁹So the Israelites arose early in the morning to arrange their battle lines against Gibeah, ²⁰upon which the men of Israel marched out to fight Benjamin, arraying themselves in battle against those of Gibeah.

²¹Then the Benjamites marched out of Gibeah and made 22,000 Israelites to die on that day. ²²But the Israelites closed ranks and arrayed themselves for battle in the same place where they fought the first day. ²³The Israelites also wept before the LORD until evening, inquiring of the LORD, "Shall we again engage our kinsmen, the Benjamites in battle?"² The LORD answered: Attack them!

²⁴So the Israelites advanced against the Benjamites on the second day, ²⁵and the Benjamites marched out of Gibeah the second day and made 18,000 of Israel's swordsmen to die. ²⁶Then all the Israelites, the entire army, went to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD, fasted until evening, and offered burnt offerings

and peace offerings to the LORD.³ ²⁷The Israelites then inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there at that time ²⁸and Phinehas¹ the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, "Shall we again engage our kinsmen, the Benjamites, in battle, or shall we cease?" The LORD said: Attack them; for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand.

²⁹So on the third day the Israelites set men in ambush^m all around Gibeah; ³⁰and the Israelites engaged the Benjamites and arranged themselves in battle formation against Gibeah, as at previous times. ³¹The Benjamites marched out to meet the army, and they were drawn away from the city. They began to do battle by killing about thirty Israelites along the highways, one of which led to Bethel and the other across the field to Gibeah. ³²The Benjamites said, "They are being killed as on the first day." But the Israelites said, "Let us draw them away from the city into the highways by running away."ⁿ ³³Then the main army of the Israelites arose and arrayed themselves for battle at Baal-tamar,^o while the Israelites in ambush rushed out of their places in Maareh-geba.^p

³⁴When the 10,000 chosen men of Israel neared Gibeah, the battle raged furiously; but those of Benjamin were not aware of the impending danger. ³⁵The LORD routed the Benjamites before Israel, so that the Israelites killed 25,100 Benjamite swordsmen that day.

³⁶The Benjamites realized that they were beaten. While the Israelites yielded ground to the Benjamites, because they had confidence in the men whom they had placed in ambush near Gibeah, ³⁷the men in ambush rushed upon Gibeah and put the whole city to the sword. ³⁸Now the Israelites had agreed

g) Indicates the extent of their depravity.

h) Heb. — House of God. i) But God did not promise immediate victory.

j) Apparently the Israelites trusted in their army and the goodness of their cause, and did not make God a part of the venture. All Israel stood in need of chastisement. God used their enemy for this purpose.

k) Real humility is now evidenced. God responds by giving them victory.

l) If this is the same Phinehas as in Numbers 25, then these events occurred hardly a century after the death of Joshua.

m) They now use prudent caution and military strategy.

n) The men in ambush were to enter the city following the exit of Benjamin's main army.

o) Heb. — Baal of the palm tree. p) Treeless desert near Geba.

upon a signal with the men in ambush, that when they made a great cloud of smoke rise into the air, ³⁹the Israelites should make an about-face in the battle. After the Benjamites attacked and killed about thirty Israelites, they had thought, "They are completely routed as in the first battle." ⁴⁰But then the signal started to rise in a column of smoke. The Benjamites looked back and saw that the whole city was going up in flames. ⁴¹Then the Israelites turned around, and the Benjamites were overcome with fear. When they saw that disaster had overtaken them, ⁴²they turned their backs upon the Israelites and fled into the desert; but the battle hemmed them in; those coming from the city cut them down between them. ⁴³They surrounded Benjamin, chased him without stopping and trampled on him opposite Gibeah toward the east, ⁴⁴so that 18,000 men, all warriors, fell. ⁴⁵Some turned and fled toward the desert near the Rimmon rock, ⁴⁶5,000 were gleaned on the highways, and they followed close after them as far as Gidom, killing 2,000 of them. ⁴⁷Altogether 25,000 swordsmen from the ranks of the Benjamites were killed that day, all of them men of valor. ⁴⁸But 600 men escaped into the desert near the rock of Rimmon, and there they lived for four months. ⁴⁹The men of Israel turned back against the Benjamites and exterminated all the people and the cattle they encountered; and they set on fire all the cities they entered.

1358 B.C.

21 NOW THE MEN OF ISRAEL HAD sworn at Mizpah, "None of us shall marry his daughter to a Benjamite." ²But as the people went to Bethel and remained there in the presence of God until evening, they raised their voices and wept aloud, ³exclaiming, "Why, O LORD, God of Israel, has this happened in Israel, that one of the tribes of Israel is now missing?" ⁴Early next morning the people arose, built an altar, and offered burnt offerings and

peace offerings. ⁵The Israelites said, "Who among all the tribes of Israel did not come out to the assembly?" For an oath had been taken concerning those who did not come out to the congregation at Mizpah, saying, "He shall be put to death."

⁶The Israelites felt grieved about the Benjamites. They said, "Today one of our tribes is eliminated from Israel. ⁷How shall we provide wives for those who are left, seeing we have sworn by the LORD not to give them our daughters for wives?" ⁸Then they said, "Which one of the tribes of Israel did not come to the congregation before the LORD in Mizpah?" And it showed that none had come to the assembly from Jabesh-gilead; ⁹for when they checked up on the people that were mustered, not a man from Jabesh-gilead had been present.

¹⁰Then the congregation sent warriors there with orders, "Go and execute the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead, including the women and children. ¹¹This is what you are to do: kill all the men, also the women who have lain with men." ¹²They found 400 young virgins among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead, who had not lain with a man; these they brought into the camp at Shiloh, located in the land of Canaan. ¹³Then the whole congregation sent word to the Benjamites living at the Rimmon rock, proclaiming amnesty to them. ¹⁴The Benjamites returned, and they gave them the women that had been saved alive in Jabesh-gilead; but even so there were not enough for them. ¹⁵The people felt grieved concerning the Benjamites, because the LORD had made a gap among the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for those who are left without wives, since all the Benjamite women were killed?" ¹⁷They added, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, so that no tribe shall be blotted out from Israel; ¹⁸but we cannot give

q) A fortified, rocky stronghold.

r) Their hasty action resulted in repentance. s) Indicating their contrition.

t) Or, dry Gilead, probably located in an arid spot.

u) The vow in vs. 5 is carried out. The town revived, and King Saul of Benjamin delivered it from overwhelming Ammonites [I Sam. 11:1-11].

v) A change of heart calls for restitution.

them our daughters for wives." For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be he who gives a wife to Benjamin." ¹⁹So they said, "A feast of the LORD is held annually in Shiloh, north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that runs from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah."

²⁰They instructed the Benjamites, "Go, hide in the vineyards, ²¹and wait; when the daughters of Shiloh come to take part in the dances, you may come out of the vineyards; each of you catch his wife from among the daughters of Shiloh, and you go to the land of Benjamin. ²²If their fathers or brothers come out and complain, we will say to them, 'Forgive them graciously, because

we did not provide all of them with a wife in battle, nor did you give them any, because you would have been doing wrong.'"

²³Then the Benjamites did as had been suggested; they took wives according to their own number from the dancers, whom they carried away. When they returned to their own inheritance, they built the cities and settled down.

²⁴Then the Israelites departed, every man as related to his own tribe and family to occupy his inheritance. ²⁵In those days there was no king in Israel; every person did what seemed right in his own eyes.^w

w) See Prov. 14:12. Without a leader the nation became involved in apostasy and social injustices.

THE BOOK OF

RUTH

Around 1100 B.C.

1 IN THE DAYS WHEN THE JUDGES governed^a there was a famine in the land, and a man migrated with his wife and his two sons from Bethlehem in Judah to live for a while in the land of Moab.^b ²The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion,^c Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the land of Moab and remained there. ³But Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; so she was left with her two sons, ⁴who married Moabite women, the one named Orpah and the other Ruth. For about ten years they had lived there ⁵when both Mahlon and Chilion died so that the woman was bereft of her two sons and of her husband. ⁶Then, when she learned in the land of Moab that the LORD had visited His people in giving them food, she got ready to return with her two daughters-in-law from Moab.

⁷With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had lived, but on the way to the land of Judah,^d ⁸Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "You go back, each of you to her mother's home! May the LORD treat you as kindly as you have treated me and those who have died. ⁹The LORD

grant that you may find rest, each in her husband's home." She then kissed them, but they raised their voices and wept. ¹⁰They told her, "We are certainly going back with you to your people." ¹¹But Naomi said, "Go back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Do I have any more sons within me, who could become your husbands? ¹²Go back, my daughters; go your way; I am too old to marry again. And even if I thought there was hope, if I were with a husband tonight, if I should bear sons, ¹³would you wait until they are grown up, while you are kept from having a husband? No, my daughters, it is harder for me than for you that the LORD's hand is stretched out against me." ¹⁴Then they renewed their audible weeping, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clung closely to her.

¹⁵Naomi said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; you return after her." ¹⁶But Ruth replied, "Do not urge me to desert you by turning away from you; because wherever you go, there I will go; wherever you lodge I will lodge. Your people are my people, and your God is my God;^e ¹⁷Wherever you die I will die, and there I shall be

a) Jesse, Obed and Boaz were David's ancestors [ch. 4:19], so these events dated around 1100 B.C.
b) Moab and Ammon were sons of Lot; the language of their descendants was similar to that of the Hebrews.

c) Elimelech - my God is King; Naomi - pleasant; Mahlon - sickly; Chilion - wasting away; Ruth - good-looking; Orpah - neck or mane; Ephrathah - fruitful; Bethlehem - bread-house.

d) Probably on the south bank of the Arnon River, the boundary between Moab and Reuben.

e) Ruth could extend her trust in and love for Naomi to trust in and love for God.

buried. Thus^f may God do to me and worse if anything but death separates you and me."

¹⁸When Naomi saw her determination to accompany her, she said no more. ¹⁹They both walked on until they came to Bethlehem. But on their arrival, the whole town was stirred because of them. The women said, "Is this Naomi?" ²⁰But she answered, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara,^g for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me. ²¹Amplly supplied^h I left this place; but destitute the LORD has made me return. Why then call me Naomi, since the LORD has witnessed against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

²²Naomi and Ruth, the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, who had come with her from the land of Moab, arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

2 THERE WAS A CLOSE RELATIVE OF Naomi's husband, a prominent and wealthy man of Elimelech's family, whose name was Boaz.ⁱ ²Now Ruth, the Moabitess, said to Naomi, "Please, let me go into the field and glean heads of grain behind someone who is kind to me." She said to her, "Yes, go, my daughter." ³So she reached the field and gleaned behind the harvesters; and she happened to get into a field that belonged to Boaz, the near relative of Elimelech. ⁴Then, look! There came Boaz from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters with, "The LORD be with you!" to which they responded, "The LORD bless you!" ⁵Boaz then asked his foreman of the harvesters, "Who is that young woman?" ⁶The foreman replied, "That is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi. ⁷She said, 'Please, let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' So she came and has been busy from early morning until now, except for a little rest in the booth."

⁸Boaz then said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter!^k Do not glean in any other field; do not leave here at all; keep near my women workers. ⁹Keep track of the field in which they are harvesting, and follow them up. Have I not given the young men strict orders not to annoy you? And when you feel thirsty, go to the water jars and drink from what the workmen have drawn." ¹⁰She fell on her face, bowed deeply to the ground, and said to him, "Why do you show me the favor of noticing me,^l an outsider?" ¹¹Boaz replied to her, "It has been fully told me how much you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of her husband; also how you have left your father and mother and the land of your birth to identify yourself with a people you did not know before. ¹²May the LORD reward your kindness; may a full reward be yours from the LORD God of Israel under whose wings you have come to shelter." ¹³Upon which she said, "Even though I am not equal to any one of your maid servants, you have spoken so kindly to me, sir, that you have given me courage. What you say touches your servant girl's heart."^m

¹⁴When it was time to eat, Boaz said to her, "Come this way; eat from the bread and dip your bit in the vinegar." So she sat among the harvestmen, and he served her roasted heads of grain. She ate all she wanted and had some leftovers.ⁿ ¹⁵When she got up to glean, Boaz ordered his young men, "Let her glean right among the sheaves; be not hard on her; ¹⁶rather drop some heads for her on purpose, and let them lie there so that she can gather them; do not reprimand her."

¹⁷Until evening she gleaned in the field; then beat out what she had gathered—about a bushel of barley, ¹⁸which she took up and went into the city. When her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned and when she

f) A motion of the hand indicated the possibly fatal results.

g) Mara—bitter; Miriam, Maria, Mary, myrrh, all have the same stem.

h) Husband, sons, sheep and cattle when leaving; none of these on returning.

i) Boaz probably means strength, cf. I Kings 7:21 and II Chron. 3:17.

j) Friendly feelings when both employer and employee relate life to God.

k) Boaz must have been older than Ruth. l) Literally—eying me.

m) Heart was answering to heart.

n) Which she saved to share that evening with Naomi whom she had learned to love and who had led her to God.

showed the leftovers after she had eaten enough, ¹⁹her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed is the man who took notice of you." She then told her mother-in-law, "The name of the man for whom I worked today is Boaz." ²⁰Naomi then told her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not withdrawn His kindness from the living or the dead." Naomi further said to her, "The man is a near relative of ours, one of our redeemers."^o

²¹Ruth, the Moabite, said, "Beside, he told me, 'Join my harvestmen until they are through with my entire crop.'" ²²Naomi assured Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, for you to go out with my maidservants, so you will not be molested in another field." ²³Ruth therefore joined the women workers of Boaz to glean until the barley and the wheat harvests were in, and she lived with her mother-in-law.

3 NAOMI, HER MOTHER-IN-LAW, then said to her, "My daughter, should I not look for a resting place for you so that you may prosper? ²Is not Boaz, with whose women you worked, our relative? See here! Tonight he winnows the barley on the threshing floor; ³so, you take a bath, anoint yourself, get dressed up and go down to the threshing floor; but let him not see you until he is through eating and drinking. ⁴When he lies down, watch carefully the exact spot where he lies down; then you slip in, raise the foot covering and lie down. He will let you know what to do next."

⁵She replied to her, "Everything you suggest to me I will do."

⁶So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything exactly as her mother-in-law had instructed her.

⁷When Boaz had eaten and drunk and felt happy of heart, he went to lie down at the edge of the grain pile.

Quietly she moved near, turned up his foot covering and lay down. ⁸At midnight this happened: The man awoke startled, turned around and, look, there was a woman lying at his feet. ⁹He asked, "Who are you?" She answered, "I am Ruth, your servant girl. Spread your covering^p over your servant girl, for you are a near kinsman." ¹⁰He said, "May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. This your later kindness is lovelier than any previous one; for you have gone after no young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹Now then, my daughter, feel at ease; everything you suggest I will do for you, for everybody in town knows that you are a virtuous woman. ¹²It is true, I am a near kinsman; but there is one nearer kin than I. ¹³Remain here overnight and tomorrow morning, if he wants to redeem you, well and good, let him redeem you; but if he is not inclined to redeem you, as truly as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. You lie down until morning."

¹⁴So until morning she lay at his feet, then got up before people could recognize each other; for he said, "Let it not be known that a woman came to the threshing floor."^q ¹⁵He further said, "Hand me the shawl you wore and open it up." She opened it up, and he measured out six pecks of barley with which he loaded her, and she went into town.

¹⁶On her return, Naomi asked her, "How did you make out, my daughter?" She told everything the man had done, ¹⁷adding, "These six pecks of barley he gave me because, he said, 'Do not go to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'" ¹⁸"Wait quietly, my daughter," she rejoined, "until you learn how the affair turns out; for that man will not stop without completing the matter today."

4 BOAZ MEANWHILE HAD GONE UP to the gate and had taken a seat, when, look, the redeemer whom Boaz

^o) By Mosaic law [Lev. 25:25], a near kinsman should buy what had been sold because of poverty, so as to keep it in the family.

^p) The first meaning of the word is — wing or protective covering.

^q) Boaz wisely protected his reputation; he avoided gossip.

had mentioned came by! So he said, "Hello, you there! Come over here and sit down." He came and sat down. ²He then took ten men of the city's elders and said, "Take a seat here," and they sat down. ³He then said to the closest relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, is selling the tract of land that belonged to our brother Elimelech; ⁴so I thought I should let you know about it with the suggestion that you buy it in the presence of those who sit here and of the elders of my people. If you want to redeem it, redeem it; but if not, so declare to me so that I am assured, for there is nobody to redeem it except you, with myself next." He said, "I will redeem it." ⁵But Boaz added, "On the day on which you purchase the field from Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth, the Moabitess, the widow of the one who died, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." ⁶The next in kin then said, "I cannot redeem it for myself; for that would ruin my own inheritance; you redeem my right for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

⁷In times past it was customary in Israel in order to validate redemptive and exchange transactions, that one dealer pulled off his sandal and gave it to the other; it was a way of confirming the deal. ⁸The next of kin, therefore, took off his sandal and said to Boaz, "You buy it for yourself." ⁹Boaz then addressed the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses that I today have bought from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech, to Chilion and to Mahlon; ¹⁰and besides, I acquire

as my wife Ruth, the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, so as to revive the name of the dead for his estate; then the name of the dead shall not be lost from among his brothers and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today." ¹¹All the people in the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses." ¹²May the LORD make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and like Leah, who jointly built up the house of Israel. Build well in Ephrathah and earn fame in Bethlehem. ¹³May your house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which the LORD will grant from this woman."

¹³Boaz then took Ruth, and she became his wife. When he cohabited with her, the LORD granted her conception, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴The women said to Naomi, "Praised be the LORD, who did not leave you this time without a family; may his name grow famous in Israel. ¹⁵He will rejuvenate you and support you in your old age, because your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has given him birth; she who means more to you than seven sons."

¹⁶Naomi took the baby, laid it in her lap, and took care of it. ¹⁷The neighbor women named it. They said, "A son is born to Naomi," and called him Obed.^a He is the father of Jesse, David's father.

¹⁸This is the Pharez genealogy:¹ Pharez got Hezron; ¹⁹Hezron got Ram; Ram got Amminadab; ²⁰Amminadab got Nahshon; Nahshon got Salmon; ²¹Salmon got Boaz; Boaz got Obed; Obed got Jesse, and Jesse got David.

r) Still nothing put down in writing. s) Warshiper.

t) One reason why the book of Ruth was written is to show King David's lineage and background. The atmosphere suggests a sense of divine Presence in life's daily affairs, such as is but rarely shown in the book of Judges, of which this forms an appendix. Although the events are not dated, they must have occurred about 90 years before David's birth. Because it pictures a harvest scene, the book was read sometimes at Persecost, the harvest festival.

SAMUEL

About 1100 B.C.

1 AT RAMAH OF THE ZOPHITES^a IN the Ephraim hill country, there lived a certain man by the name of Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ²He had two wives, one called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. ³Annually this man went up from his town to Shiloh to worship the LORD of hosts and to bring Him offerings. The priests of the LORD there were Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli.

⁴On his offering-day Elkanah gave his wife Peninnah and all her sons and daughters a portion each; ⁵but to Hannah he gave a double portion; for he loved Hannah although the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶Her rival, however, provoked her mercilessly to make her irritable, because the LORD had closed her womb.^b ⁷This happened year after year. Every time they went up to the house of the LORD, she annoyed her so that she cried and did not eat. ⁸But Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why cry and why not eat; why so downhearted? Do I not mean more to you than ten sons?"

⁹Eventually, after their eating and drinking at Shiloh, Hannah arose. Eli the priest was seated on a bench near the doorpost of the LORD's temple.

¹⁰Out of a sorrowful soul she prayed

to the LORD and cried bitterly. ¹¹She then made a vow. She said, "O LORD of hosts, if Thou wilt actually look at Thy handmaid's trouble, wilt think of me and not forget Thy handmaid, and wilt grant Thy handmaid a son, then I will give him to the LORD all his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."

¹²As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli noticed her mouth; for ¹³Hannah was speaking in her heart; her lips moved, but no voice could be heard, so that Eli thought that she was drunk. ¹⁴So Eli said to her, "How long will you behave as one intoxicated? Get rid of your wine." ¹⁵But Hannah replied, "No, my master, I am a deeply grieved woman. I have drunk no wine or liquor, but I have poured out my soul before the LORD. ¹⁶Do not consider your maid a good-for-nothing; for I have spoken all the while under stress of provocation and distress."

¹⁷Eli then responded, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel will grant you what you have prayed of Him." ¹⁸She said, "May your maid find favor with you." So the woman went her way; she ate and her face showed no more sadness.

¹⁹Next morning they got up early, worshiped before the LORD, and went back to their Ramah home. Elkanah went in to his wife Hannah; the LORD remembered her ²⁰and in due time,

a) The Zophites were Levites through Zuph. This Ramah is probably the one between Bethel and Bethlehem, near which Rachel died [Gen. 35:16-19].

b) Biblical evidence shows no peace and happiness in bigamy or polygamy.

after conception, Hannah gave birth to a son whom she named Samuel, because "I have asked him of the LORD."^c

²¹Elkanah, the husband, went up with his whole household to offer the annual sacrifice to the LORD and also his pledge. ²²But Hannah did not go up because, she told her husband, "When the boy is weaned, then I will take him and he will appear before the LORD and stay there for always." ²³Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Do whatever seems best to you. Stay home until you have weaned him, and may the LORD confirm His word." So his wife remained at home and nursed the boy until she weaned him.

²⁴When she had weaned him, she took him — still very young — with her; also a three-year-old bullock, a bushel of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the LORD's house at Shiloh. ²⁵After the bullock had been slain, she took the lad to Eli ²⁶and said, "Please, sir, as you live, sir, I am the woman who stood near you here in prayer before the LORD. ²⁷For this lad I prayed, and the LORD has granted me what I prayed Him for; ²⁸I have therefore handed him back to the LORD; as long as he lives he is returned to the LORD." And there he^d worshiped before the LORD.

2 HANNAH PRAYED AND SAID, "IN the LORD my heart is joyful; in the LORD my strength is heightened. Against my enemies my mouth is freely opened because of my enjoyment of Thy deliverance. ²None is holy as the LORD; for none exists without Thee; no rock^e is equal to our God.

³"Quit talking so boastfully; no more taunts from your mouth; for the LORD is a knowing God; by Him actions are estimated.^f ⁴The bows of the mighty are broken; but the tottering are girded with strength. ⁵Those once full, hired out for food; while those who suffered hunger are now at ease. The barren gives birth to seven, while the mother

of many children is losing out.

⁶"The LORD kills, and He causes life; He brings down to the grave, and He makes alive. ⁷The LORD impoverishes, and He makes rich; He demotes, and He promotes. ⁸He lifts the poor out of the dust and raises the beggar from the dump to have him seated with the leaders, to have him obtain a seat of honor; for the earth's pillars are the LORD's; He set the world upon them. ⁹He guards the footsteps of His worshipers; but the godless perish in darkness because no human power renders one mighty. ¹⁰Those who oppose the LORD shall be broken; from heaven He thunders upon them. The LORD judges the earth from end to end; He supplies the king with power; He enhances the might of His anointed."

¹¹Elkanah then went home to Ramah, but the lad was in the LORD's service under direction of Eli the priest.

¹²However, the sons of Eli were sons of Belial;^g they showed no regard for the LORD, ¹³nor for the proper dues of the priests from the people. Every time a person offered a sacrifice, while the meat was boiling, the priest's boy came with a three-pronged fork in his hand, ¹⁴which he thrust into the pot or kettle or basin and all that the hook brought up the priest took for himself, and thus they ate at Shiloh all the Israelites who came there. ¹⁵Even before they burned the fat as incense, the priest's boy would come and tell the person who brought the offering, "Give the priest roast beef; he will accept no boiled meat from you, only raw." ¹⁶If the man replied, "Have the fat burned first as incense, then take for yourself as much as you want," he would retort, "No, you give it to me now, or I will take it by force." ¹⁷So monstrous was the sin of the young men in the presence of the LORD that the people came to scorn the LORD's sacrifices.

c) Samuel means — name of God. d) The boy, a Levite, stayed there to help the priests, as Levites were commissioned to render service. Though quite young, he was no babe and had learned personally to worship. e) No foundation on which to stand securely.

f) A universal principle of which Peninnah's taunts had made Hannah personally aware.

g) Belial stands for worthlessness. In II Cor. 2:15 the contrast is to the worthiness of Christ.

¹⁸Meanwhile the lad Samuel, clad in a linen vestment, was ministering before the LORD. ¹⁹Regularly his mother used to make for him his little suit, which from year to year she brought as she went with her husband to bring the annual offering. ²⁰Eli would then bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, "The LORD give you by this woman offspring in the place of the one you have returned to the LORD." They would then go back home. ²¹And the LORD visited Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters; while the lad Samuel grew up in the LORD's presence.

²²Now Eli was very old, and when he heard everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they cohabited with the women who served at the entrance of the meeting tent, ²³he said to them, "Why do you behave this way? I hear all the people talk about your misconduct. ²⁴This will not do, my sons; for what I hear is not a good report. You lead the LORD's people to transgress. ²⁵When one person sins against another, the judges^h will do him justice; but when a person sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" But they would not listen to their father's warning; so the LORD was inclined to slay them. ²⁶And all the while young Samuel increased in stature and in favor with the LORD and with men.ⁱ

²⁷A man of God^j came to Eli and said to him, "This is the LORD's message: How clearly I revealed Myself to your father's house when in Egypt they were subject to the house of Pharaoh! ²⁸And him^k I selected out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to wear the ephod in My presence, and to your father's house I have donated all the burnt offerings of the Israelites. ²⁹Why do you trample on My sacri-

fices and My offerings which I have prescribed, and honor your sons above Me, fattening yourselves on the best of My people Israel's meat offerings? ³⁰Therefore hear the word of the LORD God of Israel: I have definitely said that your family and the family of your fathers should walk before Me forever; but now the LORD says:^l Be it far from Me; for they who honor Me I will honor; but they who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. ³¹Take note! The days are impending when I shall break down your dominance and that of your father's house until not an old man remains in your whole family. ³²In My house you will witness shortage among all the blessings I will give to Israel; not an old man shall live in your household forever. ³³But the single person, whom I shall not cut off from My altar, is to ruin your sight and to wear out your life; all those who grow up in your family shall die at maturity. ³⁴Let what is to befall your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, be a sign to you; they shall both die on the same day, ³⁵and I will appoint Me a faithful priest, who acts in accord with My mind and My Spirit. For him I will build a lasting house, and he shall walk before My anointed^m forever. ³⁶Whoever of your family still remains shall bow down to him for a mite of money and a piece of bread and shall say, 'Do, I beg of you, appoint me to some priestly service so I may have a bite to eat.'"

3 YOUNG SAMUEL WAS IN THE LORD's ministry under Eli's direction. In those days a word from the LORD was rare, and a vision was infrequent. ²But one day it happened. Eli was lying down in his accustomed place. His eyesight was getting dim, so he could not see clearly any more. ³The lamp of God was still burning,

h) *Elohim*, literally, gods — but usually "God"; also may mean "judge" or "judges" in the O.T. and is so quoted by our LORD [John 10:35]. As *Elohim* has not occurred in this book, but *Yahweh* (*Jehovah*) for the Supreme Being, "the judges" seems the best translation here.

i) Luke, in writing his ch. 2:52, seems to have this lingering in his memory.

j) An unnamed, unfamed prophet. Many of his kind must have witnessed for God among His people, besides those whose messages have come to us.

k) Levi, under judgment of being scattered among Israel; but the judgment changed to blessing upon evidence of obedience [Ex. 32:25-29].

l) One of the many "ifs" of God. The fatalist will find no confirmation from sacred history.

m) Usually the king.

and Samuel had retired in the tent of the LORD where God's ark was. ⁴Then the LORD called Samuel, who said, "Here I am," ⁵and ran to Eli. He said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶Once more the LORD called: Samuel! And Samuel arose and ran to Eli, saying, "Here I am, for you certainly called me." But he said, "No, I did not call you, my son; lie down again."

⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD; never yet had a word from the LORD been revealed to him. ⁸So when for the third time the LORD called Samuel, he got up, went to Eli, and said, "Here I am; unquestionably you called me." Then it dawned on Eli that the LORD was calling the lad. ⁹So Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down again, and when He calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for Thy servant is listening.'" Samuel went and lay down in his usual place. ¹⁰Then the LORD came, took His stand, and called as at previous times: Samuel! Samuel! Samuel said, "Speak, for Thy servant is listening." ¹¹The LORD said to Samuel: Take note! I am about to do something in Israel that will tingle both ears of all who hear it. ¹²In that day I will carry out from start to finish against Eli everything I have said about his family. ¹³You tell him that I will execute justice over his family forever, because he knew that his sons were bringing a curse upon themselves, and he failed to discipline them. ¹⁴I have therefore sworn to the Eli family that the iniquity of Eli's household shall never be paid for, either by sacrifice or by offering.

¹⁵Until morning Samuel kept to his couch; then he opened the doors of the LORD's house, afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶But Eli called Samuel and

said, "Samuel, my son!" He said, "Here am I." ¹⁷Eli then asked, "What is the message He spoke to you? Do not hide it from me. God do so to you and worseⁿ if you hide from me one syllable of all the words He told you." ¹⁸Then Samuel told him everything; he kept nothing from him. And he said, "He is the LORD; may He do what seems good in His sight."

¹⁹Thus Samuel matured, and the LORD was with him; He let not one of His words fall to the ground. ²⁰And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba came to understand that Samuel was commissioned as the LORD's prophet. ²¹Once more at Shiloh the LORD appeared again, for there He revealed Himself to Samuel through the divine message.

1090 B.C.

4 SAMUEL'S MESSAGE REACHED ALL Israel. ¹Israel went out to fight the Philistines and camped at Eben-ezer while the Philistines camped at Aphek. ²The Philistines drew up in battle line against Israel, and when the fight became general, Israel was beaten as they faced the Philistines, who killed in the open field about four thousand men.

³As the troops went back to camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD allowed us to be defeated by the Philistines today? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD from Shiloh, so that He will come among us and will deliver us from the power of our enemies."^r ⁴So the people sent word to Shiloh, and they brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, throned above the cherubim,^s and accompanying the ark of God's covenant were both sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas. ⁵As soon as the ark of the LORD's covenant reached the camp, all Israel raised so mighty a shout that the earth resounded.

⁶When the Philistines heard the

n) Much of God's previous revelation, as we have it, had been conveyed to young Samuel, but none as direct as was then about to be given.

o) Eli had spoken to his sons about their wickedness but had not disciplined them. We Christian parents must deal lovingly and firmly with our children when their behavior is contrary to Christ's will and teaching.

p) Some hand motion seems to have been made, intimating harm to neck or head.

q) This sentence belongs to the previous chapter. Of course, the sacred writers were not responsible for divisions into chapters and verses.

r) They tried to force God into their service, a popular practice of modern cults, whose gods are the forces of the universe.

s) Cherubim is the Hebrew plural of cherub, of whom two were imaged above the mercy seat, facing one another.

shouting, they said, "What is the meaning of such loud shouting in the Hebrew camp?" And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had arrived there, ⁷the Philistines were afraid. They said, "The gods have come into the camp. Alas for us! Such a thing has never happened before. ⁸Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote Egypt with every plague and devastation. ⁹Philistines, take courage and be men, so you will not be slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Act the men you are and fight." ¹⁰Then the Philistines did fight, and Israel was defeated; ¹¹they fled each for himself to his tent. The carnage was terrible; of Israel's infantry thirty thousand fell; ¹²the ark of the LORD was captured, too; and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

¹²A Benjamite broke ranks and ran to Shiloh that same day, his clothes torn and earth upon his head. ¹³When he arrived, Eli was sitting^u by the road in expectation, for he was deeply moved about the ark of God. As the man entered town and told the news, there was an outcry all over town. ¹⁴Eli heard the din of the lamentation and asked, "What sort of tumult is this?" The man hurried to Eli and told him. ¹⁵Eli was ninety-eight years old; his eyes stood fixed so that he could not see. ¹⁶The man told Eli, "I come from the battle; today I fled from the army." He asked, "What happened, my son?" ¹⁷The messenger answered, "Israel was routed when fronting the Philistines; the people have suffered a disastrous defeat; both your sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are slain, and the ark of God is captured."^v

¹⁸When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell back from his seat by the

gate, broke his neck and died; for he was an aged man and heavy. For forty years he had judged Israel.

¹⁹When his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, who was pregnant and about to become a mother, heard the report that the ark of God had been captured, that her father-in-law and her husband had died, she collapsed and gave birth, for the birth-pains came upon her. ²⁰While she lay dying, the woman who attended her said, "Have no fear; for you gave birth to a son." But she did not reply and paid no attention ²¹but named the child Ichabod,^w saying, "Gone is the glory from Israel." Because the ark of God was taken and because of her father-in-law and her husband, ²²she said, "Gone is the glory from Israel, because the ark of God is taken."

5 THE PHILISTINES HAD CAPTURED the ark of God and had moved it from Eben-ezer to Ashdod, ²where the Philistines brought the ark of God into the temple of Dagon and placed it near Dagon. ³Early next morning when the Ashdodites got up, look! Dagon had fallen face down to the floor in front of the ark of the LORD; so they took hold of Dagon and set him back in his place. ⁴But when they got up the following morning, not only was Dagon lying face down on the floor before the ark of the LORD, but Dagon's head and both his hands lay severed on the threshold; only Dagon's trunk was left him.^x ⁵For this reason to this day the priests of Dagon and all who enter the Dagon temple keep from stepping on Dagon's threshold at Ashdod.

⁶The LORD's hand lay heavy on the Ashdodites. He punished them with hemorrhoids,^y both at Ashdod and in its suburbs, ⁷so that when the men of

t) No commander is mentioned. Eli was too old, his sons too unreliable. Had an outstanding leader come to the fore, his name would have been given.

u) Eli is never mentioned except as occupying a seat or lying down. No activities of his are recorded, only that he was priest, judge, and father.

v) God will not be coerced. As God He is LORD of all and only voluntarily does He serve all.
w) Departed glory. x) The form of the Dagon image was a human head with shoulders, arms and the whole upper part as of man, but the lower portions from the hips down may have been the form of a fish, a merman, in honor of the sea.

y) "Swellings" is the Hebrew word, which may mean boils, tumors, or piles. Consulted surgeons consider hemorrhoids or piles most likely.

Ashdod realized the situation, they said, "The ark of Israel's God must not remain among us, because His hand is severe against us and against our god Dagon." ⁸So they called all the Philistine princes and said, "What are we to do with the ark of the God of Israel?" The answer was, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be moved around to Gath." So they conveyed the ark of Israel's God around there; ⁹but after they had taken it there the LORD's hand was against the city, with resultant panic. He touched the citizens, young and old, so that hemorrhoids broke out among them. ¹⁰They sent the ark of God to Ekron, but as soon as the ark of God reached there the Ekronites cried out, "They have brought us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people!" ¹¹They, therefore, called all the Philistine princes together and said, "Send the ark of Israel's God away; let it go back to its place and not kill us and our people," for a fatal fear had gripped the whole city; God's hand lay heavy there. ¹²Those who did not die were plagued with hemorrhoids, so that the city's lamentation went up to heaven.²

6 AFTER THE ARK OF THE LORD HAD remained in the Philistines' territory for seven months, ²the Philistines summoned the priests and the diviners and asked, "What should we do with the LORD's ark? Inform us in what way we should send it back where it belongs." ³They answered, "When you return the ark of Israel's God, do not send it empty; but forward an atoning offering. You will then be healed and will find out why His hand does not turn from you."

⁴They asked, "What satisfaction should we offer Him?" To this they replied, "According to the number of Philistine town princes, five gold hem-

orrhoids and five gold mice, because the same plague struck everyone, including your town princes. ⁶Make, therefore, images of your swellings and images of the mice^a that are ruining the land, and give glory to the God of Israel; possibly He will remove the pressure of His heavy hand from you, from your gods, and from your land. ⁶Why harden your hearts as the Egyptians^b and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? Did they not let them go when He had made them feel His power, and they went out? ⁷Now then, take hold and construct a new cart, and get two fresh cows that have never been yoked; hitch those cows to the cart but keep their calves home from them.^c ⁸Then take the ark of the LORD, place it on the cart, put the gold articles for atonement in a box next to the ark; then send it on its way. ⁹Watch carefully! If it goes up the road to its own territory, toward Bethshemesh,^d then it is He who brought this serious catastrophe upon us; but if not, then it was not His hand that struck us; it happened by chance."

¹⁰The men did so. They took two fresh cows, hitched them to a cart, and kept their calves at home. ¹¹They placed the ark of the LORD on the cart; also the box containing the gold mice and the images of their swellings. ¹²The cows went straight up the highway to Bethshemesh, lowing as they went, but going right on and turning neither right nor left, with the Philistine princes following them as far as the Bethshemesh boundary line.

¹³The Bethshemesh people were busy harvesting their wheat in the valley and, as they looked up, they saw the ark. How glad they were to see it! ¹⁴The cart came as far as the field of Joshua, the Bethshemite, and there it stopped. An immense stone was lying there; so they split the wood

2) When in the cry there is some thought of the LORD of heaven and earth, there is assurance of divine response.

a) Mice have thus far not been mentioned, but shortly we learn they were plaguing the people. b) The plagues of Egypt were four centuries in the past, but those acts of God were still remembered among neighboring nations.

c) It would be difficult to drive the best-trained cows straight on a road when their calves have just been taken from them. So, when these animals, though lowing for their calves, moved steadily eastward, the princes felt convinced of divine supervision.

d) Bethshemesh means sun-house. Before the Hebrews took possession, the Canaanites had maintained a temple for the sun in that place.

of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹⁶The Levites had unloaded the ark of the LORD and the box next to it that contained the golden jewels and had deposited them upon the great stone. That day the men of Bethshemesh offered to the LORD burnt offerings and other sacrifices.

¹⁶When the five princes of the Philistines had taken notice, they returned to Ekron that same day. ¹⁷And these are the five golden swellings which the Philistine princes presented to the LORD for atoning — one each for Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron; ¹⁸also the golden mice, according to the number of all Philistine towns that belonged to the five town princes, both walled cities and open villages. The great stone in the field of Joshua, the Bethshemite, on which they rested the ark of the LORD, bears witness till our day.

¹⁹But of the Bethshemite men He slew some because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. He slew seventy of the people, fifty to the thousand, and the people mourned because the LORD had slain so many of them. ²⁰The men of Bethshemesh said, "Who can exist in the presence of the LORD, this holy God? To whom shall He go from here?" ²¹So they sent messengers to the Kiriath-jearim residents to say, "The Philistines have brought the ark of the LORD back. Come down and move it up to you!"

1070 B.C.

7 THE MEN OF KIRIATH-JEARIM came, carried with them the ark of the LORD, and brought it to Abinadab's home on the hill; his son Eleazar^e they set apart to care for the ark of the LORD. ²During the twenty-year period while the ark remained in Kiriath-jearim, the whole house of Israel was seriously seeking the LORD.^f ³Then Samuel told the whole house of Israel, "If you wholeheartedly turn to the LORD, then remove the strange gods

from you, including the Ashtaroth, and center your worship on the LORD; serve Him alone. Then He will deliver you from the Philistines' power."

⁴The children of Israel then got rid of the Baals and Astarte and served the LORD exclusively. ⁵So Samuel announced, "Assemble all Israel at Mizpah,^g and I will pray the LORD on your behalf." ⁶Gathered at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD;^h they also observed a day of fasting. Then and there they confessed, "We have sinned against the LORD." And at Mizpah Samuel judged the people.

⁷When the Philistines learned that Israel was gathered at Mizpah, the Philistine princes marched against Israel; and the Israelites, hearing of it, were in fear of the Philistines. ⁸They said to Samuel, "Do not cease calling on the LORD our God for us, so He may deliver us from the Philistines' dominance." ⁹Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it whole as a burnt offering to the LORD; and when Samuel called on the LORD for Israel, the LORD answered him.

¹⁰While Samuel was occupied with offering the burnt offering and the Philistines were closing in to attack Israel, just then the LORD thundered mightily against the Philistines and confused them, so that they suffered defeat before Israel. ¹¹The troops of Israel marched out of Mizpah, pursued the Philistines, and beat them down, as far as below Bathcar. ¹²Samuel then took a stone, which he set up between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Eben-ezer;ⁱ he said, "Thus far the LORD has helped us."

¹³The Philistines were thus humbled, and they no longer crossed Israel's boundaries; throughout the period of Samuel the LORD's hand was against the Philistines. ¹⁴The cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were returned to Israel from Ekron to Gath, and their bordering terri-

e) Apparently not a descendant of Aaron. f) The ark remained much more than twenty years; but Samuel seems to have begun his judgeship of Israel that twentieth year, probably at the age of thirty, like Jesus and John the Baptist.

g) Not the Mizpah in Gilead where Jacob and Laban met, but in Benjamin, not far from Ramah, Samuel's home town. h) In line with their fasting, they did not drink it. i) Stone of help.

stories Israel rescued from Philistine control.¹ There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites.

¹⁶Samuel served as Israel's circuit judge all his life. ¹⁶He made the rounds annually to include Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, holding court at these centers for Israel; ¹⁷then he returned to his Ramah home, where he served as Israel's judge and where he built an altar to the LORD.⁶

8 WHEN SAMUEL WAS AGING, HE APPOINTED his sons as judges over Israel, ²the older named Joel and the second Abiah; they judged at Beer-sheba. ³But his sons' conduct was not like his; they turned aside for money; they accepted presents; they twisted justice.¹ ⁴All the elders of Israel, therefore, got together and called on Samuel at Ramah. ⁵They told him, "Look here, you are aging and your sons do not behave as you did. Appoint a king over us to be our judge like all the nations."

⁶Their saying, "Give us a king to judge us," was disgusting to Samuel, and he prayed to the LORD. ⁷The LORD said to Samuel: Whatever they tell you, listen to the people; for they have not rejected you, but Me they have rejected to be King over them.^m ⁸From the day when I brought them out of Egypt till now they have acted this way, forsaking Me and serving other gods; they are now behaving similarly against you. ⁹Now then, you listen to them; but solemnly warn them and point out to them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.

¹⁰Samuel told the whole message of the LORD to the people who had asked him for a king. ¹¹He said, "This will be the procedure of the king who shall reign over you: he will take your sons and employ them for his chariots and as his horsemen; they shall run in front

of his chariots. ¹²He will appoint some for himself in command of thousands and of hundreds; others to cultivate his acres and to harvest his crops; also to construct his weapons and his chariot equipment. ¹³Your daughters he will require for perfumers, for cooks, and for bakers. ¹⁴Besides he will take your choicest fields, your vineyards, and your olive yards and give them to his attendants. ¹⁵He will, besides, take a tenth of your grain crop and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. ¹⁶Your male and female servants he will take from you and your choicest young men; also your donkeys and employ them for his business. ¹⁷He will appropriate a tenth of your flocks, too, and you yourselves will become his servants. ¹⁸By that time you will cry out about the king you chose; but that day the LORD will not answer you."

¹⁹The people, however, declined to listen to Samuel. They said, "No, there must be a king over us, ²⁰so we may be like all the other nations; our king will give us justice; he will lead us on and conduct our wars." ²¹Samuel heard all the people's words and rehearsed them in the LORD's presence. ²²The LORD told Samuel: Listen to their voice; place a king over them. So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his own city!"

9 THERE WAS A MAN OF BENJAMIN whose name was Kish son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a man of influence. ²He had a son named Saul, young and well built, none more handsome among the Israelites, his head and shoulders higher than all the people.ⁿ

³Now some donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, had strayed. So Kish said to his son Saul, "Take along one of the servants and go in search of the don-

j) Philistia was only about fifty miles long and fifteen miles wide. There was no reason why the Hebrews should ever be subject to it, except for degrading practices on the part of Israel in Baal worship, and personal bravery on the part of the Philistines.

k) Obviously, northern Israel received but occasional service from Samuel, if at all. Until David's reign north and south had little sense of unity.

l) It was not wholesome for Samuel's sons that the father was often absent from home; so busy helping others to go straight, his own offspring was neglected.

m) The people had reason to ask for a new judge as upright as was Samuel; but instead they asked for a king "like all the nations," as if God were not their King.

n) Exactly what the people were looking for — physical strength and attractive appearance.

keys." ⁴Then they passed through the Ephraim highlands and the Shalisha district but did not find them; the Shaalim country too but they were not there; the Benjamites' territory and found nothing. ⁵On reaching the Zuph district, ⁶Saul said to his servant companion, "Come on, let us go back, lest my father quit thinking of the donkeys and worry about us."

⁶He replied, "See here! There is a man of God in this town, a highly respected man; everything he says always comes true. Let us go there at once; perhaps he can inform us in the errand we are on." ⁷Saul said to his servant, "But if we go, what can we give the man? The bread in our bag is used up, and we have no present to offer the man of God. What have we?" ⁸Once more the servant furnished Saul with an answer. He said, "Look! I have a silver quarter with me; ⁹you give it to the man of God, so he may rightly direct us on our errand." ⁹In Israel, when people went to inquire from God, they used to say, "Come, let us go to the seer"; for the prophet of today used to be called a seer. ¹⁰So Saul said to his servant, "A good idea; come on, let us go," and they entered the town where the man of God lived.

¹¹As they were climbing the steep road into town, they met girls going out to draw water and asked them, "Is the seer here?" ¹²They replied to them, "Yes, there he is ahead of you, just come into town, for today the people are having a sacrificial meal on the high place. ¹³You will find ^a him as soon as you get into town, before he goes up for the meal, for the people will not eat until he is there because he pronounces the blessing on the sacrifice, after which those invited will eat." Now then, go up, for you will meet him in a moment." ¹⁴So they

went up to town and as they came to the gate house, ^a Samuel was coming out toward them to go up the hill.

¹⁵Now on the day before Saul arrived, the LORD had revealed to Samuel: ¹⁶Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him to be prince over My people Israel. He will deliver My people from the power of the Philistines; for I have paid attention to My people as their cry has come through to Me. ¹⁷So when Samuel looked at Saul, the LORD assured him: This is the man I mentioned to you, the one who is to rule over My people.

¹⁸Saul stepped up to Samuel in the center of the gate house and said, "Tell me, please, where the seer's house is!" ¹⁹Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer. Go ahead of me up the hill; you will be my dinner guest today, and early in the morning I will let you go. I will clear up for you everything you are concerned about;" ²⁰as for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not worry about them; they are found. But to whom belongs everything desirable in Israel? Is it not to you and to your father's house?"

²¹Saul, however, responded, "Am I not a Benjamite, of one of the smallest tribes in Israel?" And is not my family of least importance among Benjamin's families? Why do you speak this way to me?" ²²But Samuel took along Saul and his servant, brought them into the dining hall and seated them in the chief place among the guests, about thirty men. ²³Samuel told the cook, "Serve the portion I gave you, which I told you to reserve." ²⁴So the cook brought out the shank and what pertains to it and placed it before Saul. Samuel said, "See, you are being served what was set aside for you! Eat; even before I invited the people, it was reserved for

o) Just south of the Benjamite boundaries, with Ramah as its main town.

p) Obviously not a slave; the silver on him must have been earned and saved.

q) That is, meet him personally; they seem to have caught sight of him.

r) Those supplying the animals for sacrifice reserved the right to invite participants at the semi-public meal.

s) There was more to the entrance to the city than the gate. The elders could meet there, so there would be seats provided, thus gaining some features of a house.

t) The Spirit could inform him then and there; often a dream pictured the facts to God's messenger. u) The tribe of Benjamin had deservedly been punished, so as to leave but 600 men alive, during the latter half of the period of the Judges [Judg. 20,21].

you until the appointed time." Thus did Saul eat that day with Samuel. ²⁶Then they came down from the high place, and he conversed with Saul on the roof.^v ²⁶They arose at early dawn. Samuel called to Saul on the roof, "Up, and I will start you on your way." So Saul got up and together they went out, he and Samuel. ²⁷As they reached the city limits, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go on ahead of us," and he went on, "but you stand still here, and I will acquaint you with God's message."

10 THEN SAMUEL TOOK A FLASK of oil, poured it upon his head and kissed him. He said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over His possessions? ²When today you have left me, you will meet two men near Rachel's tomb on the Benjamin boundary at Zelzah. They will tell you, 'The donkeys you searched for are found; your father has ceased thinking about the matter of donkeys; his concern is about you. He says, "What shall I do about my son?"' ³As you go on and get near the Tabor Oak, three men will meet you on their way to God at Bethel, one carrying three kids, another three loaves of bread, and a third a bottle of wine. ⁴They will greet you as friends and give you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them. ⁵After that you will come to the hill of God, where the Philistine garrison is stationed. On entering the town you will meet a group of prophets coming down the hill, before them lyre, tambourine, flute, and harp, and prophesying with ecstasy. ⁶Then the Spirit of the LORD will grip you, and you will share their ecstatic prophesying; you will become a different person. ⁷As you experience these signs, do as the occasion requires, for God is with you. ⁸Go in advance of me to Gil-

gal and, take note, I will come down to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings! Wait for me seven days until I join you and let you know what you are to do."

⁹This then happened: As he turned around to leave Samuel, God changed his heart.^w All the signs mentioned came true that day. ¹⁰As they reached the hill, see, a group of prophets met him; the Spirit of God took hold of him, and he prophesied along with them.^x ¹¹All his old acquaintances, who saw him prophesying along with the prophets, remarked to one another, "What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul, too, among the prophets?" ¹²A man from the neighborhood responded, "But who is their father?"^y So it became a saying, "Saul among the prophets."

¹³When he had finished prophesying, he went to Gibeah. ¹⁴Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?" He replied, "In search of the donkeys, and when we realized they were lost, we went to Samuel." ¹⁵Saul's uncle then said, "Do tell me what Samuel said to you." ¹⁶Saul told his uncle, "He informed us at once that the donkeys had been found"; but that Samuel had mentioned the kingdom, he did not tell him.

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¹⁷Samuel called together all Israel to the LORD at Mizpah, and ¹⁸he told the Israelites, "Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel: I have led Israel up from Egypt; I delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and from the control of all the kingdoms that oppressed you, ¹⁹and yet today you reject your God who personally saved you from all your calamities and your miseries; and you say, 'No, but appoint a king over us.' Now then, take your stand before the LORD by your tribes and clans."

²⁰Samuel then had all the tribes of Israel come forward,^z and the tribe of

v) The Septuagint adds here, "They spread for Saul the couch on the roof and he fell asleep," a custom so obvious it needed no recounting in the original; but likely a mat was used, not a couch or bed.

w) Our word "mind" we owe to the Greeks; the Hebrew word for "heart" comes nearest to it as the thinking power.

x) To "pro-phesy" is to "speak" or "sing for." These young men, led by music, sang to God's praise, and Saul joined in their singing.

y) This was so unusual a behavior for worldly Saul that "Saul among the prophets" equalled a worldling getting religion.

z) To take one lot each out of twelve; then one lot for a Benjamin family.

Benjamin was taken. ²¹He then had the tribe of Benjamin draw near by its families, and the Matri family was taken. Finally Saul the son of Kish was taken; but when they looked for him, he could not be found. ²²So they inquired further of the LORD, "Has the man come here?" The LORD answered: He is hiding himself among the baggage. ²³So they ran and brought him out from there, and as he stood among the people, it showed that he was head and shoulders taller than any of the people. ²⁴Samuel said to the whole nation, "Do you see whom the LORD has chosen? There is none his equal among all the people." Then all the people gave a mighty shout, "Long live the king!"

²⁵Samuel also described to the people the ways of the kingdom and wrote it in a book, which he deposited before the LORD.^a Then Samuel dismissed the people, each to his own home. ²⁶Saul, too, went home to Gibeah, and the brave men whose hearts God had touched went with him. ²⁷But some sons of Belial said, "How is this man going to save us?" They despised him and brought him no presents. But he kept still.

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11 NAHASH THE AMMONITE^b CAME up and laid siege to Jabesh-gilead; and all the men of Jabesh-gilead told Nahash, "Make a treaty with us, and we will submit to you." ²But Nahash the Ammonite replied to them, "I will make a treaty with you on this condition, that I gouge out the right eye of each of you, thereby bringing disgrace on all Israel." ³The Jabesh elders replied, "Allow us seven days, and we will send messengers throughout all Israel's territory; then, if none comes to our aid, we shall come out to you."

⁴When the messengers reached Gib-

eah,^c Saul's town, and reported their tidings, so that all the people could hear, the people all wept audibly. ⁵Saul, coming out of the field behind the oxen, said, "What is amiss with the people, that they are weeping?" They told him what the Jabesh men had said, and ⁶when Saul heard the tidings, the Spirit of God took hold of him. His anger was deeply roused. ⁷He took a yoke of oxen, cut them up into pieces, and sent them by messengers over the whole stretch of Israel with the warning, "Whoever does not march behind Saul and behind Samuel, this will happen to his oxen."

A terror from the LORD fell upon all the people; they rallied as one man. ⁸At Bezek he mustered them; there were 300,000 Israelites and 30,000 of Judah.^d ⁹They instructed the messengers who had come, "Assure the men of Jabesh-gilead, 'Tomorrow when the sun grows hot there will be deliverance for you.'"^e The messengers went and informed the Jabesh men, who felt cheered. ¹⁰The men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Tomorrow we surrender to you, and you can do what you like with us."^e

¹¹Next morning Saul arranged the troops into three divisions. At break of day they burst into the camp and struck down the Ammonites until the day was hot; the survivors they scattered till no two remained together. ¹²Then the people said to Samuel, "Who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Bring those men, so we may execute them." ¹³But Saul remarked, "On this day none shall be punished; for the LORD has worked salvation in Israel."

¹⁴Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there confirm the kingship." ¹⁵So all the people went to Gilgal, and there at Gilgal they declared Saul king in the presence of the LORD. They sacrificed peace offerings

a) Within or near the Holy of Holies where the ark of the covenant had stood.

b) Ammon was Lot's younger son. The Ammonites had settled east of Jordan between the Arnon and Jabkok rivers before Israel, still led by Moses, dispossessed them.

c) The Hebrew word for hill or height is *gibeah*. In the foregoing story of Saul, it is difficult to distinguish between *gibeah* as any hill and *Gibeah*, Saul's native town.

d) Too clear a distinction was constantly drawn between Israel south of Jerusalem and the northern tribes. Their greatest unity came when, under Davidic leadership, all the tribes worshiped in Jerusalem. e) War and deceit have always been twin brothers.

there before the LORD, and there Saul and the men of Israel enjoyed themselves immensely.

12 SAMUEL SAID TO ALL ISRAEL, "Take note! I have listened to your voice in everything you mentioned to me, and I have placed a king over you. ²Now then, note the king walking before you, while I am old and gray, and see, my sons are with you.¹ From childhood I have led a public life till this very day. ³Here I am; witness against me in the presence of the LORD and of His anointed. Whose cattle have I taken? Whose donkey have I seized? Whom have I abused? Whom have I wronged? From whom have I accepted a present to blind my eyes? I will restore it to you."

⁴They said, "You have not mistreated us; you have not wronged us, and you have received no present from anyone." ⁵He said, "The LORD is witness among you today, and His anointed is witness that you have found nothing in my possession."⁶ They confirmed, "He is witness."

⁶Samuel then said to the people, "It is the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and who led your fathers out of the land of Egypt. ⁷Now then, stand at attention, so that as judge I may set before you in the LORD's presence all the righteous acts which the LORD has done for you and your fathers. ⁸When Jacob had gone to Egypt and your fathers cried out to the LORD, then the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and located them in this place. ⁹But they forgot the LORD their God, and He sold them into the hand of Sisera, the Hazor commander, and into the hand of the Philistines and of the Moabite king, who fought against them. ¹⁰Then they cried to the LORD. They said, 'We have sinned, for we have deserted the LORD and have served the Baals and the Astartes. But save us now from the power of our enemies and we will

serve Thee!" ¹¹Then the LORD sent Jerubbaal,^b Barak, Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you from the power of the enemies all around, so that you lived in safety. ¹²However, when you saw that Nahash, the Ammonite king, came up against you, you told me, 'No, a king must reign over us,' although the LORD your God was your King. ¹³Now then, look at the king you have chosen, whom you wanted. See, the LORD has set a king over you. ¹⁴If you serve the LORD, heed His voice, and rebel not against the LORD, then you as well as the king who shall rule over you shall follow the LORD, your God; ¹⁵but in case you do not listen to the LORD's voice but rebel against the LORD, then the LORD's hand will be against you as it was against your fathers.

¹⁶"Now then, stand at attention, and see this great wonder, which the LORD will do before your eyes! ¹⁷Is not this the wheat harvest season? I shall call upon the LORD, and He will produce thunder and rain.¹ Understand, therefore, and see how great an evil you have committed in the LORD's sight by asking for a king."

¹⁸So Samuel called on the LORD, and the LORD produced thunder and rain that day; and all the people were in awe of the LORD and of Samuel. ¹⁹They all said to Samuel, "Pray to the LORD your God for your servants, so we may not die, because in addition to all our sins, we have wickedly asked for a king." ²⁰Samuel assured all the people, "Be not in terror! You have indeed committed all this evil, but do not turn away from the LORD any longer. Worship the LORD with your whole heart; ²¹go not astray after useless idols who can neither benefit nor save you but are mere nothings. ²²For the LORD will not push away His people in consideration of His great name because the LORD is minded to make you His own peculiar people. ²³As for me, far be it from me that I should sin

f) The father still esteemed his sons more highly than did the people.

g) Of course, nothing that he had not honestly earned. h) Gideon, whom his father renamed Jerub-baal — against Baal.

i) As in many far western states, no rain or thunder is expected in harvest time. As in all physical miracles, God directed natural forces for a particular purpose.

against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and upright way. ²⁴Be sure to revere the LORD and to serve Him faithfully with your whole heart; for consider what marvels He has wrought among you. ²⁵But if you persist in doing evil, then both you and your king will be set aside."

13 BY THIS TIME SAUL HAD reigned for one year.¹ When Saul had been king over Israel two years, ²he selected three thousand men of Israel, of which two thousand were with Saul at Michmash and at the Bethel heights, while one thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. But the rest of the people he dismissed, each to his home.

³Now Jonathan overpowered the Philistine garrison at Geba.^k And the Philistine people got the report of it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the entire country; for he said, "The Hebrews must learn what has happened." ⁴And all Israel heard the tidings, "Saul has beaten the Philistine garrison, and Israel has become odious to the Philistines." The people were then summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.

⁵The Philistines, too, were drafted to fight Israel, thirty thousand chariots, six thousand cavalry, and infantry as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They moved up and camped at Michmash, east of Bethaven. ⁶When the men of Israel saw that they were being hedged in (for the troops were threatened),¹ the people hid themselves in caves, in thickets, among rocks, in caverns, and in pits, ⁷while some Hebrews crossed the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul, however, was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him, trembling.

⁸For seven days, the time set by Samuel, he waited; but when Samuel did not come to Gilgal and the troops were deserting him, ⁹Saul said, "Bring me the burnt sacrifice and the peace offerings." Then he offered the burnt offering, and ¹⁰scarcely was he through sacrificing the burnt offering when Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and greet him, ¹¹but Samuel asked, "What have you done?" Saul replied, "When I saw that the people were deserting me and you did not come at the agreed time, while the Philistines were camping at Michmash, ¹²I thought, Now the Philistines will swoop down on me at Gilgal, and I have not prayed for the LORD's favor; so I forced myself to offer a burnt sacrifice."

¹³Samuel told Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not observed the instruction of the LORD your God, which He charged you; else the LORD would have established your kingship over Israel for ever. ¹⁴Now, however, your kingship will not last. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man in harmony with Him, whom the LORD has appointed to be His people's prince because you have not obeyed what the LORD commanded you." ¹⁵Samuel then arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin; but Saul mustered the troops still with him, about six hundred.

¹⁶Saul, his son Jonathan, and the troops with them camped at Geba in Benjamin, and the Philistines camped at Michmash. ¹⁷From the Philistine camp raiders went out in three details; one detail took the road to Ophrah in the Shual district;^m ¹⁸another detail turned the way to Beth-horon;ⁿ and the third took the hill road that overlooks the Zeboim valley toward the desert.^o

j) The Heb. has here: "Saul was . . . years old when he began to reign, and he reigned . . . and two years over Israel!"

k) Not to be confused with Gibeah, although located in Benjamin very close to the borders of Judah. It is distinguished as a priest town [Josh. 18:24]. A village by the name still exists six miles n.e. of Jerusalem, two miles s.w. of Michmash.

l) In numbers the Philistines could not match the Hebrews, but they were less peacefully inclined, were greatly superior in equipment, and were united.

m) Northward from Michmash. n) Still more north and westward, close to the Benjamin-Ephraim boundaries, where a mountain pass gave occasion for numerous battles.

o) East of Michmash where hills overlook the Jordan valley.

¹⁹No blacksmith was to be found in all the land of Israel; for the Philistines had said, "Else the Hebrews might fashion swords or spears for themselves."^p ²⁰So all the Israelites had to go down to the Philistines each one to sharpen his plow point, his coulter, his ax, or his sickle. ²¹The charge for plow point or coulter was a quarter; for ax or sickle or sharpening goads, about a dime. ²²On the day of battle, therefore, there was neither sword nor spear among all the troops captained by Saul and Jonathan; only Saul and Jonathan were armed. ²³And a Philistine army post had occupied the Michmash mountain pass.

14 ONE DAY JONATHAN SAUL'S SON said to his young armorbearer, "Come on, let us cross over to the Philistine garrison on yonder side." But he did not tell his father. ²Saul was sitting under the pomegranate tree by the threshing floor on the outskirts of Gibeah and about six hundred men were with him, ³also Ahijah son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, priest of the LORD at Shiloh, who wore the ephod. The people, too, were unaware of Jonathan's leaving.

⁴Now between the passes by which Jonathan tried to cross over to the Philistine post, there was on either side a sharp crag, the one called Bozez and the other Seneh.^q ⁵The one stood out northward in front of Michmash, the other southward in front of Geba. ⁶Jonathan said to his young armorbearer, "Come on, let us cross over to the army post of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will work through us; for the LORD is never held back to work either through many or through

few."^r ⁷His armor-bearer told him, "Do whatever you have in mind; go ahead; I am with you heart and soul."

⁸Then Jonathan said, "Look! We will cross over to those men and show ourselves to them. ⁹If they say to us, 'Stay there until we reach you,' then we will stay where we are and not climb up to them. ¹⁰But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will climb up; for then the LORD has put them in our power. This shall be our sign."^s

¹¹When they both showed themselves to the Philistine post, the Philistines said, "Look, the Hebrews have come out of the holes in which they have been hiding." ¹²And to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, the men of the post called out, "You climb up to us and we will teach you something." Then Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "You climb behind me; for the LORD has handed them over to Israel." ¹³Jonathan then climbed up hand and foot with his armor-bearer behind him. The Philistines were felled by Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him.^t ¹⁴This first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer wrought, numbered about twenty men, covering about a yoke of oxen's half acre.^u ¹⁵Then panic struck the army post in the field and among the men; the garrison and the raiders grew panicky; the earth also quaked so that it became a terror from God.

¹⁶When Saul's outposts at Gibeah of Benjamin noticed it — the many moving back and forth — ¹⁷Saul told the people with him, "Inspect and find out who of ours has gone." They made inspection and discovered that Jonathan and his armor-bearer were missing. ¹⁸Then Saul told Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here";^v for the ark of God

p) Disarming their neighbors, the Philistines could readily control them and, through their garrisons, they could continually demand and secure tribute. Occupied and satellite countries in Europe had and have similar humiliations.

q) Between these two rocks, General Allenby sent a few valiant men who thus surprised and defeated the Turkish garrison in World War I. r) This last clause should be every Christian's motto; it is such a union of faith and practice.

s) Jonathan showed uncommonly good judgment; the Philistines showed lack of watchfulness, so the two could surprise the post.

t) In this battle all Hebrew fighters had to arm themselves with the weapons of fallen Philistines and so they did, beginning with Jonathan's armor-bearer.

u) As much land as might be plowed with a yoke of oxen in a day.

v) Saul was particularly anxious for divine counsel which might be furnished with aid of the priest's ephod.

was at that time among the Israelites. ¹⁹However, while Saul was talking to the priest, the commotion in the Philistine camp grew worse and worse. So Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand."

²⁰Then Saul and all the men with him rallied for battle and on reaching the battle line, look, the enemy were putting each other to the sword! The confusion was terrible. ²¹Besides, the Hebrews, who had been drafted by the Philistines and had come up with their troops, now joined the Israelites around Saul and Jonathan. ²²Also, as soon as the men of Israel who had been hiding in the Ephraim highlands learned that the Philistines were being put to flight, they, too, pursued them hotly in battle.^w ²³Thus did the LORD deliver Israel that day, and the battle lengthened out to beyond Beth-aven.

²⁴In the crisis of Israel's troops that day, Saul had put the people on oath, saying, "Cursed is the man who eats food until evening before I am avenged on my enemies." Therefore none of the people tasted food. ²⁵When the troops entered a forest with honey on the ground, ²⁶although the combs were dripping, nobody put his hand to his mouth because they feared the oath. ²⁷But Jonathan had not heard his father putting the troops under oath, so he stuck out the stick he had in his hand and dipped the end in the honey. Then when he put his hand to his mouth, his eyes brightened. ²⁸But one of the men remarked, "Your father definitely put the troops under oath, saying, 'Cursed is the man who takes food today.'" However the people felt exhausted.

²⁹Jonathan responded, "My father has disturbed the country. Just see how refreshed I am because of this little bit of honey. ³⁰How much greater would the slaughter of the Philistines have

been if the troops had freely eaten today of the enemies' supplies!" ³¹But although the troops were lacking energy, they beat the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon.^x ³²Then the men threw themselves on the loot. They seized sheep, cattle, and calves, butchered them on the ground and ate them, blood and all.^y

³³Then Saul was told, "Take note! The people are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood." He said, "You are sinning. Turn at once a great stone my way."^z ³⁴Saul added, "Disperse among the troops and tell them, 'Everyone must bring me his cattle or sheep and butcher and eat it here; but do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.'" So that night every man of the troops brought the animal he had on hand and slaughtered it there. ³⁵And Saul built an altar to the LORD — the first altar he built to the LORD.

³⁶Then Saul proposed, "Let us keep on pursuing the Philistines tonight, plunder them until dawn, and not leave a man of them alive." They responded, "Do as you think best." But the priest said, "Let us at this point draw near to God." ³⁷Saul, therefore, inquired of God, "Shall I pursue the Philistines? Wilt Thou deliver them in Israel's hand?" But God did not answer him that day.^a ³⁸Then Saul said, "Come near, all you chiefs of the people; investigate and discover whose is the guilt on this occasion. ³⁹For, as the LORD lives who delivered Israel, even if the guilt rests with my son Jonathan, he must die." But not one of all the people answered him.

⁴⁰Saul then told all Israel, "You stand on one side and I and my son Jonathan on the other side," to which the people replied, "Do as you think best." ⁴¹Saul prayed unto the LORD, "O LORD God of Israel, give a perfect

w) Like star dust swirling around a nucleus, thus forming a new star or a constellation, so people will gather around one person with initiative and a promising plan.

x) Remembered [Josh. 10:12], as quoted from Hebrew poetry. It was located about 13 mi. n.w. of Jerusalem. y) God's command to Noah, with His reason for it [Gen. 9:4-6], applied to the Hebrews and was reiterated by the Church [Acts 15:20,29].

z) May mean that Saul, representing the troops, accepted the sin as his own; or that the butchering would be on the stone. a) Impulsive Saul had rashly laid an oath of fasting on the people. Ignorantly Jonathan failed to live up to it. The oath made this a matter immediately related to God; hence divine silence when His counsel is desired.

lot!" Then Saul and Jonathan were indicted, and the people were freed. ⁴²Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan," and Jonathan was taken. ⁴³Saul then said to Jonathan, "Tell me, what have you done?" And Jonathan told him, "I tasted a drop of honey from the tip of the staff I had in my hand. Here I am, ready to die."

⁴⁴Saul announced, "God do so to me and more, Jonathan, but you certainly must die." ⁴⁵The troops, however, said to Saul, "Jonathan die, who won this great victory for Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not a hair of his head shall fall to the earth, for with God's help he has achieved this today." Thus the people delivered Jonathan so that he did not die. ⁴⁶Saul then returned from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went where they belonged.

⁴⁷When Saul had gained the kingship over Israel, he fought enemies in every direction: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned he conquered. ⁴⁸He worked mighty deeds; he defeated the Amalekites, and he saved Israel from the control of their plunderers.

⁴⁹The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishui, and Malchishua,^b and of his two daughters the older was named Merab and the younger Michal. ⁵⁰The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, daughter of Ahimaaz. His general's name was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle. ⁵¹Kish, the father of Saul, and Ner, the father of Abner, were the sons of Abiel. ⁵²Throughout Saul's life there was heavy fighting against the Philistines; so whenever Saul noticed any brave and athletic man, he personally drafted him.^c

15 SAMUEL SAID TO SAUL, "THE LORD sent me to anoint you

king over His people Israel; listen therefore to the LORD's message. ²The LORD of hosts says: I have in mind what Amalek did to Israel; how he waylaid him when he came up from Egypt. ³Now then, you go and strike down Amalek; destroy all he has; spare none. Slay man and woman, child and infant, cattle and sheep, camel and donkey."

⁴So Saul called up the people and mustered them at Telaim,^d two hundred thousand infantry, with ten thousand men from Judah. ⁵When Saul approached the Amalek capital he made an ambush in the valley ⁶and sent word to the Kenites,^e "Move out; separate yourselves from the Amalekites, so I may not destroy you together with them; for you treated all Israel kindly when they came out of Egypt." So the Kenites moved away from among the Amalekites.

⁷Saul struck down Amalek from Havilah to the Shur approach east of Egypt. ⁸He captured Agag, the Amalek king, alive; but he doomed all the people to complete destruction with the sword. ⁹However, Saul and the people spared Agag; also the choicest sheep and cattle and the fattest lambs — everything of high value they did not doom to destruction; only the lesser quality cattle and the worthless they utterly destroyed.

¹⁰Then came the LORD's message to Samuel: ¹¹I am grieved ever to have made Saul king; for he has quit following Me and has not carried out My orders. Samuel was so deeply moved,^f he cried to the LORD all night; ¹²and early in the morning he went to meet Saul. It was told Samuel, "Saul came to Carmel where he erected for himself a monument; then he turned and left; he went down to Gilgal."

¹³Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "The LORD bless you. I have carried out the LORD's command."

b) A younger son was Ishbosheth, whom Abner made king after Saul and these three sons had fallen in battle. c) Much like the Prussian kings, especially "Old Fritz," with their seven-foot grenadiers. d) Little lambs — likely a pasture valley. Again Judah, including the Simeon tribe, mentioned separately.

e) Hobab, a Kenite, had helped Moses in his leadership from Sinai to Canaan. He was a brother-in-law of Moses [Num. 10:29].

f) Few disappointments hurt as deeply as a life which was once headed in the right direction but finally goes wrong.

¹⁴But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle that I hear?" ¹⁵Saul replied, "They have brought them along from the Amalekites; the people have spared the best of sheep and cattle to bring an offering to the LORD your God,^g but the rest we have destroyed."

¹⁶Samuel then said to Saul, "Wait, and I will relate to you what the LORD told me last night." He said to him, "Say it!" ¹⁷Samuel went on, "When you were little in your own sight, did you not become a prince of Israel's tribes, and has not the LORD anointed you to be king over Israel? ¹⁸The LORD sent you out under orders. He said: Go and destroy the evildoers, the Amalekites; fight them until you have exterminated them. ¹⁹Why then, did you not listen to the LORD's voice, but flung yourself on the loot and did evil in the LORD's sight?"

²⁰Saul answered Samuel, "I did listen to the LORD's voice and went the way the LORD sent me. I brought along Agag, the Amalekite king, and I have doomed the Amalekites to destruction; ²¹but the people took of the choicest sheep and cattle, the best that was doomed, to bring sacrifices to the LORD your God^g at Gilgal."

²²Samuel then said, "Does the LORD delight as much in burnt offerings and in sacrifices as in obeying the LORD's voice? See! Obedience is better than sacrifice and to listen than the fat of rams.^h ²³For rebellion is as the sin of fortunetelling and stubbornness as wickedness and idol worship. Because you have rejected the LORD's word, He has rejected you from being king."

²⁴Saul replied to Samuel, "I have sinned; I have transgressed the LORD's command and your order because I was afraid of the people and listened to them. ²⁵Now then, pardon my sin; go back with me, and I will worship the LORD." ²⁶But Samuel told Saul, "I will not return with you; because you have rejected the LORD's word, there-

fore the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel."

²⁷As Samuel turned around to leave, Saul seized the border of his robe, which tore off. ²⁸So Samuel said to him, "Today the LORD has torn the kingship of Israel away from you and has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you, ²⁹and the Everlasting of Israel does not lie or repent; for He is not a man to change His mind." ³⁰"I have sinned," he said, "but please do me the honors before the elders of my people and before Israel; then will I worship the LORD your God." ³¹So Samuel did return behind Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.

³²Samuel said, "Present me here Agag, the Amalekite king. And cheerfully Agag approached him, remarking, "Surely, the bitterness of death is past." ³³"As your sword has made women childless," said Samuel, "so shall your mother be childless among the women." Then Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD in Gilgal. ³⁴Samuel then went to Ramah, and Saul went home to Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵Samuel did not see Saul again before he died; but he grieved over Saul. It was grief to God that he had appointed Saul king over Israel.ⁱ

16 THE LORD SAID TO SAMUEL: How long will you grieve over Saul since I have renounced him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go; I am sending you to Jesse, the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king among his sons. ²Samuel answered, "But how can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." The LORD said: Take with you a heifer and say, "I have come to sacrifice to the LORD." ³Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice; I will suggest to you what next to do; you will anoint for Me whom I point out to you.

⁴Samuel did what the LORD had said. But when he came to Bethlehem,

g) Not "my God," for he knew he had grown disloyal to Jehovah.

h) Our LORD heard these words quoted to Him [Mark 12:33], by a scribe.

i) There are "ifs" with God in His dealings with man, because He made man in His likeness, with the possibility of going against Him; but God made no mistake. First the people and then Saul made the mistake.

the town's elders met him, trembling from fear, and asked, "Does your coming mean peace?" ⁵He answered, "Peace! I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves, so you may share this sacrifice with me." He also consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶As they came in, he looked at Eliab and thought, "Surely, the LORD's anointed is before Him." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel: Pay no attention to his looks or to his splendid height, for I have passed him by. It is not what man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.¹

⁸Jesse then called Abinadab and had him pass by Samuel; but he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Jesse next had Shammah walk by him, but he said, "This one, too, the LORD has not chosen." ¹⁰Eventually Jesse had seven of his sons walk before Samuel, but Samuel told Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen them."

¹¹When Samuel asked Jesse, "Are these all your sons?" he replied, "There is still the youngest; you see, he is tending the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him; for we shall not sit down until he is here."

¹²So he sent and got him. He had a ruddy complexion, sparkling eyes, and a handsome appearance. The LORD said: Stand up and anoint him, for this is he. ¹³So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him among his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD took hold of David from then on. Samuel then got up and went to Ramah.

¹⁴But the LORD's Spirit departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him.^k ¹⁵Saul's servants then told Saul, "You know that an evil spirit from God is frightening you. ¹⁶Tell your personal attendants to look for someone who is skillful in playing the harp; then when the evil spirit from God takes hold of you, he will

play the instrument, and it shall be well with you."

¹⁷Saul said to his attendants, "Be on the lookout for a good musician, and bring him to me." ¹⁸One of the attendants spoke up, "I saw a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who plays excellently; he is a good fighter, of sound judgment, well built, and the LORD is with him."¹ ¹⁹Saul then sent messengers to Jesse with this request,^m "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." ²⁰Jesse loaded a donkey with ten loaves of bread, a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them to Saul by his son David. ²¹Thus David came to Saul and became his valet. Saul appreciated him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. ²²Saul therefore sent word to Jesse, "Let David stay in my service; he has won my favor." ²³And whenever the evil spirit from God came on Saul, David would take his harp and play; it eased Saul; he felt better, and the evil spirit would leave him.ⁿ

17 THE PHILISTINES MUSTERED their forces for war and came together at Socoh, which belongs to Judah; they camped at Ephes-dammim between Socoh and Azekah. ²Saul and Israel's troops mustered and camped in the Elah^o valley and drew up in battle formation against the Philistines. ³The Philistines occupied one mountainside and Israel the other, with the valley between them.

⁴A champion named Goliath, of Gath, came forward from the Philistine army, over nine feet tall, ⁵wearing a bronze helmet and armed with a bronze coat of mail that weighed two hundred pounds, ⁶bronze leggings on both legs, and carrying a bronze javelin on his shoulder. ⁷His spear shaft was the size of a weaver's beam, and the head of his iron spear weighed twenty-five pounds. His armor-bearer went ahead of him.

⁸He stood and shouted to Israel's

j) God had provided David with royal possibilities, and he under adverse circumstances had applied them.

k) Evil spirits, disobedient as they are to God, remain subject to God, unable to molest without divine permission. Saul, by forsaking God, had opened the door for Satan and his demons.

l) Obviously no longer a boy, as so often pictured.

m) Which, coming from a king, was an order, as Samuel had foretold.

n) Read Robert Browning's "Saul" and, if at all possible, see Rembrandt's "David before Saul" at the Maurits Art Gallery in The Hague. o) Oakdale, in our language.

battle lines, "Why draw up in battle formation? Am I not a Philistine and you Saul's slaves? Choose a man to represent you, and let him challenge me. ⁹If he is able to fight and kill me, then we shall be your slaves; but if I beat and kill him, then you will be our slaves and serve us. ¹⁰I defy the ranks of Israel today," so the Philistine went on, "to furnish me a man, so we can fight each other." ¹¹And as Saul and all Israel heard the Philistine's challenge, they were alarmed and in great fear.^p

¹²Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse and he had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was up in years. ¹³His eldest sons had followed Saul to war; those three sons were Eliab the first-born, Abinadab next and Shammah third. ¹⁴David was the youngest, and the three eldest were behind Saul. ¹⁵David went back and forth from Saul to Bethlehem to tend his father's sheep.

¹⁶For forty days, morning and evening, the Philistine champion came forward and took his position. ¹⁷Now Jesse told his son David, "Take your brothers a bushel of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and take them quickly to your brothers at the camp; ¹⁸also hand these ten cheeses to their colonel.^q See how your brothers are faring, and bring back some reminder from them. ¹⁹Saul, they, and all of Israel's troops are in Elah valley in conflict with the Philistines."

²⁰Early in the morning David got up, left the sheep with a herdsman, packed as Jesse had instructed him, and was off. He reached the encampment as the army was moving up for military formation and the battle cry was sounded. ²¹Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their battle lines, army against army. ²²David left his pack behind in care of the commissary and hurried toward the ranks. Once

there, he asked his brothers about their welfare.

²³While he was talking with them the champion Goliath, the Philistine of Gath, came out from the ranks of the Philistine troops and repeated the daily challenge, which David heard. ²⁴As the men of Israel saw him, they all ran from the man in terror. ²⁵They said, "Did you see this man who is coming this way? He comes forward to defy Israel. The king will richly reward the one who slays him; he will give him his daughter and exempt^r his father's family in Israel."

²⁶David asked the men who were standing near him, "What shall be done to the man who kills that Philistine and removes the shame from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, to defy the armies of the living God?" ²⁷The people repeated to him the same statement, "Thus they will treat the man who kills him."

²⁸When Eliab, his oldest brother, heard him conversing with the men, his anger grew hot against David^s and he said, "Why really did you come here? With whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I am aware of your impudence and your ugly heart. You came to watch the fighting."

²⁹David responded, "What have I done wrong by asking a question?" ³⁰He then turned from him to another, put the same question, and the people gave the same answer as those before.

³¹David's words were noted and were repeated to Saul, who sent for him. ³²David said to Saul, "Let no one lose courage on his account; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." ³³Saul told David, "You will not be able to tackle this Philistine for combat, for you are still young, and he is a warrior from his youth up." ³⁴David, however, answered Saul, "Your servant has been tending sheep for his father; and when a lion came or a bear to seize a sheep from the

p) Saul knew and Israel knew that the nearest match to put against Goliath was their tallest, strongest man, the king.

q) Teachers of history might well study these martial records of 3,000 years ago, near in time to Homer's facts and fancies. r) Exemption from such burdens as taxes and involuntary services which the common man must meet. It amounted to being raised to nobility.

s) It had not been easy for David's older brothers to see him chosen in preference to themselves; for Eliab, the oldest, this seemed especially humiliating.

flock, ³⁵I got after him, struck him, and rescued the sheep from his jaws. In case he turned on me, I caught him by his chin whiskers, wounded, and killed him.^t ³⁶Your servant has slain the lion as well as the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will go their way, since he has defied the drawn up army of the living God.” ³⁷Then David added, “The LORD, who rescued me from the paws of lion and bear, He will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.”^u

Saul told David, “You go, and the LORD be with you.” ³⁸Then Saul dressed David in his own suit; he put a bronze helmet on his head and armed him in a coat of mail. ³⁹Over the coat David girded on his sword, and thus he tried walking, for he had never tested them. David then told Saul, “I cannot freely move in these, for I have never tried them.” So David got rid of them ⁴⁰and with staff in hand selected five smooth stones from the brook, put them in the bag he had with him, the shepherd's food bag, held the sling in his hand, and thus went out to meet the Philistine.^v

⁴¹The Philistine moved toward David, gradually nearer, his armor-bearer ahead of him. ⁴²When the Philistine laid eyes on David, he took a good look at him and disdained him because he was young, ruddy, and handsome. ⁴³“Am I a dog,” the Philistine said to David, “that you come at me with sticks?” And he cursed him by his gods. ⁴⁴The Philistine further said to David, “If you come at me, I will feed your body to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.”

⁴⁵David answered the Philistine, “You are meeting me with sword and spear and javelin, but I meet you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶Today the LORD will

hand you over to me, and I will slay you and cut off your head. Today I will feed the corpses of the Philistine army to the birds of heaven and to the beasts of the field, so that the whole earth may know there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷This whole gathering, too, shall know that the LORD does not save through sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will hand you over to us.”

⁴⁸As the Philistine readied himself to attack and kept coming closer to meet David, David hurried and ran toward the line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹He put his hand in the bag, took out a stone, slung it, and hit the Philistine's forehead, so that the stone drilled into his forehead, and he fell face down to the ground. ⁵⁰Thus did David conquer the Philistine with sling and stone; he struck the Philistine and killed him without a sword in his hand. ⁵¹But David ran, stood over the Philistine, drew his sword from its sheath and dispatched him, cutting off his head with it.^w And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead they took to flight.

⁵²The troops of Israel and Judah sprang up with a war cry and chased the Philistines as far as Gath and to the gates of Ekron, with the wounded of the Philistines lying along the Shaaraim road all the way to Gath and Ekron. ⁵³The Israelites then turned from pursuing the Philistines and plundered their camp. ⁵⁴But David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem,^x and his armor he laid in his tent.

⁵⁵When Saul watched David going out to fight against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the army commander, “Abner, whose son is this youth?”^y Abner replied, “As you live, O king, I do not know.” ⁵⁶The king said, “Find out whose son the young man is.”

t) David seems to have followed Samson's example [Judges 14:6], tearing the animal's jaws apart.

u) It is well that David acknowledged God's help, which alone could see him through against Goliath. v) David knew how to sling a smooth stone; he did not yet know how to fight in armor. We, too, may be capable along certain lines and utterly useless for other activities.

w) Probably the smooth gravelstone, piercing Goliath's skull, knocked him unconscious; but David dispatched him before the giant came to.

x) David could deposit it in Jerusalem, held by Benjamin, except the Zion which was held by the Jebusites. y) David as his musician and armor-bearer had interested Saul, but as his prospective son-in-law the king grew anxious to know more about his family — how well a scion of it might fit into the court life.

⁶⁷So when David came back from slaying the Philistine, Abner engaged David and took him to Saul with the Philistine's head in his hand. ⁶⁸Saul asked him, "Young man, whose son are you?" To this David replied, "I am a son of Jesse of Bethlehem."

18 **BY THE TIME DAVID WAS** through talking with Saul, Jonathan's soul was in unison with David's soul; Jonathan loved him as himself. ²On that same day Saul retained him and did not let him return to his father's home. ³Because he loved him, Jonathan made a covenant with David; ⁴he stripped himself of the robe he had on and gave it to David; also his armor with sword, bow, and belt. ⁵David went out wherever Saul sent him and enjoyed success, so that Saul put him in charge of troops; he was in favor with the people and with Saul's servants.

⁶Something happened, however, on their return trip from David's slaying of the Philistine. The women came out from all the Israelite towns to meet King Saul, singing and dancing to tambourines, and making joy with cymbals. ⁷As they danced, the women sang responsively, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands."^a ⁸This made Saul very angry. The refrain disgusted him; he said to himself, "They ascribe to David ten thousands and to me only thousands; what more for him but the kingdom!" ⁹From that day on Saul kept an envious eye on David.

¹⁰Next day an evil spirit from God took hold of Saul so that he raved inside his house, while David as usual played the harp. In his hand Saul had a spear ¹¹which he threw, intending to pin David to the wall; but twice David escaped from his presence. ¹²Saul was afraid of David because the LORD was with him and had departed from Saul. ¹³Saul therefore removed him from his presence and made him

colonel of a regiment; so that his going in and out became public, ¹⁴and he behaved wisely in all his enterprises. The LORD was with him.

¹⁵When Saul noticed how capable he was, he dreaded him, ¹⁶while all Israel and Judah prized David highly because as a leader he went in and out before them. ¹⁷Saul said to David, "Here is Merab, my older daughter, whom I will give you for a wife;^b only, serve me bravely and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "Let not my hand, but the Philistines', be against him." ¹⁸But David said to Saul, "Who am I and what is my family in Israel that I should be the king's son-in-law?" ¹⁹Yet, when the time arrived for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she married Adriel the Meholahite.

²⁰But Saul's daughter Michal fell in love with David and when Saul was told of it, he was pleased; ²¹for he thought, "I will give her to him and let her be his undoing; let the Philistines put him down." But to David he said, "You can now be my son-in-law with the second one." ²²At the same time Saul instructed his attendants, "Have a private chat with David and tell him, 'The king favors you and all his attendants love you; why not be the king's son-in-law?'" ²³Saul's attendants conveyed Saul's suggestions to David, but he said, "Do you consider it trifling to become the king's son-in-law, poor and insignificant as I am?"

²⁴Saul's attendants reported to him what David had said, ²⁵to which Saul replied, "You tell David, 'The king wants no dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.'" Saul intended to have David fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶His attendants repeated the statement to David, who then agreed to become the king's son-in-law. Before the fixed time ²⁷David got up and went out with his men, slew two hundred Philistines,^c

z) He furnished the promising recruit with the choicest military equipment.

a) The singers displayed more zeal than judgment; it required a better man than Saul to take that without retaliating. b) Saul had promised her to Goliath's slayer, whoever he might be.

c) This was multiplied murder, definitely contrary to divine law, unless it was part of the Hebrew war of liberation from the Philistines.

brought back their foreskins, and presented the whole number to the king, so as to become his son-in-law; upon which Saul gave him his daughter Michal to be his wife.^d

²⁸When Saul fully realized that the LORD was with David and that Michal, Saul's daughter loved him, ²⁹Saul feared David more than ever, and he remained David's enemy for life. ³⁰But each time the Philistines went on the warpath and made sallies, David achieved more success than all Saul's captains, so that his name grew famous.

19 SAUL SUGGESTED TO HIS SON Jonathan and to all his attendants to bring about David's death. But Saul's son Jonathan prized David highly, ²so he warned David, "Saul, my father, is intending your death; be on guard tomorrow morning; go in hiding in some secret spot. ³I will go out in the field where you are, stand beside my father, talk about you, and let you know how matters stand." ⁴Jonathan then spoke well of David to his father. He said, "Let not the king wrong his servant David, for he has not wronged you; on the contrary, he has behaved admirably toward you. ⁵He risked his life to slay the Philistine, and the LORD worked out a great deliverance for Israel, which you were glad to see. Why then be guilty of innocent blood by killing David without due cause?"

⁶Saul listened to what Jonathan said and made oath, "As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death."^e ⁷Then Jonathan called to David and repeated to him the whole conversation; he took David back to Saul, and David served him as before. ⁸When war broke out afresh, David went out and fought the Philistines, defeating them with such heavy losses that they fled before him.^f ⁹Then an evil spirit from the LORD came upon Saul while he sat in his house with a spear in his hand. As David was playing the strings with

his hand, ¹⁰Saul tried to pin him to the wall; but David dodged away from Saul so that he hit the wall with the spear, and that night David escaped.

¹¹Saul sent messengers to David's house to guard it and to kill him in the morning; but Michal, his wife, informed him, "Unless you save your life tonight, you will be killed tomorrow." ¹²So Michal lowered David from the window; then he fled away and escaped. ¹³Michal took an image,^g laid it on the bed, adjusted a goats' hair pillow at the head and covered it with a garment. ¹⁴Saul sent messengers to take David, but she said, "He is sick." ¹⁵Saul sent the messengers back to call on David, with orders, "Bring him to me on his bed, so I may dispatch him." ¹⁶But when the messengers went in, there in bed was the image, with the goats' hair pillow at the head. ¹⁷Saul said to Michal, "Why did you deceive me so and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal replied to Saul, "He threatened me, 'Let me go! Why should I kill you?'"^h

¹⁸After David had escaped by flight, he called on Samuel at Ramah and told him everything; then he left there with Samuel, and they settled at Naioth. ¹⁹Saul, upon getting a message, "Take note! David lives at Naioth in Ramah," ²⁰sent police to arrest David; but when they saw a group of prophets, moved by the Spirit and led by Samuel, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's officers until they prophesied.ⁱ ²¹Hearing of it, Saul sent a second detachment; but they, too, became inspired. Once more Saul sent officers and they prophesied. ²²Then he himself went to Ramah and, arriving at the great well of Sechu, he inquired, "Where are Samuel and David?" They said, "At Naioth near Ramah." ²³So he took the road to Naioth by Ramah, and of him also the Spirit of God took hold. He prophesied as he went until he reached Naioth by Ramah; ²⁴he stripped off his

d) David had no right to marry more than this one wife while she lived, and his later lawbreaking brought him much trouble, personally and as a family man.

e) Saul meant what he said when he was at his best, but failed to hold to his noblest impulses.

f) Jealousy and envy were Saul's worst traits; he could not endure David's successes.

g) A man-sized image with a manlike face, the image suggests an idol. h) Which was certainly untrue. i) Once more music and inspiring singing proved catching and helped hearts to turn to God and to yield to His holy influences.

clothes too and kept prophesying in Samuel's presence, like the rest.^j All day and all that night he lay there stripped. For this reason they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

20 DAVID THEN HURRIED AWAY from Naioth by Ramah, came to Jonathan and said, "What have I done? What is my misdemeanor? How have I wronged your father, that he is out for my life?"^k He answered him, "Not at all; you shall not die. You see, my father does nothing great or small without confiding it to me; why should he hide this affair from me? It is not so!"^l David, however, asserted with an oath, "Your father knows perfectly well that you favor me; so he says, 'Jonathan had better not know this; it would distress him'; but as the LORD lives and you live, there is but one step between me and death."^m

ⁿJonathan asked David, "What do you want? I will do it for you."^o To which David replied, "See here! It's new moon tomorrow, and I should not fail to sit at the king's table. If you will excuse me, I will remain hidden in the field till the day after at evening.^p In case your father misses me, tell him, 'David urged me strongly for leave to go at once to his Bethlehem town because there the whole family observes its annual sacrifice.'^q If he says, 'Very well,' then your servant is safe; but if he grows very angry, then be sure he has definitely decided on evil.^r Now then, treat your servant kindly, for you have entered into a covenant of the LORD with your servant; but if there is guilt on my part, you yourself dispatch me. Why hand me over to your father?"

^sJonathan replied, "By no means. If I knew for certain that my father had definitely decided to treat you evilly, would I not let you know?"^t Upon which David asked Jonathan, "Who will inform me in case your father

answers you roughly?"^u Jonathan responded, "Come on, let us go out in the field." And they went out together into the field.^v Then Jonathan told David, "The LORD God of Israel be witness! I shall sound my father about this time tomorrow or the third day, and if the situation looks promising and he feels cordial toward you, shall I not send word to inform you?"^w So may the LORD repay Jonathan and worse, if my father has set his mind to harm you, if I do not let you know so that you can leave in peace; and may the LORD be with you as He has been with my father."^x Not merely during my life will you show me the LORD's graciousness, but also if I die.^y Never withdraw your kindness from my family, not even when the LORD wipes every one of David's adversaries from the face of the earth."

^zJonathan made this covenant with the house of David: The LORD shall require it from David's adversaries.^{aa} Jonathan also took oath afresh from David, because of his love for him, for he loved him as himself.^{ab} Jonathan then told him, "New moon tomorrow; you will be missed, for your place will remain vacant;^{ac} but on the third day be sure to come down and return to the spot where you hid on that eventful day; sit down by the stone pile.^{ad} I will shoot three arrows alongside it as if aiming at a mark.^{ae} Then I will charge the lad, 'Go and find the arrows.' If I say expressly to the lad, 'Look! The arrows are this way; get them,' then come, for all is safe for you; as the LORD lives, there is no trouble.^{af} But if I say to the youth, 'Look! The arrows are beyond you,' then be on your way, for the LORD is letting you go.^{ag} And as to our mutual pledge, mind you, the LORD is our Mediator forever."

^{ah}David did hide in the field. At the new moon the king sat at the table to eat food.^{ai} He sat at the king's ac-

j) Stripped probably means minus his robe but still in his tunic. Thus he enjoyed the leadership of Samuel, but did not personally converse with him.

k) The Psalms of David are rich in relating life to a wise and gracious God, who is also righteous, because his life was so rich in experience.

l) A made-up story to test Saul.

m) Jonathan had accepted the anointing of David.

customed place near the wall, with Jonathan standing and Abner sitting beside the king; but David's place was vacant. ²⁶That day Saul never said a word, for he thought, "Something happened to him; he is not purified; no, he is not purified." ²⁷But when on the day after the new moon David's place was still vacant, Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why has not the son of Jesse come to dinner either yesterday or today?" ²⁸Jonathan replied, "David begged of me for leave to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹He said, 'Please let me go, for our family is observing a sacrifice in town and my brother charged me to be there; be so kind as to let me go and visit my brothers.' This is the reason he did not come to the royal table."

³⁰Then Saul's anger burned hotly against Jonathan. He said to him, "You son of a rebellious, undisciplined woman,ⁿ do I not know that you made choice of Jesse's son to your own dishonor and to the shame of your mother's exposure? ³¹It is certain that so long as the son of Jesse walks the earth, neither you nor your kingship will be secure. You therefore send for him and have him brought to me, for he is doomed to die." ³²Jonathan answered Saul his father, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" ³³Then Saul threw his spear at him to kill him. From this Jonathan knew that his father had fully determined to kill David. ³⁴In hot anger, therefore, Jonathan left the table and ate nothing the second day of the new moon; for he grieved on account of his father's shameful behavior toward David.

³⁵Next morning Jonathan went into the field at the time prearranged with David, and a small boy came along. ³⁶He told the boy, "Run; find the arrows I shoot," and as the lad began to run, he shot an arrow over him. ³⁷When the boy reached the spot where Jonathan had shot the arrow,

Jonathan called after him, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" ³⁸He then shouted after the lad, "Be quick! Hurry! Don't delay!" So Jonathan's boy picked up the arrows and came to his master, ³⁹without sensing what it was all about; only Jonathan and David knew. ⁴⁰Jonathan handed his equipment to his boy and told him, "Go and take them to town."

⁴¹As soon as the lad was gone, David came from beside the stone pile and threw himself prone on the ground before Jonathan, bowing down three times.^o They kissed each other and wept together until David got control of himself. ⁴²Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace! Since we have sworn to each other in the LORD's name, the LORD will be Mediator between me and you; also between my descendants and yours forever." David then arose and left, while Jonathan entered the town.

21 DAVID WENT TO NOB TO Ahimelech the priest. Frightened,^p Ahimelech met David and asked him, "Why are you alone and nobody with you?" ²David told Ahimelech the priest, "The king has commissioned me with a task about which he said, 'Nobody must know about the affair on which I am sending you and which I have committed to you. I have sent the young men to a definite meeting place.' ³Now then, what have you on hand? Let me have five loaves, or as much as you have."

⁴The priest answered David, "I have no ordinary bread on hand, but there is consecrated bread, if only the young men have kept away from women."

⁵David told the priest, "Rest assured, women have been kept from us as usual when I am on the march; the young men's kits have been consecrated. Although this is a secular mission, the kits will render it set apart."

⁶The priest then gave him the consecrated bread; for there was only the

n) Like "a son of Belial." This may be only a form of extreme disapproval. It is also possible that his wife, Ahinoam, sided with Jonathan to be fair toward David and had tried to persuade Saul in that direction. o) Grateful for Jonathan's loyalty at great risk.

p) The priest had much reason to fear. David's falsehoods proved fatal to Ahimelech, and to the whole community.

showbread, which was regularly removed from the LORD's presence so as to be replaced by fresh bread on the same day.^q

⁷That same day one of Saul's servants was there, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg, an Edomite, chief of Saul's herdsmen.

⁸David asked Ahimelech, "Do you not have a spear or sword available? For I had no chance to take along my sword or any other weapon because the king's business required haste." ⁹The priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine is here, whom you slew in the Elah valley; it lies wrapped behind the ephod. If you care to take it, go ahead; there is nothing else here." David said, "There's nothing like it; let me have it."

¹⁰That day David, in fear of Saul, took flight and went to Achish the king of Gath. ¹¹But the attendants of Achish told him, "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not in dance measures sing the responses, 'Saul has killed his thousands and David his ten thousands?'" ¹²David took these remarks to heart and grew dreadfully afraid of Achish the king of Gath, ¹³so that he pretended in their presence to be demented, needing control like a madman. He scribbled on the gate doors and let his saliva run down his beard.^r ¹⁴Achish told his attendants, "Take a look at the man, how demented he is! Why do you bring him to me?" ¹⁵Am I short of madmen, that you brought me this one to rave around me? Should such a fellow be my guest?"

22 DAVID GOT AWAY FROM THERE and escaped to the cave of Adullam, and when his brothers and all his father's family heard of it, they joined him there. ²Besides, there gathered around him all those in difficulties, those in debt, those with griev-

ances; and he became their leader.^s About four hundred men joined him.

³From there David went to Mizpeh in Moab and said to the Moabite king, "Please allow my father and mother to come and live among you until I know what God will do for me."^t ⁴He then brought them under the care of Moab's king with whom they stayed during the entire period of David's remaining in the stronghold.^u ⁵However, the prophet Gad told David, "Do not remain in Mizpeh; move out to the Judah country." So David moved to the Hereth woods.

⁶Saul heard of it, for David and his band had been detected. Saul was sitting, spear in hand, under the Gibeah oak tree on the high place, with all his attendants standing around him; ⁷and Saul said to them, "Listen, you Benjamites!" Do you imagine that the son of Jesse will give every one of you fields and vineyards? Will he appoint all of you chiefs of thousands and of hundreds, ⁸so that all of you have conspired against me and none informed me when my son made a covenant with Jesse's son? Nobody has enough sympathy with me to let me know how my son has incited my servant against me to lie in ambush, as is the case today."

⁹Doeg the Edomite, who stood with Saul's attendants, answered, "I saw Jesse's son come to Nob to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, ¹⁰who consulted the LORD for him and supplied him with provisions, even gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." ¹¹Upon this the king sent Ahimelech son of Ahitub a summons, including his whole family and the priests at Nob, all of whom came to the king. ¹²Saul said, "Attention, you son of Ahitub!" He replied, "Present, your majesty!" ¹³Then Saul asked him, "Why have you conspired with Jesse's son against me by giving him food and a sword and by consult-

q) This showbread, or "bread of the Presence," twelve loaves placed on the table in the holy place, was changed each Sabbath to be eaten by the priests in the holy place [Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5-9]. r) David's faith could hardly be at lower ebb.

s) Most of David's heroes came from these misfits, awakened by a true leader.

t) As descendants of Ruth the Moabitess, they were cordially received.

u) Stronghold and Mizpeh can be identical. v) Saul had greatly favored his own tribe in distributing desirable offices: the party-spoils policy is not of recent origin.

ing God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and is now waylaying me?"^w ¹⁴Ahimelech answered the king, "And who among all your servants is as loyal as David, the king's son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and honored in your house? ¹⁵Was this the first time I consulted God for him? Not at all. Let not the king accuse his servant and my whole family of anything; for your servant knew nothing whatever of all this, not the least."

¹⁶But the king said, "Ahimelech, you must certainly die, you and your whole family." ¹⁷The king then ordered the guards who stood by him, "About face! Execute the LORD's priests because they too side with David, and although they knew he was a fugitive, they never informed me." But the king's men would not lift their hands to dispatch the priests of the LORD. ¹⁸The king then ordered Doeg, "About face! Dispatch the priests!" Doeg the Edomite turned around and dispatched the priests; he slew eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.^x ¹⁹He also put Nob, the town of the priests, to the sword, massacring men, women, children, and babes on the breast; cattle, donkeys, and sheep.

²⁰Abiathar, one of Ahimelech's sons, grandson of Ahitub, escaped and fled to David. ²¹When Abiathar related to David how Saul had slain the LORD's priests, ²²David said to Abiathar, "I knew very well that day, since Doeg the Edomite was there that he would unquestionably report it to Saul. I am the occasion of death for your entire family. ²³You stay with me; have no fear, for whoever is after your life is after mine. With me you are perfectly safe."

23 **THEY TOLD DAVID, "TAKE** note! The Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing their

threshing floors."^y ²So David asked the LORD, "Shall I march and defeat these Philistines?" The LORD answered David: March out, defeat the Philistines, and save Keilah. ³But David's men argued, "See here! We live in fear here in Judah; how much worse, then, if we move to Keilah and face the Philistines." ⁴David, therefore, inquired of the LORD once more and the LORD answered: March out; move down to Keilah, for I will put the Philistines in your power. ⁵Then David and his men marched to Keilah and fought the Philistines; they brought away their cattle and inflicted heavy losses on them. In this way David delivered the dwellers of Keilah.

⁶When Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he brought the ephod with him. ⁷And when it was told Saul that David had moved inside Keilah, he said, "God has handed him over to me, for he has shut himself in by entering a town with gates and bars." ⁸So Saul summoned all the people for war, to march on Keilah and to besiege David and his men.

⁹David found out that Saul was planning evil against him and ordered Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." ¹⁰David then prayed, "LORD God of Israel, Thy servant has heard with certainty that Saul plans to march to Keilah to destroy the town on my account. ¹¹Will the men of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as Thy servant has heard? LORD God of Israel, I plead with Thee, let Thy servant know." The LORD said: He will come down. ¹²David then asked, "Will the men of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?" The LORD said: They will hand you over.^z ¹³David and his men, about six hundred, then left Keilah and roamed wherever they could go. And when Saul was told that David had escaped

w) David never rose against Saul; he fled from him for his own life.

x) Ephod means "covering" and here applies to the linen garment each priest wore when in service. The high priest's ephod was more like a vest on which precious stones, inlaid in a square of cloth, were worn and which could be used for consulting with the LORD.

y) They looted the harvest and the granaries. z) From a human standpoint they acted prudently; for a siege by the Hebrews would likely be worse than that of the Philistines from whom they had been delivered by David. And God would have allowed Saul to enter the city. Here is another of God's "ifs." David remained free only by leaving there.

from Keilah, he abandoned the trip.^a

¹⁴David stayed in desert strongholds and remained in the mountainous parts of the Ziph desert. Day in and day out Saul kept hunting for him, but God did not hand him over into his power.

¹⁵David learned how Saul was on the march to take his life; David was then in the Ziph^b desert at Horesh.

¹⁶Jonathan, Saul's son, went to David in the woods and strengthened his trust in God. ¹⁷He told him, "Have no fear, for the hand of Saul my father will not reach you. You will be Israel's king, and I will be next to you. My father Saul knows this too well." ¹⁸The two then made a covenant in the LORD's presence. David remained in the Horesh woods, and Jonathan went back home.

¹⁹However, some Ziphites went to Saul at Gibeah and told him, "Is not David hiding among us in the Horesh mountain strongholds on the Hachilah hill in the south part of the desert?"

²⁰Now, if you care to come down, O king, we will undertake to hand him over to your majesty." ²¹Saul replied, "The LORD bless you for having sympathy with me. ²²You go ahead and find out for sure where his haunt is located and who has seen him there; for I am told he behaves very shrewdly.

²³Try to find all his hiding places; then come back to me with trustworthy information, and I will go with you. If he is anywhere in the land, I will trace him among all the thousands of Judah."^c ²⁴So they started for Ziph ahead of Saul; while David and his men were in the Maon plain in the southern part of the desert.

²⁵When Saul and his men went hunting David, he learned of it, so he moved down to the rock in the Maon plain and stayed there. Saul heard of it and followed David in the Maon plain, ²⁶Saul moving on one side of the ridge and David with his men on the other side. David did his level best

to get away from Saul, but Saul and his men were at the point of encircling and capturing David and his men, ²⁷when a messenger brought Saul the news, "Hurry back, for the Philistines have invaded the country." ²⁸Saul then gave up pursuing David and marched against the Philistines. That place therefore is named Escape Rock.^d ²⁹David moved out from there and housed in the Engedi strongholds.

24 WHEN SAUL HAD RETURNED from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "Observe! David is in the Engedi desert." ²Saul then mustered three thousand choice men from all Israel and went in search of David at the Wild-Goats' Rocks. ³On the way he came to the sheepfolds, where Saul entered a cave to cover his feet,^e but David and his men were sitting in the cave's recesses. ⁴David's men remarked to him, "This is the day in which the LORD said to you, 'Now I put your enemy in your power; do to him what you wish.'"

Unobserved, David got up and cut off the tail end of Saul's robe, ⁵after which his heart smote him for having cut off a piece of Saul's robe. ⁶He said to his men, "May the LORD keep me from doing such a thing to my master, the anointed of the LORD, to raise my hand against him who is the LORD's anointed." ⁷And with these words David restrained his men; he would not let them rise against Saul.

Meanwhile Saul had arisen and had left the cave and gone on his way. ⁸David then moved out of the cave and called after Saul, "Your majesty the king!" Saul looked around, and David bowed deeply, his face touching the ground. ⁹David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to people's words,^f who say 'David schemes evil against you?' ¹⁰Just look! This very day your eyes see how in the cave the LORD put you in my power. They talked about kill-

a) Not all pursuit, but that particular trip. b) There is today a Zif four miles s.e. of Hebron, very hilly and thickly wooded. Horesh means dense wood or thickets.

c) An expression used again by Micah in his Messianic prophecy [ch. 5:2].

d) Selaham-Mahleloth. e) Answer the call of nature. f) It has always been difficult for a king to get at the truth, because no one is supposed to point out his mistakes; presumably he makes none.

ing you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not lift my hand against my master for he is the LORD's anointed.' ¹¹Take a look, my father, and see your coat-tail in my hand. I cut off the tail end of your robe without killing you; so you know that I have no evil or rebellion in mind; that I have done nothing against you, while you intend to take my life. ¹²May the LORD judge between me and you, and may the LORD grant justice regarding you; but my hand shall not be against you. ¹³As the old-time proverb has it, 'From the wicked comes forth wickedness,' but my hand shall not be against you. ¹⁴After whom, really, is the king of Israel? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A lone flea? ¹⁵May the LORD, therefore, be judge and decide between me and you; may He take notice, be my Advocate, do me justice, and rightfully acquit me from your hand."

¹⁶When David had finished speaking to Saul, Saul asked, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul then raised his voice and wept. ¹⁷He told David, "You are fairer than I am; for you treated me well, and I have treated you meanly. ¹⁸Today you have shown your benevolent spirit toward me, not killing me when the LORD committed me into your hand. ¹⁹When one surprises his enemy, will he let him go unharmed? May the LORD be good to you for your dealings with me today. ²⁰Now then, I know for certain that you will be king and that the kingship over Israel will be enduring under your direction. ²¹So, make oath to me by the LORD that you will not destroy my descendants nor wipe out my name from my father's family." ²²David swore this to Saul, and Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

25 SAMUEL DIED, AND ALL ISRAEL gathered to lament over him. They buried him at his Ramah home; but David got out and moved to the Paran desert.

²There lived a man at Maon whose business was at Carmel,^g a very rich man, who owned three thousand sheep and one thousand goats. He was at Carmel attending to the sheepshearing. ³The man's name was Nabal and his wife's name Abigail. The woman was intelligent and good-looking, but the man's behavior was rough and uncouth. He was a Calebite.^h

⁴When David in the desert heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep, ⁵he sent ten young men, whom David commissioned, "Go to Carmel and call on Nabal. Inquire in my name after his welfare, ⁶and tell him, 'Greeting! Peace to you! Peace to your home! Peace to all you possess!' ⁷I hear that you are having shearers. Now, your shepherds were with us and we never molested them, neither have they missed anything all the time they were at Carmel. ⁸Ask your men, and they will confirm it. Will you therefore favor these young men, as we have come on a feast day? Give your servants and your servant David anything you have on hand."

⁹When David's young men arrived, they repeated to Nabal in David's name this entire message, and waited. ¹⁰But Nabal inveighed against David's servants, "Who is David, and who is Jesse's son? There are many servants nowadays running away from their master. ¹¹Shall I then take my food, my wine and the meat I have butchered for my own shearers, and give it to persons from I do not know where?"

¹²David's men faced about, went back, and told him everything that had occurred; ¹³upon which David ordered his troop: "Every man gird on his sword!" So they all girded on their sword, David himself included; then about four hundred men marched behind David while two hundred remained with the supplies. ¹⁴But one of the young men had told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "You should know that David sent messengers from the desert to greet our master, but he scoffed at them. ¹⁵Yet those men were most kind to us; they did not molest us, and we

g) This was not the Carmel ridge noted for Elijah's daring faith; but a village in Judah about seven miles s.e. of Hebron. Its ruins are still called Karmul.

h) A descendant of Caleb, the companion of Joshua.

never missed a thing all the time we were in the fields and had contact with them. ¹⁶They formed a wall around us night and day as long as we pastured the sheep in their neighborhood.¹

¹⁷Now then, consider well what you are to do, because disaster has been decided on for our master and for his entire household; and he is such a son of Belial that nobody can talk to him."

¹⁸Abigail then hurriedly took 200 loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five roasted sheep, two bushels of roasted grain, 100 raisin cakes and 200 fig-cakes, packed them on donkeys, ¹⁹and ordered her servants, "You move on ahead of me; I will follow." But she did not inform Nabal, her husband.

²⁰Seated on her donkey she was coming down a mountain pass when David and his men came down, too, meeting her; so she faced them. ²¹Now David had said, "So, our protecting this fellow's belongings in the desert so that he missed nothing, proved all useless; he is returning evil for good. ²²May God do so to David's enemies and worse if, of all he has, I leave a single male alive by morning." ²³But when Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted from her donkey, fell on her face before David, bowed to the ground, ²⁴fell at his feet, and said, "On me, sir, falls the blame! Allow your maid, please, to address you, and listen to your servant girl's words. ²⁵Let my master pay no attention, I beg of you, to this worthless man Nabal,¹ for as his name, so is the man. He is named Nabal; he is a fool. But I, your maid, did not see the men my master sent. ²⁶So then, sir, as the LORD lives and as you live, when the LORD has restrained you from bloodshed and from taking the law in your own hands, may your enemies and all who plan against my master fare like Nabal.

²⁷"This present which your hand-maid brings her master, may it be given the young men who are enlisted with my master. ²⁸Please, pardon your

maid's conduct,^k for the LORD shall certainly set up for my master a lasting dynasty, because my master is fighting the LORD's battles, and no evil is found in you all your life. ²⁹Should anyone undertake to persecute you and to seek your life, then my master's soul will be wrapped in the bundle of life with the LORD your God; but the soul of your enemy He shall fling out as from the hollow of a sling. ³⁰And when the LORD has fulfilled all His good promises to my master and has appointed you prince over Israel, ³¹then your heart will suffer from no self-accusation for my master's shedding blood without cause and for taking the law in his own hand. And when the LORD has prospered my master, then remember your servant girl."

³²David responded to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, ³³who sent you today to meet me. Blessed be your good judgment, and blessed be you for restraining me today from the guilt of bloodshed and from taking the law in my own hands. ³⁴For as surely as the LORD God of Israel lives, who kept me from hurting you, if you had not hurriedly met me, not a male around Nabal would have been left alive by break of day." ³⁵David then accepted from her what she had brought and told her, "Go back home in peace. Observe! I have listened to your voice, and personally I like you."

³⁶But when Abigail reached Nabal, he was banqueting in his house like a king. Nabal was in a happy mood and very drunk; so she did not tell him any particulars until morning. ³⁷Next morning, however, when Nabal's spree was over, his wife told him everything, and his heart gave out within him; he became like stone. ³⁸In about ten days the LORD brought on a stroke, and he died.

³⁹When David learned that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has executed justice for

i) Men who form a band and live in caves need nourishment, which must be earned, asked, or plundered. David and his men had formed an exception by actually deserving considerable support.

j) Nabal means foolish, or wicked.

k) Coming forward without her husband and speaking against him was hardly accepted etiquette, and she was a woman of uncommon ability and judgment.

Nabal's insult to me and who has kept His servant from wrongdoing. The LORD has caused Nabal's wickedness to come down on his own head." Then David sent messengers to converse with Abigail about taking her to be his wife. ⁴⁰As David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they informed her, "David has sent us to you in order to take you for his wife." ⁴¹She stood up, bowed her face toward the earth, and said, "Yes, your maid will be a servant girl to wash the feet of my master's servants." ⁴²Then Abigail quickly arose, mounted a donkey and, accompanied by five maids, was on her way. She followed David's messengers and became his wife.

⁴³David had also taken Ahinoam of Jezreel; so both became his wives.^m

⁴⁴But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, of Gallim.

26 THE ZIPHITES WENT TO SAUL at Gibeah and said to him, "Do you know that David is hiding in the Hachilah hill facing the desert?" ²Then Saul took the road down to the Ziph desert and with him three thousand shock troops of Israel to hunt David in the Ziph desert. ³Saul camped on the Hachilah hill, facing the desert near the road, while David stayed in the desert. When David saw that Saul was following him into the desert, ⁴he sent out spies and learned that Saul was indeed coming on. ⁵David then moved up and approached Saul's encampment. He observed the location where Saul lodged with his general, Abner son of Ner—Saul lying inside the wagon barricade and the troops camped around him.

⁶David turned to Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai, Joab's brother and son of Zeruiahⁿ and asked, "Who will go down with me to Saul's camp?" Abishai said, "I will go with you." ⁷So David and Abishai invaded the camp

David's Bigamy; He Spares Saul Again

by night; and there inside the barricade lay Saul asleep, his spear stuck in the ground by his head, with Abner and the soldiery lying around him. ⁸Abishai said to David, "Today God has put your enemy in your hand; now please, let me nail him to the ground with his spear; just one stab, no need of a second one for him." ⁹But David told Abishai, "Do not murder him; for who can with innocence assault the LORD's anointed?" ¹⁰He added, "As the LORD lives, unquestionably the LORD will smite him; he will die either as his time comes, or he will go to battle and be wiped out. ¹¹May the LORD keep me from lifting my hand against the LORD's anointed. Now then, take the spear at his head and the water jug, and let us get away." ¹²So David took the spear and the jug from near Saul's head, and they were off. No one noticed or knew a thing; they were all asleep, for a sound sleep from the LORD had overpowered them.

¹³As soon as David had crossed over, he took his stand on top of the hill at a good distance with plenty of space between them; ¹⁴and David called out to the troops and to Abner son of Ner, "Abner, will you not respond?" Abner replied, "Who are you, calling to the king?" ¹⁵David then twitted Abner, "What a hero you are! Who in Israel is your equal? Why then have you not guarded your master, the king? For one of the people came to murder the king, your master. ¹⁶What you did is not commendable. As the LORD lives, you are children of death,^o because you have not guarded your master, the LORD's anointed. Take a look, where the king's spear and the water jug are, that stood by the king's head!"

¹⁷Saul recognized David's voice and called, "Is that your voice, my son David?" David replied, "Yes, my master, the king." ¹⁸He said further, "Why does my master pursue me? What have

^m) Saul's second daughter, Michal, had been given David for his slaying Goliath; but Saul, when pursuing David, gave her to another man. Later, David demanded her back [II Sam. 3:14]; but she had lost her affection for him [II Sam. 6:16], and died childless [vs. 23].

ⁿ) Zeruiah was David's sister, but not Jesse's daughter; David's mother had been the widow of Nahash [II Sam. 17:25]; Zeruiah was the mother of Joab, nephew of David, but about the same age. ^o) You deserve death.

I done? Of what crime am I guilty? ¹⁹Will my master, the king, please listen to your servant's plea: If the LORD has set you against me, then an offering might be acceptable; but if children of men are doing so, then they are cursed before the LORD, because this very day they are exiling me from fellowship with the LORD's heritage. They say, 'Get out; serve other gods.' ²⁰Now, therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth far from the presence of the LORD. The king is on the move to find a lone flea, as they hunt a partridge on the mountains."

²¹Saul answered, "I have sinned; come back, my son David. I will not harm you; for today you held my life precious. I have acted the fool; I have gravely erred."^p ²²David responded, "Here is the spear, O king; let one of the young men come over and get it. ²³The LORD will reward each person's fairness and loyalty; for the LORD handed you over to me today, and I would not lift my hand against the LORD's anointed. ²⁴Take note! As your life today was held precious by me, so may my life be precious in the LORD's sight, and may He save me out of every difficulty."

²⁵Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, my son David; you will succeed in whatever you undertake." David then went his way, and Saul went back home.

27 DAVID SAID TO HIMSELF, "ANY day now I may fall into Saul's hands. I had better seek refuge in the Philistine country; then Saul will give up hunting for me everywhere in all Israel, and I shall escape from his grip." ²Then David and the six hundred men with him moved out to Achish son of Maach, king of Gath;^q ³David and his men lived with Achish at Gath, each with his household, David with his two wives, Ahinoam,

the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. ⁴And when Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he did not hunt for him any more.

⁵David said to Achish, "If you feel friendly toward me, allow me space in one of your country towns for residence; why should your servant dwell with you in the royal city?" ⁶So Achish assigned him Ziklag; for which reason Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah to this day. ⁷The duration of David's stay in the Philistine country was a year and four months.

⁸David would march out with his troop and raid the Geshurites,^r the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for those were from of old the inhabitants of the land toward Shur and on to the Egypt country. ⁹Every time David conquered a region, he left not a man or woman alive; he took the sheep, the cattle, the camels, the donkeys, and went back to Achish.^s ¹⁰When Achish inquired, "Where have you raided this time?" David would reply, "Against the southern portion of Judah," or "Against the southern part of the Jerahmeelites," or "Against the southland of the Kenites." ¹¹David let neither man nor woman live to be brought to Gath, because he reasoned, "They may betray us and say, 'David behaved this way.'" As long as he remained on Philistine territory this was his custom. ¹²Achish, however, trusted David, reasoning, "He has doubtless brought himself into bad repute with his people, with Israel; he will remain permanently in my service."

28 ABOUT THAT TIME THE PHILISTINES mustered their armies to engage in a campaign against Israel. Achish told David, "You and your men, mind you, are to march with me in the army."^t ²David answered Achish, "Splendid! You will discover what

^p Saul at the moment meant every word he spoke; but David wisely did not place himself under his power; Saul was too fickle.

^q The same Achish of his previous flight. He survived David by at least three years [I Kings 2:39]. In the title to Ps. 34 he is called Abimelech, a title designating royalty, like that of Egypt's Pharaohs. ^r Geshur means bridge. These were probably a colony from Geshur, between the Hermon and Bashan mountains.

^s Bringing tribute from the loot. But he lied and covered up with murder. ^t David could never have done that. Instead, his contingent was the kind that could have turned the battle into an Israelite victory.

your servant is able to do." To this Achish responded, "Then I will appoint you my lifelong bodyguard."

³At Samuel's death all Israel had made lamentation over him and had buried him in his Ramah home town. And Saul had driven the mediums and the fortunetellers out of the country.

⁴The Philistines mustered and made camp at Shunem;^u while Saul mustered all Israel and made camp at Gilboa. ⁵At the sight of the Philistine encampment Saul felt afraid; his mind was shaken. ⁶He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him either by dreams or through Urim^v or through prophets. ⁷Then Saul told his attendants, "Find me a woman who contacts spirits, so I may go and consult her." His courtiers replied, "There is a medium at Endor." ⁸Saul then disguised himself, changed his clothes, and with two men went to the woman by night. When they arrived, he said, "Will you inquire for me as a medium and bring up the one I shall mention to you?" ⁹But the woman answered him, "You know what Saul has done, how he has eliminated mediums and fortunetellers from the land. Why then are you setting a snare for my life, to cause my death?" ¹⁰Saul then swore to her by the LORD, "As the LORD lives, this affair will bring no guilt on you." ¹¹So the woman asked, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" He said, "Bring me up Samuel."

¹²When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed and said to Saul, "Why did you deceive me? You yourself are Saul!" ¹³But the king spoke to her, "Have no fear. What do you see?" The woman answered Saul, "I see a god-like form rising from the earth."^w ¹⁴He then asked her, "Of what appearance is he?" She said, "An old man wrapped in a robe." Saul then understood that it was Samuel. He knelt with his face turned to the earth and bowed down.

¹⁵Samuel then spoke to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me to bring me up?" Saul said, "I am in great distress. The Philistines are fighting me, and God has left me; He does not answer me any more, either through prophets or by dreams. I have therefore called you to let me know what I should do."

¹⁶Samuel said, "Why consult me when the LORD has departed from you and has become your adversary?" ¹⁷The LORD has done what He announced through me; the LORD has torn the kingship from you and has given it to your neighbor, to David. ¹⁸Because you did not listen to the LORD's voice and failed to execute His burning indignation upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has thus treated you today, ¹⁹and along with you the LORD will also hand Israel over to the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me, and the LORD shall deliver the army of Israel into the Philistines' power."

²⁰Then and there Saul fell full length to the ground, terrified by Samuel's message. One reason why his strength had left him was that for a day and a night he had eaten nothing.

²¹So when the woman stepped up to Saul and saw that he was in distress, she said to him, "Your maid has obeyed your orders, and I have endangered my life to do what you told me. ²²Now, please, do as your maid suggests; I will serve you a bite of bread so you may eat and have strength to travel." ²³He refused, however, and said, "I will not eat." But when his attendants, as well as the woman, kept urging him, he yielded to them; he got up from the floor and sat on the couch. ²⁴Hurriedly the woman butchered the fatted calf she had in the house, took flour, which she kneaded and baked to make unleavened cakes. ²⁵This she served Saul and his men and they ate; then that same night they got up and left.

u) Made familiar through "the Shunamite" who entertained Elisha (II Kings 4:25).

v) Urim and Thummim - lights and perfection - were placed in the high priest's breastplate, belonging to the ephod, and worn over the heart as he went before the LORD. On twelve precious stones the names of the twelve tribes were engraved. The godly wearer obtained divine guidance for affairs of state.

w) The fact that necromancy was forbidden suggests that it had been practiced. In Israel it meant departure from God [Lev. 19:31]. The Endor medium was probably a Canaanite.

x) Septuagint [Greek] translation - "and is with your adversary." Saul had become God's adversary.

29 THE PHILISTINES CONSOLIDATED all their forces at Aphek, while the Israelites camped at the Jezreel fountain.^y ²When the Philistine city princes were marching along by companies and regiments, and David and his men formed the rear with Achish, ³the Philistine commanders remarked, "What about these Hebrews?" Achish answered the Philistine commanders, "That, you should know, is David, a subject of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me now for over a year, and to date I have found nothing wrong with him from the time he came over."

⁴But the Philistine commanders were angry at Achish and told him, "You dismiss this man; let him go back to the place you have assigned him. Let him not join us in the battle, lest in the fighting he turn against us. How could he more readily gain favor with his master than with the heads of our soldiers? ⁵Is not this the same David of whom they sang in their responsive dances, 'Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands'?" ⁶Achish then called David and told him, "As the LORD lives, you are an honest man; and it would please me to have you in the army marching out and coming back with me, for since you came to me until now I have found no wrong in you. But the trouble is, the town princes have no use for you. ⁷So you better withdraw peacefully without antagonizing the Philistine princes."

⁸David argued with Achish, saying, "What have I done? What fault can you find with your servant from the day I came into your service until now, so that I may not go along to battle against the enemies of my lord the king? ⁹Achish answered David, "I know it; you are as pleasing to me as an angel of God; but the Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not march to war along with us!' ¹⁰Now then, get up early in the morning with your master's servants^z who have come

with you, and with break of day as soon as it is light take your leave." ¹¹So David and his men got up early in the morning to leave to go back to the Philistine country while the Philistines moved toward Jezreel.

30 WHEN ON THE THIRD DAY David and his men arrived at Ziklag, the Amalekites had invaded the southland including Ziklag which they had burned; ²and they had captured the women and all who were in it without killing any, and had moved on with them. ³So when David came to the town with his men, they found it burned and their wives, their sons and their daughters taken captive. ⁴Then David and the people with him raised their voices and wept until they could weep no more. ⁵Both wives of David, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of the Carmelite Nabal, had been captured too.

⁶David was in a serious predicament; some men talked of stoning him;^a for all the people were in an ugly mood, each on account of his sons and daughters. But David laid hold on the LORD his God. ⁷He said to the priest Abiathar, "Please bring me the ephod." And Abiathar brought David the ephod. ⁸Then David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I pursue these bandits? Shall I overtake them?" He answered him: Go after them, and you will surely overtake and free the captives. ⁹So David and the six hundred men with him marched till they reached the Besor brook; ¹⁰there two hundred men, too exhausted to cross the brook, remained, while four hundred continued the pursuit with David.

¹¹They found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David. They gave him bread, which he ate; they let him drink water; ¹²they gave him a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, he revived; for he had eaten or drunk nothing for three days and three nights. ¹³Then

y) That fountain is still active. The Jezreel valley, later known as the plain of Esdraelon, has been the battlefield for many nations. Gideon had there routed the Amalekites and the Midianites.

z) A broad hint that they really belonged with Saul and his army.

a) As had been Moses' experience (Ex. 17:4); so human to center the blame on someone within reach.

David asked him, "Who are your people, and where do you come from?" He replied, "I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite. My master left me behind because I got sick three days ago. ¹⁴We raided the south section of the Cherethites,^b the Judah country, and the south land of Caleb; we also set fire to Ziklag."

¹⁵David asked him, "Could you lead us to those bandits?" He said, "Swear to me before God that you will neither kill me nor hand me over to my master, and I will lead you to the band."

¹⁶He led them there and, see, they were lying spread out all over the place, eating, drinking, and celebrating over the enormous plunder they had taken from the countries of Philistia and Judah! ¹⁷From twilight until next day's evening David slaughtered them, and none of them escaped, except four hundred young men who mounted camels and sped away. ¹⁸David recovered all that the Amalekites had captured, freeing also his two wives. ¹⁹They lost practically nothing, small or great, sons or daughters, or booty — nothing of what the band had plundered; David brought it all back. ²⁰Besides, David captured all the sheep and cattle, which the men drove ahead of the caravan, saying, "This is David's prize."

²¹When David came near the two hundred men, who had been too exhausted to follow him, so that he left them behind at the Besor brook, they came out to meet him and all those with him; and when David reached them, he inquired after their welfare. ²²Then the evil and worthless characters^c among those who had accompanied David started to argue, "Because they did not go with us, we shall give them nothing of the plunder we recovered, except each one's wife and children. Let them take these and be gone."

²³David, however, said, "My brothers, this is not the way to handle what

the LORD gave us; He preserved us and delivered the invaders to us. ²⁴Who should listen to you on this score? The share of him who stays with the baggage shall be equal to the share of him who marches to battle." ²⁵And so it has been ever since that day. He made it a rule and a statute for Israel to the present.^d

²⁶After David got back to Ziklag, he sent a share of the loot to the elders of Judah with the message, "Here is a present for you of the prize from the LORD's enemies," — ²⁷to those at Bethuel, to those in Ramoth in the south-land, to those at Jattir, ²⁸to those at Aroer, to those in Siphmoth, to those at Eshtemoa, ²⁹to those in Rachal, to those of the Jerahmeelite and Kenite towns, ³⁰to those in Hormah, to those in Borashan, to those in Ether, ³¹to those in Hebron and to all the places where David and his men used to gather.^e

31 MEANWHILE, THE PHILISTINES were fighting Israel, and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines; the slain fell on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines pursued Saul and his sons; they slew Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons.^f ³Against Saul himself the battle went heavily; the bowmen made him their target, so that he was badly wounded by the archers.

⁴Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and run me through, so that these uncircumcised may not come to run me through and have their sport with me." But his armor-bearer refused, repelled by the horror of it. Saul then took his sword and threw himself upon it. ⁵And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too, fell on his sword and died with him. ⁶So then, Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men died together on the same day.

⁷When the men of Israel at the other end of the valley and the people

b) Mentioned among David's bodyguard [II Sam. 8:18].

c) Sons of Belial. d) It was a fair ruling and therefore won the day, with fair characters in the majority. e) A "thank-you" for past favors and a suggestion for future action; David rightly aimed for kingship. f) Philistine officers must have so ordered their archers.

on the other side of Jordan observed that the Israelite troops had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled. Then the Philistines came and occupied them.

⁸Next day, when the Philistines came to strip the fallen, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹They severed his head, stripped off his armor, and sent messengers to broadcast the news all over Philistia in the temples of their idols and among the people. ¹⁰His armor

they deposited in the Astarte temple, and his body they fastened to the Bethshan wall.

¹¹But when the dwellers of Jabesh-gilead learned what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹²all the warriors got up, walked all night, and took the bodies of Saul and his sons from the Bethshan wall^b and, on reaching Jabesh, they cremated them. ¹³But their bones they took and buried under the Jabesh oak. They then fasted seven days.

b) The men of Jabesh matched the heroism of Saul, who had delivered them from the Ammonites [ch. 11].

THE SECOND BOOK OF

SAMUEL^a

1 AFTER THE DEATH OF SAUL, WHEN David had returned from slaughtering the Amalekites, he stayed in Ziklag two days. ²Then on the third day, a man arrived who had been with Saul in the army; his clothes were torn, and he had dust on his head.^b When he came to David, he bowed to the ground and prostrated himself before him. ³David said to him, "From where have you come?"

"I have escaped from Saul's army," he replied. ⁴David then asked him, "How have things gone there? Please, tell me." His reply was, "The men gave up the battle and fled; not only have many fallen but Saul, too, is dead, with Jonathan his son."

⁵Then David asked the young man who was bringing this information, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan have died?" ⁶"I happened to be on Mt. Gilboa," the young informer went on, "and there was Saul, leaning on his spear. The enemy's chariots and cavalry were moving in on him. ⁷Just then he looked around, saw me, and called out to me. I said, 'Here I am.' ⁸He asked me, 'Who are you?' I told him, 'An Amalekite.' ⁹Then he said, 'Come over here, stand and kill me; because even though I am still alive, weakness has seized me.' ¹⁰So I stood by him and killed him,

because I knew, since he had fallen, that his life was over. Then I took the crown which was on his head and a bracelet which he had on his arm, and I have brought them here to my ruler."^c

¹¹But David took hold of his clothes and tore them, as did all the men who were with him. ¹²Further, they mourned, wept, and fasted until evening over Saul and his son Jonathan and the LORD's people, the community of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

¹³Then David asked the young man who had brought the report, "Where are you from?" He said, "I am the son of a resident alien, an Amalekite."

¹⁴David then replied, "How is it you felt no compunction against raising your hand to destroy the anointed of the LORD?" ¹⁵And with that, David gave orders to one of his young men, "Approach! Strike him down!" He struck him so that he died, ¹⁶even as David pronounced on him the sentence, "Your blood is on your own head, because your mouth has condemned you by saying, 'I killed the anointed of the LORD!'"^d

¹⁷Then David lamented over Saul and his son Jonathan with the following elegy, ¹⁸and he gave orders that this "Song of the Bow"^e be taught to

a) II Samuel is by the same prophetic author as I Samuel, the two originally forming one book.
b) These were signs of deep mourning. See vs. 11.

c) The Amalekite's story differs from the scriptural record of Saul's death, I Samuel 31:3-5. He seems simply to have discovered and plundered Saul's body and then told his tale to David, hoping for reward.

d) The name comes from vs. 22. In Hebrew the dirge is not in the strict lamentation meter of three beats followed by two, but the second lines of the verses do generally fall one beat short of the first, thus expressing incompleteness and grief.

the people of Judah. Note! It is written in the Book of the Upright.^e

¹⁹Thy honor, O Israel, is dead upon thy high places;

How are the mighty fallen!

²⁰Tell it not in Gath,
publish it not in the streets of
Ashkelon;

lest the daughters of the Philistines
rejoice,

lest the daughters of the uncircum-
cised glory.

²¹Ye mountains of Gilboa,
let there be no dew nor rain upon
you, neither fields of offerings:
For there the shield of the mighty
was defiled,

the shield of Saul, the anointed no
more.

²²From the blood of the slain, from
the fat of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan turned not back,
nor did the sword of Saul return
unsated.

²³Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely,
in life and death they were not
divided;

they were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.

²⁴Ye daughters of Israel, weep over
Saul,

who clothed you in scarlet and with
delights,

who put ornaments of gold upon
your apparel.

²⁵How are the mighty fallen in the
midst of the battle!

Jonathan was slain in thy high
places.

²⁶I am grieving for thee, my brother
Jonathan:

very pleasant hast thou been unto
me:

thy love to me was wonderful, pass-
ing the love of women.^f

²⁷How are the mighty fallen, and the
weapons of war destroyed!

1010 B.C.

2 AFTER THIS, DAVID ASKED THE LORD, "Should I go up to one of the cities of Judah?" The LORD's answer was, Go! David then inquired, "To which should I go up?" To Hebron, was the response. ²So David went up there with his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel, and Abigail, widow of Nabal of Carmel. ³His men who were with him David brought up, too, each with his family, and they settled in the towns around Hebron. ⁴Then the men of Judah^g came and anointed David there as king over the house of Judah.

Further, when David was told, "The men of Jabesh Gilead have buried Saul," ⁵the king sent messengers to the men of that city with the wish, "May you be blessed by the LORD because of this act of faithfulness toward your leader Saul, giving him decent burial!" ⁶Now may the LORD deal faithfully and truly with you! So I will deal with you because of what you have done. ⁷Moreover, keep heart, and prove worthy citizens; because, though your ruler Saul is dead, the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

⁸But Abner son of Ner, the general of Saul's army, took Ish-bosheth,^h Saul's son, and brought him over to Mahanaim, ⁹where they made him kingⁱ over Gilead, the people of Ashur, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and all Israel. ¹⁰Ish-bosheth the son of Saul became king over Israel at the age of forty and reigned two years. The house of Judah, however, followed David. ¹¹The time David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah amounted to seven years and six months.

¹²Now Abner son of Ner, with the troops of Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, advanced from Mahanaim toward Gib-

e) Hebrew: The Book of the Jashar. A lost collection of hero songs that grew over a long period of Israel's history. Joshua 10:12-13 is an earlier quotation from it.

f) Jonathan stands among the noblest Bible characters, unselfish and loyal, apparently in line for the throne, but willing to take second place for David. g) This included the tribe of Simeon.

h) Hebrew: man of shame. His original name was Esh-baal [I Chron. 8:33; 9:39], "man of Baal." Saul probably did not have the idol Baal in mind when naming his son, but the Hebrew word *baal*: master, the name then meaning "man of the Master," referring to God, or to the king.

i) As a close relative of Saul [I Sam. 14:50], Abner had no desire to see the kingship leave his family.

eon; ¹³but Joab son of Zeruiah,¹ with David's followers, went out and encountered them by the reservoir of Gibeon. Coming together, they halted by the reservoir, one force on one side and the other on the other side of the reservoir. ¹⁴Abner then made the proposition to Joab, "If this seems satisfactory, have the young men get up for a contest before us."^k Joab agreed, "Let them stand up."

¹⁵So a number that were selected got up and went across: twelve for Benjamin, for Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of David's men. ¹⁶Each man caught hold of his opponent's head, stabbing his sword into his side, consequently all of them fell; so the place was called, "Field of the Sword-Edges," in Gibeon. ¹⁷That day there followed a most severe battle, in which Abner and the men of Israel went down in defeat before the soldiers of David.

¹⁸Now the three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel; and Asahel was a fast runner, like a deer in the field. ¹⁹Asahel pursued straight after Abner, swerving neither to the right nor to the left. ²⁰Abner looked back and questioned, "Is that you, Asahel?" "It is," came the reply. ²¹"Then turn off to your right or left," said Abner. "Get your captive from one of the young men; strip him for your plunder!" But Asahel would not turn back. ²²Again Abner spoke to him, "Get away from me! Why should I strike you to the ground? How could I hold up my face to your brother Joab?" ²³But Asahel would not be diverted, and Abner gave him a back-thrust in the abdomen¹ with the butt end of his spear.^m The spear came out at his back and he fell there, dying in his tracks. Thus everyone who came to the place where Asahel had fallen dead, stood still.

²⁴Joab, too, and Abishai pursued after Abner, and by sunset they had reached the hill of Ammah, which is in front of Giah on the road to the

desert of Gibeon. ²⁵Meanwhile, the men of Benjamin had rallied behind Abner, re-formed, and taken up a position on top of a hill. ²⁶Abner called out to Joab, "Is the sword going to keep on consuming us forever? Do you not know that in the long run this will only produce bitterness? How long will it be before you tell the people to stop chasing their own brothers?"

²⁷"As God lives," came Joab's reply, "Had you but spoken sooner, the people would have withdrawn, every man from his brother, this morning!" ²⁸So Joab sounded the trumpet and the people halted, gave up the pursuit of Israel, and no longer continued the battle. ²⁹Abner and his men marched all that night through the Jordan Valley, crossed the Jordan, went on through all of Bithron, and arrived at Mahanaim. ³⁰Joab, after turning back from Abner, mustered all the people. Of David's troops there were only nineteen missing, and Asahel; ³¹but the men of David had so struck Benjamin and the forces of Abner that three hundred and sixty of them had died. ³²So they lifted up Asahel and buried him in his father's grave in Bethlehem; and Joab and his command, by marching all that night, reached Hebron as day was breaking.

1003 B.C.

3 THE WAR BETWEEN THE HOUSES of Saul and of David was long drawn out; but David became progressively stronger and Saul's house weaker and weaker. ²In Hebron David had these sons: his oldest was Amnon, by Ahinoam of Jezreel; ³second came Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; ⁴fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; fifth Shephatiah the son of Abital; ⁵and sixth, Ithream, by Eglah, David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.

⁶During the war between the houses of Saul and of David, Abner was

j) Zeruiah was David's half sister [I Chron. 2:16], apparently by the marriage of his mother to one Nahash [II Sam. 17:25], prior to her having become the wife of Jesse, David's father. Joab was thus David's half nephew.

k) Abner looked for a decision from single combat by champions, thus avoiding much bloodshed. Cf. Goliath's offer [I Sam. 17:8-9]. l) Heb.: under the fifth rib.

m) Probably pointed, somewhat similar to a bayonet, so as to be stuck in the ground, as was Saul's spear [I Sam. 26:7].

strengthening his own position within Saul's group. ⁷Now Saul had a concubineⁿ named Rizpah, daughter of Aiah; and Ish-bosheth accused Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?"^o ⁸Abner became infuriated at the charge of Ish-bosheth and exclaimed, "Am I a dog's head, to lick the palm of Judah? Here I work faithfully for the house of Saul your father, for his brothers, and for his friends; I have not allowed you to fall into David's hands, and today you have brought up a misstep with a woman against me! ⁹May God get even with Abner and worse, if I do not do for David what the LORD swore to him, ¹⁰to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beer-sheba!"

¹¹Ish-bosheth could not answer him a word because he was afraid of him. ¹²Then Abner sent messengers to David to represent him and to say, "Whose is the land?" and, "Come, make your agreement with me, and my hand will be with you to turn all Israel over to you."^p

¹³The reply came, "Good; I will make an agreement with you. But there is one matter on which I insist; you are not to see my face without first bringing me Saul's daughter Michal, when you appear for a meeting." ¹⁴David then sent messengers to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, demanding, "Give me my wife, Michal, to whom I became engaged at the price of a hundred Philistines' foreskins."

¹⁵So Ish-bosheth sent and had her taken from her husband, Paltiel^q the son of Laish. ¹⁶But her husband accompanied her as far as Bahurim, weeping as he went along behind.

Then came Abner's order, "Go back!" And back he went.

¹⁷Now Abner had consulted with the elders of Israel, "In times past you were looking for David to be king over you; ¹⁸now carry it through. For the LORD has said about David, 'By the hand of David My servant I will rescue My people Israel out of the power of the Philistines and from the power of all their enemies.'" ¹⁹Abner himself had also addressed the people of Benjamin. Then Abner came to tell David personally at Hebron all that Israel and the house of Benjamin^r wanted to do.

²⁰When Abner met David at Hebron, he had twenty men with him, and David prepared a dinner for Abner and the men with him. ²¹Abner declared to David, "I will get up and go and bring all Israel here to my master the king."^s Then they can make the contract with you, so you can reign over all that your heart desires." David dismissed Abner, and he went in peace.

²²At that point the troops of David under Joab, came in from a raid, bringing with them a huge amount of plunder. Abner was no longer with David at Hebron, since the king had sent him away, and he had left peaceably. ²³But when Joab and his whole command arrived, the news reached Joab, "Abner the son of Ner has been to the king who sent him away; and he has gone in peace."

²⁴Joab called on the king and exclaimed, "What have you done? See! Abner has called on you. Why have you sent him off and let him get away? ²⁵You know Abner the son of Ner. He came to deceive you, to learn your comings and goings, to know everything you are doing!"

²⁶When Joab left David's presence,

n) A concubine was more than a mere mistress; for she was a member of the household, had the rights of a married woman, took her position by an official ceremony of appointment, and could even be called a "wife," though in a secondary sense [Exod. 21:8-10; Deut. 21:11-13]. Concubines were generally gotten by purchase or as captives and, unlike a true wife, could be "divorced" at will, but then only to be released, not sold as a slave [Gen. 16:2-3; 21:10; Exod. 21:7,8,11; Deut. 21:10-14; Mal. 2:14-16].

o) Possession of the court women indicated royal power. Cf. Absalom with David's concubines [ch. 16:21-22]; Adonijah with Abishag [I Kings 2:21-22]; and David's insistence on the return of Michal [vs. 13].

p) Abner here demonstrates an unprincipled willingness to support whatever party best advanced his own interests. See also 2:8-9; 3:6. David's prompt cooperation was to be expected, since he had been divinely anointed for the throne. q) In I Sam. 25:44 his name has the shorter form, Palti. r) Benjamin, as the tribe of Saul's family, was particularly concerned.

s) Almost certainly, Abner would have become commander of all the forces.

he sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the pit of Sirah; but David was unaware of what he did. ²⁷When Abner had come back to Hebron, Joab took him aside into the middle of the gate, as if to talk privately to him; but there, in revenge for the blood of his brother Asahel, he stabbed him fatally in the abdomen.

²⁸After it had happened, when David heard of it, the king exclaimed, "I and my kingdom are innocent before the LORD forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. ²⁹Let it act as a boomerang on the head of Joab and on all his father's house. May the house of Joab always have someone with running sores, a leper, a man with a crutch, a victim of the sword, or someone starving!"^t

³⁰So Joab, along with his brother Abishai, murdered Abner because he had killed Asahel, their brother, in the battle at Gibeon. ³¹But David ordered Joab and all the people with him, "Tear your clothes and put on sackcloth! Mourn before Abner!" King David himself walked behind the bier. ³²Thus they buried Abner in Hebron; and at the grave the king wept aloud, as did all the people. ³³Then the king lamented over Abner:

"Must Abner die as a fool dies?

Your hands never had to be bound,
Your feet were never held in fetters.
As one does fall before the wicked
so you have fallen."

Again, all Israel wept over him. ³⁵Moreover, when all the people urged David to eat food while it was still day, David swore with an oath, "God do so to me" if I taste food or anything else before the sun goes down!" ³⁶All the people took note and approved, even as everything the king did met with popular approval. ³⁷Thus in that day all the people, and indeed all Israel, recognized that the death of Abner the son of Ner had not been of the king's doing.

³⁸The king also told his attendants, "Do you not know that a prince, a great man, has fallen this day in Israel?" ³⁹As for me, I stand powerless today, even though anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too harsh for me; may the LORD repay in kind the man who does wrong."

1003 B.C.

4 WHEN SAUL'S SON, ISH-BOSHETH, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost heart, and all Israel fell into confusion. ²Now there were two military commanders of his, one named Baanah and the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon of Beeroth who was a Benjaminite. For Beeroth is counted as a part of Benjamin, ³but its people withdrew to Gittaim and live there as foreign residents up to the present. ⁴It might also be noted that Saul's son, Jonathan, had a son with crippled feet. He was five years old when the report came from Jezreel about Saul and Jonathan,^v at which time his nurse snatched him up and fled. But in her hurry to get away he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.^w

⁵So the sons of Rimmon of Beeroth, Rechab and Baanah, came and approached Ish-bosheth's house in the hot part of the day, while he was lying down for his noonday rest. ⁶Here they came to the center of the house, apparently to take out wheat; but they struck him in the abdomen. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped. ⁷They had entered the house while he was lying on his couch in the room where he rested and they had both stabbed and killed him and then cut off his head. They took the head and traveled by the way of the Jordan Valley all night. ⁸Thus they brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron, saying to the king, "See the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, that man who was your enemy and who tried to get your life! But this day the LORD has given our sovereign the

t) David pronounced a curse on his general and on Joab's immediate family; for Joab's brother had been slain in battle and had been warned by Abner. Obviously Joab wanted Abner out of his way. u) Probably making a motion toward his throat or head.

v) Their death at the battle of Mt. Gilboa.

w) Hebrew: one who scatters shame. His original name seems to have been Merib-baal [I Chron. 8:34; 9:40], "hero of Baal," or, "a warrior is Baal."

king vengeance on Saul and on his descendants!"

⁹But David's answer to Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon of Beeroth, was, "As the LORD lives, who has saved me out of every trouble, ¹⁰when that informer told me, 'Look, Saul is dead!' and thought he was bringing me good news, he was seized and executed by me in Ziklag, that fellow who hoped I would give him a reward for his news. ¹¹What do you think is going to happen when criminals murder a good man lying on his couch in his own house? Would I not here and now require his blood at your hands and eliminate you from the earth?" ¹²With that, David gave the word to his attendants, who killed them and cut off their hands and feet. These they hung up beside the Hebron reservoir; but the head of Ish-bosheth they took and buried in Abner's grave at Hebron.

1003 B.C.

5 THEN ALL THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL came to David at Hebron with the statement, "Here we are, your bone and your flesh. ²Besides, in times past when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought her in. The LORD also told you: You are the man who is to be the shepherd for My people, for Israel, and you shall be sovereign over Israel."

³So when all the elders, who led Israel, had come to Hebron to the king, and when King David in the presence of the LORD had made a compact with them at Hebron, they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴David was thirty years old at the commencement of his reign, and he was king a total of forty years. ⁵In Hebron he had reigned over Judah seven years and six months and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

⁶The king and his troops then marched on Jerusalem against the people of Jebus, the natives of the territory. They, however, announced to David, "You shall not get in here; the blind and the lame can turn you back!" assuming, "David cannot gain access here."^x ⁷But David did capture the fortress of Zion, which now is the City of David. ⁸On that day David had given orders, "Whoever would strike down the men of Jebus, let him reach them by way of the water tunnel,^y even these 'lame' and 'blind' whom the soul of David hates!" From this comes the saying, "The blind and the lame cannot get into the house."

⁹So David occupied the fortress and called it, "The City of David." He also did construction work around it from Millo^z and in the interior. ¹⁰David's power kept increasing; the LORD, the God of armies, was with him. ¹¹Hiram king of Tyre sent David messengers and then logs of cedar, with men skilled in carpentry and in stonemasonry for walls, who built David a palace.^a ¹²Thus David recognized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and exalted his kingdom for the sake of Israel, His own people.

¹³From Jerusalem, however, after his move from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives;^b and more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴These are the names^c of the sons born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

¹⁷When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, they advanced in full force to attack him; but David was informed and went down into his stronghold.^d ¹⁸The Philistines came and spread out in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹Then David asked

x) The mountain position of the fortress on Zion made it almost impregnable. This fact and its strategic, central location between northern Israel and southern Judah — also its neutral nature — made it an ideal site for David's proposed capital.

y) A concealed passageway cut down through the rock under the city. z) One of the fortifications.

a) In all fairness the world should render much service to the church.

b) Prohibited by law [Deut. 17:17].

c) This list of names appears with two additions and with minor variants in I Chron. 3:5-8 and 14:4-7.

d) The Cave of Adullam [23:13,14], for one goes "up" into Jerusalem. This attack must have come shortly after his anointment as king of all Israel, even before the capture of Zion.

the LORD, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Wilt Thou give them over into my hands?"

The LORD replied to David, "Go up, for I will certainly deliver the Philistines into your hands." ²⁰So David entered Baalperazim, and as he struck them down there, he exclaimed, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like a breakthrough of water!" Therefore he named that place Baal-perazim.^e ²¹There they^f even abandoned their idols, and David and his troops carried them off.^g

²²But the Philistines resumed the offensive and spread out in the valley of Rephaim. ²³When David made inquiry of the LORD, He said: Do not go up; circle them to the rear, and come in on them by the front of the balsam trees. ²⁴It shall be that when you hear a sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, at that instant you shall take the decisive action; for then the LORD will have gone out before you to overwhelm the Philistine army. ²⁵David did as the LORD had ordered him; and he struck down the Philistines from Geba^h to where one enters Gezer.

6 AGAIN DAVID ASSEMBLED ALL THE chosen men of Israel, 30,000. ²And David and all the people who were with him took up the march to Baale of Judahⁱ to bring up from there the ark of God, over which is pronounced the name, the very name of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned between the cherubim. ³They transported it on a new cart, moving it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Moreover, Uzzah and Ahio,

the sons of Abinadab, were driving the cart with the ark of God, ⁴moving it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking in front of the ark. ⁵Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made of cypress wood and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals. ⁶But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward God's ark and caught hold of it, because the oxen had slipped. ⁷Then the LORD's anger burned against Uzzah, and God struck him on the spot for his sacrilege; so he died there beside the ark of God.^j

⁸David was deeply moved at the LORD's outbreak against Uzzah; he called that place Perez-uzzah,^k a name kept to the present day. ⁹In his fear at that time toward the LORD, he exclaimed, "How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?" ¹⁰So David was unwilling to move the LORD's ark into the city of David to be with him, but redirected it to the house of Obed-edom, who had come from Gath. ¹¹The ark of the LORD stayed in the house of Obed-edom of Gath for three months, and the LORD prospered Obed-edom^l along with all his household.

¹²When the report was brought to King David, "The LORD has prospered the household of Obed-edom and all he has because of the ark of God," David again took action and with rejoicing brought God's ark from the house of Obed-edom up to the city of David.^m ¹³As soon as those who were carrying the ark had advanced six steps, he sacrificed an ox and an offering

e) Master of the breakthroughs. f) The Philistines.

g) And burned them [I Chron. 14:12], as required by the law [Deut. 7:5,25].

h) Gibeon [I Chron. 14:16; Isa. 28:21].

i) Known also as Baalah and Kiriath-jearim [I Chron. 13:6], where the ark had stayed in the house of Abinadab [though see I Sam. 14:18] for almost a century, following its capture by the Philistines at the first battle of Eben-ezer and its subsequent return [I Sam. 7:1].

j) Such severity served the purpose of emphasizing for all future generations the necessity of reverence and conforming obedience toward God's sacred objects. Two transgressions combined to produce the situation: (1) The ark should never have been mounted on a cart but carried by hand [Num. 4:15]; (2) The ark itself, to be carried on staves, should not be touched even by its authorized carriers, the priests — on pain of death [Num. 4:15]. Uzzah's intentions were good and his eternal salvation was not involved. k) "The outbreak of Uzzah."

l) A Levite of the family of Korah in the clan of Kohath [I Chron. 26:1,4], and so meeting the requirement for a caretaker of the ark.

m) For this occasion Psalm 24 seems to have been written and set to music. It illustrates Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His being welcomed in our hearts.

of a fatling ¹⁴and continued dancing before the LORD with all his might. He was wearing a white linen ephod.ⁿ ¹⁵David and the whole nation of Israel were bringing up the LORD's ark with shouting and the sound of rams' horns. ¹⁶But as the ark of the LORD made its entrance into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looking down through a window, saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷So they brought in the ark of the LORD, and when they had put it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it, the king offered burnt offerings and peace offerings in the presence of the LORD. ¹⁸And when David had finished the sacrifice of burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹Furthermore, he made an allotment to all the people, to the whole population of Israel, both men and women: a ring-shaped loaf of bread, a package of dates, and a cake of raisins to each person. After this the people returned to their respective homes, ²⁰and David went back to bless his household.

But Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet David with the remark, "How glorious the king of Israel looked today, uncovering himself this day to be ogled by the female servants of his followers, as some worthless fellow would strip himself!" ²¹David replied to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me in preference to your father and in preference to his whole house; He confirmed me as leader over Israel, the people of the LORD, and I intend to show my joy before the LORD. ²²I will even be more dishonored than this; I am willing to be humbled in my own eyes; though with those servant girls about whom you talk, with them I will still be held in honor." ²³Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.^o

7 AFTER THE KING HAD COME TO live in his palace and the LORD had given him rest on every side from his enemies,^p ²he said to Nathan the prophet, "See here! I am living in a cedar palace while the ark of God resides within tent curtains." ³Nathan replied to the king, "Go ahead with whatever you have in mind and do it, because the LORD is with you."^q ⁴But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go, tell My servant David, The LORD has spoken thus: Are you the one who is to build Me a temple for My residence?^r ⁶From the time I brought the nation of Israel out of Egypt up to the present, I have lived in no house; I have been traveling about in a tent for a dwelling. ⁷Yet at any point in My journeying with the whole nation of Israel, did I ever say a word to any one of the tribes of Israel, to whom I committed the leadership of My people Israel, to the effect, Why have you not built Me a cedar temple? ⁸But now this is what you are to say to My servant David, The LORD of hosts has thus spoken:

I personally took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be leader over My people, over Israel. ⁹I have been with you in all that you have undertaken; I have eliminated all your enemies from before you; also I will make for you a great name equal in reputation to that of the great men on earth. ¹⁰I will moreover establish a place for My people Israel and plant them so that they shall inhabit their own land with no more disturbance and no more continued oppression by the unrighteous as at the first,^s ¹¹from the time when I appointed judges over My people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Now the LORD informs you that He is building a house for you.^t ¹²When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your posterity after you, produced from your own body; and I

n) Hebrew *ephod*. Possibly such a cape as the boy Samuel wore [I Sam. 2:18].

o) To the oriental woman, the severest possible punishment.

p) This chapter should chronologically come after ch. 8. The two are closely paralleled by I Chron. 17:18.

q) This statement was based on Nathan's personal judgment, not on divine revelation.

r) David had been disqualified because of his warfare [I Chron. 22:8; 28:3]. s) In Egypt.

t) A dynasty, culminating in the birth of the Messiah.

will confirm his sovereignty. ¹³He, then, will build a house for My name,^u and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever; ¹⁴so I will be for him a Father, and he shall be to Me a son.^v But when your son does what is wrong, I will correct him with a rod as men must be corrected and with the strokes that come on the sons of Adam, ¹⁵though My mercy shall not leave him as it left Saul, whom I removed before you. ¹⁶Thus your house and your kingdom shall stand firm before Me forever. Your throne is eternally established. ¹⁷In accordance with all these words and all this vision, Nathan delivered the message to David.

¹⁸Then King David, after he had come in,^w remained in the LORD's presence and prayed, "Who am I, LORD God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me to this point?" ¹⁹Then, as though this were still a little thing in Thine eyes, O LORD God, Thou hast spoken also of the house of Thy servant in the far distant future. Is such treatment the standard for men, O LORD God? ²⁰What can David say further in speaking with Thee, since Thou knowest what Thy servant is like, O LORD God! ²¹It is for the sake of Thy promises and in accordance with Thy decree that Thou hast wrought all these astounding things in informing Thy servant. ²²Surely, Thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like Thee; nor is there any God apart from Thyself, according to all that has come to our ears.

²³"Who, moreover, is like Thy people, like Israel, a nation unique upon the earth, whom God went to redeem to be a people for Himself and so enhanced His own name, doing for them great things and terrible, for Thy

land before Thy people whom Thou didst redeem for Thyself from Egypt, and from nations and their gods?" ²⁴Yes, Thou hast established for Thyself Thy people Israel to be Thine own people forever, and Thou, O LORD, Thou hast become their God.^x ²⁵Now, O LORD God, confirm for eternity what Thou hast spoken about Thy servant and his house. Do according to Thy pledge ²⁶that Thy name may be forever great, as they say, 'The LORD of Hosts, He is God over Israel'; when the house of Thy servant David shall be established before Thee. ²⁷For Thou, LORD of hosts, God of Israel, Thou hast revealed to Thy servant, 'A house' I will build for you'; accordingly, Thy servant has found courage to pray to Thee this prayer. ²⁸Surely, O LORD God, Thou art God; Thy words are truth, and Thou hast promised this good thing to Thy servant. ²⁹Now may it please Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, that it may continue forever before Thee; because Thou, O LORD God, hast spoken, and because of Thy blessing the house of Thy servant shall indeed be eternally blessed."

1002 to 995 B.C.

8 IN PROCESS OF TIME DAVID OVER-
came the Philistines and humbled them, seizing the bridle of their mother city^z from Philistine control. ²He struck down Moab; he made them lie on the ground and measured them with a line, designating two parts for death, but one other full part to be spared alive.^a So Moab became David's, as a subject people paying tribute. ³David also defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, when the latter attempted to restore his power at the Euphrates River.^b ⁴David took captive 1,000 of his chariots, 700 cavalry and

u) Done by Solomon [I Kings 5:5].

v) Referring finally to Jesus Christ, the promised Descendant of David [Luke 1:32,33], who as God's Son occupies the eternal throne [Heb. 1:5]; see also Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:33; and Heb. 5:5. I Chron. 22:10, which seems to apply these words to Solomon, appears to be simply quoting the entire passage as context, since II Sam. 7:13 and the last part of vs. 14 do in fact refer to Solomon and could not apply to Christ. w) To the tent sanctuary he had erected [6:17].

x) These last words are the central promise of the Testaments [Gen. 17:7; Exod. 6:7; and Rev. 21:3]. y) Not a building, like the "house" David wished to build for God, but a dynasty.

z) Gath, I Chron. 18:1, then chief among their five main cities.

a) In this way their fighting men were divided mathematically into three parts, two of the groups being then ruthlessly butchered. Such behavior was the main reason why David must not build the temple; he was "a man of blood."

b) See 10:16-18, the second defeat of the Syrians; the verses of this chapter summarize the full account in 10:6-19. Aram reached further east than Syria; but what we know as Syria was Aram's western territory.

20,000 infantry, and he hamstrung all his chariot horses, reserving only enough for 100 chariots. ⁵Then when Syrian Damascus came to the aid of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 of the men of Syria and went on to station garrisons in the city. ⁶So Syria became David's as a subject people paying tribute. The LORD gave David the victory everywhere he went. ⁷David, moreover, took the golden shields which had been carried by Hadadezer's officers and brought them to Jerusalem ⁸and from Bethah and Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David exacted an immense amount of bronze.^c

⁹When Toi king of Hamath heard that David had overcome all the forces of Hadadezer, ¹⁰he sent his son Joram to King David to greet him and to extend congratulations over the battle in which he had beaten Hadadezer, because Hadadezer had repeatedly been at war with Toi. With him were sent articles of silver, gold, and bronze, ¹¹which King David proceeded to devote to the LORD, along with the silver and gold which he had consecrated from all the countries he had subdued, ¹²from Edom, Moab, the people of Ammon, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the booty of Hadadezer the son of Hehob king of Zobah.

¹³David, moreover, earned a name for himself at his return from striking down eighteen thousand^d troops of Edom in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁴He then posted garrisons in Edom, stationing them throughout the country, so that all the Edomites became subject to David. Surely the LORD gave David the victory wherever he went. ¹⁵So David reigned over all Israel, executing justice and maintaining the right for all his people. ¹⁶Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the armed forces; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder;

¹⁷Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was secretary; ¹⁸Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were assisting chiefs.^e

9 DAVID MADE INQUIRY, "IS THERE still anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" ²Now Saul's family had a steward named Ziba, whom they summoned to David. The king addressed him, "Are you Ziba?" "At your service," was his reply. ³The king went on, "Is there not yet some member of Saul's house to whom I may show God's kindness?"^f Ziba told the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan, with lame feet."^g ⁴"Where is he?" asked the king. To this Ziba replied, "You will find him at the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar." ⁵So King David sent to bring him from Lo-debar out of the house of Machir son of Ammiel.

⁶When Mephibosheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, came to David, he prostrated himself, falling on his face; but David said to him, "Mephibosheth!" He answered, "Here is your servant." ⁷David told him, "Have no fear, for I will show you sincere kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. Moreover, I am restoring to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you on your part may regularly eat food at my table." ⁸Again he prostrated himself, exclaiming, "What is your servant that you have regarded such a dead dog as myself?" ⁹Then the king called Saul's steward, Ziba, with the orders, "All that belonged to Saul and his family I have given to your master's grandson; ¹⁰work the land for him, you and your sons and servants, and bring in the produce, so that the heir of your master may have food

c) This was used by Solomon in building the temple [I Chron. 18:8]. Note other accumulations of David for the temple [I Chron. 22:2-5, 14, 15].

d) The title to Ps. 60, which mentions Joab, the brother and superior of Abishai as the general, says 12,000 were slain. Compare I Chron. 18:12.

e) Parallel passage [I Chron. 18:17] "and the sons of David were chiefs at the side of the king," which means, helping him.

f) David had sworn to Jonathan before God to care for his family [I Sam. 20:14-17]; see also 23:18; but Mephibosheth did not know that and feared revenge. g) See 4:4 and note.

to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, shall eat food regularly at my table." Ziba had fifteen sons, along with twenty servants; ¹¹and he responded to the king, "Your servant will do all that my master the king commands his servant." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons. ¹²Mephibosheth, by this time, had a little son named Mica. Thus all those that made up the household of Ziba became servants of Mephibosheth; ¹³Mephibosheth himself, however, lived in Jerusalem because he was dining regularly at the king's table.^h He was lame in both feet.

About 995 B.C.

10 IN THE COURSE OF EVENTS THE king of the Ammonites died,ⁱ and his son Hanun succeeded him on the throne. ²David announced, "I will show friendship to Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father did to me."^j David therefore sent by his attendants to console him about his father. But when David's embassy arrived in the land of the Ammonites, ³that nation's officials advised their ruler Hanun, "Do you think it is to honor your father that he has sent you comforters? Is it not rather to get the lay of the city and to spy in it, so he can overthrow it, that David has sent his servants to you?" ⁴So Hanun took David's attendants, shaved off half their beards, cut off their robes halfway, just below the belt, and dismissed them. ⁵When it was told David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly humiliated. The king directed them, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow out; then you can come back."

⁶When the Ammonites realized how seriously they had antagonized David against themselves, they sent and enlisted as mercenary troops twenty thousand Syrian infantry of Beth-rehob and of Zobah, also a thousand under the

king of Maacah, and twelve thousand from the men of Tob. ⁷David heard about it and dispatched Joab with the entire army, the mighty men. ⁸The people of Ammon came out and drew up ranks for the conflict at the entrance of the gate,^k while Syrians of Zobah and Rehob, together with the men of Tob and Maacah, were posted separately in the field. ⁹But Joab, upon his discovery that the battle front was against him both in front and in the rear, picked a force out of all the men selected in Israel and spread them out to engage the Syrians; ¹⁰the rest of the troops he assigned to the command of his brother Abishai to form for battle against the Ammonites. ¹¹"If the Syrians prove too strong for me," he said, "you are to be my support; but if the Ammonites prove too strong for you, then I will come to your defense. ¹²Keep up your courage, and let us show strength for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God! Then let the LORD do what is good in His sight!"^l ¹³So Joab and his forces took up the attack against the Syrians and routed them. ¹⁴The Ammonites, too, when they saw the Syrians in flight, ran before Abishai and took refuge in the city. Then Joab broke off the campaign against the Ammonites and returned to Jerusalem.^m

¹⁵But when the Syrians sensed their defeat at the hands of Israel they drew together, ¹⁶and Hadadezer sent and summoned the Arameans that were beyond the riverⁿ to assemble at Helam. Shobach, general of Hadadezer's army, was made commander. ¹⁷David, on being informed, mustered all Israel, crossed the Jordan and advanced on Helam. The Syrians drew up in array to engage David and joined battle against him. ¹⁸Again Syria was routed before Israel, and David destroyed of Syria seven hundred chariots and forty thousand cavalry.^o He struck down

^h) To have a no-kin cripple daily at a royal palace was something unheard of.

ⁱ) Chs. 10-12, except for David's crime with Bathsheba, are paralleled by I Chron. 19-20:3.

^j) This could hardly be the same Nahash with whom Saul had fought fifty-five years before (I Sam. 11), but may have been a son, who probably helped David against Saul.

^k) Of their capital city Rabbah; comp. 11:1. ^l) Combination of faith and works.

^m) Too late in the year to undertake a siege; see 11:1.

ⁿ) East of the Euphrates, beyond the regular bounds of Syria.

^o) Perhaps read better with I Chron. 19:18, "7,000 chariotry and 40,000 infantry."

Shobach, the commander of their forces, so that he died there. ¹⁹As a result, all the kings under Hadadezer, when they saw that they were overwhelmed before Israel, made peace with Israel and became subject to them. Syria feared to send further aid to the people of Ammon.

11 THE FOLLOWING YEAR, AT THE time when kings march forth,^p David sent out his officers under Joab with all Israel to devastate the Ammonites. They proceeded to lay siege to Rabbah, but David stayed in Jerusalem.^q ²Then one evening David got up from his couch and walked about on the roof of the royal palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing, and she was exceptionally beautiful. ³David sent to make inquiry about the woman and received the reply, "Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite?"^r ⁴David ordered messengers to get her, and when she had come to him, he lay with her — she had purified herself from her uncleanness.^s Then she went back to her house.

⁵The woman conceived and informed David, sending the message, "I am with child." ⁶David's move was to communicate with Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." Joab accordingly sent Uriah to David. ⁷When Uriah reached him, David asked about the success of Joab, the troops, and the fighting. ⁸after which he said, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet."^t Uriah indeed went out of the royal palace, with a present from the king following him; ⁹but he lay down at the entrance to the king's house with all his commander's officers and would not go down to his own home. ¹⁰When David was informed, "Uriah did not go down to his house," he asked him,

"Have you not come in from a journey? Why did you not go down to your home?" ¹¹But Uriah replied to David, "The ark^u and Israel and Judah are staying in makeshift shelters, and my superior, Joab, and his officers are camping in the open field. Should I, then, go to my house to eat and drink and be with my wife? I swear by your life, by the life of your soul, I shall do no such thing!" ¹²David answered Uriah, "Stay here today too, and tomorrow I will send you off." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³David called him to eat and drink in his presence and got him drunk; but in the evening he still went out to lie on his couch with his commander's officers and refrained from going down to his house. ¹⁴So it came about that David next morning wrote a message to Joab, sending it by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵The message he had written was, "Put Uriah in the front line of the heaviest fighting; then withdraw from behind him so that he will be struck down and killed."

¹⁶The result was that Joab, as he was besieging the city, stationed Uriah in the position where he knew the enemy was in force. ¹⁷Then when the men of the city attacked and joined battle with Joab, there fell some of the troops of David's followers; and among the dead was Uriah the Hittite.^v ¹⁸Joab subsequently sent and reported to David on the full events of the fighting. ¹⁹He instructed the messenger, "When you finish telling the king all about the matters of the war, ²⁰if the king gets angry and asks you, 'Why did you draw so near the city to fight? Didn't you know how they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹Who was it struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth?"^w Was it not a woman who threw an upper millstone on him

p) Spring, after the rainy season. q) Premature retirement; he belonged with his warriors.

r) In 23:39, one of the "Thirty," David's distinguished soldiers.

s) Of menstruation [Lev. 15:19]. Polygamy, prohibited also to kings [Deut. 17:17], seems to have deadened David's moral sense. His crime is inexcusable and was at first punishable with death [Lev. 20:10], though God later relaxed the penalty because of the hardness of men's hearts [Matt. 19:8]. t) That is, rest, and spend the night with his wife, to cover up David's crime.

u) Apparently carried in battle; note 15:24-25 and I Sam. 4:3.

v) Joab thus joined David in his treachery, and David lost his true leadership.

w) Abimelech's father, Gideon [Judg. 9:50-54]. He was given the name Jerubbaal [Judg. 6:32]. But here a form of the Hebrew word for shame, *bosheth*, is substituted for the name of the shameful idol, *Baal*; see 2:8, footnote.

from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?—then tell him, ‘Your servant, Uriah the Hittite, he too is dead.’”

²²The messenger made the trip, came in and informed David about all for which Joab had sent him. ²³The messenger explained to David, “The men indeed got the advantage over us; they attacked us in the field, and when we had them backed right up to the entrance of the gate, ²⁴then the archers shot from the wall at your servants. Some of the king’s soldiers died; and your servant, Uriah the Hittite, he too is dead.” ²⁵David told the messenger, “Tell Joab, ‘Do not let this affair worry you; the sword consumes now this way, now that; press your attack against the city more strongly and overthrow it.’ And so encourage him.”

²⁶When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband Uriah had died, she made lamentation over her master. ²⁷But after the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his own house, where she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done was wrong in the sight of the LORD.^x

About 993 B.C.

12 ¹TO DAVID THEN THE LORD SENT Nathan, who came and told him this story: “There were two men in a certain city, one of whom was rich and the other poor. ²The rich man had flocks and herds in great numbers; ³but the poor man had nothing at all except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nurtured, so that it grew up with him, along with his children. It ate its part of his little food, drank out of his cup, and lay down in his arms; it was like a daughter to him. ⁴Then a traveler came to the rich man who, unwilling to take an animal out of his own flock or herd for the use of his traveling guest, took the poor man’s lamb to prepare for his visitor.” ⁵David’s anger was greatly aroused

against the man. He said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die! ⁶He must also make that ewe lamb good four times over,^y because of this thing he has done and because he has shown no pity!”

⁷Nathan then said to David, “You are the man!^z Here is what the LORD God of Israel has pronounced: I Myself anointed you as king over Israel. It was I who rescued you out of the hand of Saul ⁸and turned over your master’s household to you, even delivering the wives of your former sovereign into your power. I transferred to you the nation of Israel and of Judah, and if that were not enough, I would advance you in many more ways. ⁹Why have you despised the LORD’s commandment by doing what is wrong in His sight? Uriah the Hittite you have struck down with the sword, and his wife you have taken to be your wife; you murdered him by the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰So now, because you despised Me and stole the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be yours, the sword shall not turn away from your household. ¹¹Specifically, the LORD has declared: Observe now, I am raising up trouble against you from within your own family; I am going to take your wives from before your eyes and give them to your associate, who will use your wives as concubines with this sun shining on it. ¹²As for you, you have acted in secret; but I will have this done with all Israel looking on, in broad daylight.” ¹³David confessed before Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.”^a Accordingly Nathan assured David, “The LORD on His part has taken away your sin; you will not die.^b ¹⁴Nevertheless, because you have provided by this action such an opportunity for the enemies of the LORD to ridicule, the son born to you must surely die.”^c

x) David had invited temptation. With much to eat and to drink and no great task, he experienced “the destruction that wastes at noonday.” y) So the law in Exod. 22:1.

z) Usually what we object to most in others is our own chief weakness; it is a mirror of our lives; therefore we notice it so readily in others.

a) Compare Ps. 51, David’s great confession to God at this time, and Ps. 32, in which he describes his feelings of guilt before confession and his joy at pardon.

b) God is a forgiving Father, in the O.T. as well as in the New.

c) Although forgiven, the sinner has to suffer discipline.

¹⁶After Nathan had returned to his house, the LORD struck with sickness the boy whom Uriah's wife had borne to David. ¹⁶David appealed to God for the child; moreover, David began to fast; he went in and lay all night on the ground.^d ¹⁷The older men of his household tried to raise him up from the ground; but he would not, nor would he eat any food with them. ¹⁸Finally, on the seventh day the boy died; but David's attendants were afraid to tell him the child was dead, because they reasoned, "See here! If we spoke to him while the child was alive and he paid no attention to what we said, how may he harm himself if we tell him the child has met death?" ¹⁹But David caught sight of his attendants whispering together, realized that the boy had died, and asked them point-blank, "Is the child dead?" They replied, "He is dead."

²⁰Then David got up from the ground, washed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, went into the LORD's house and bowed in worship. Re-entering his palace, he made it known that they should serve him food, which he proceeded to eat. ²¹His attendants inquired of him, "What does this mean that you have done? For the living child you fasted and wept, but once the child was dead, you arose and took food!" ²²His reply was, "As long as the child was living, I did fast and weep, because I said, 'Who knows but the LORD may grant me mercy and let the child live?'" ²³But now he is dead, and what would be the point of my fasting? Could I bring him back again? No, I shall go to him; but he will not come back to me."^e ²⁴David, moreover, consoled his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her. Thus she bore him a son whom he named Solomon.^f The LORD

loved him ²⁵and sent word by the prophet Nathan, who named him Jedidiah,^g for the LORD's sake.

²⁶Meanwhile, Joab had fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites and had taken possession of the capital city. ²⁷At the same time Joab had dispatched messengers to David with the report, "I have fought against Rabbah and taken the part of the city by the water. ²⁸But now muster the rest of the troops and deploy against the city to complete its capture, so that I personally may not receive its surrender and have it called by my name." ²⁹David accordingly mustered all the forces, marched to Rabbah, fought against it, and completed its capture. ³⁰From the head of Maltam he took away the crown, the weight of which was ninety-two pounds^h in gold, plus a precious stone, and it was placed on David's own head. He also carried off the plunder of the city in great quantity; ³¹and the people that were in it he brought out and put to labor with saws and iron picks and axes, forcing them to keep working at the brick-molds. This he did to all the cities of the Ammonites, after which David and his whole army returned to Jerusalem.

About 990 B.C.

13 AFTER THIS, IT DEVELOPED that David's son Amnon fell in love with a beautiful sister of David's son Absalom, whose name was Tamar.¹ ²Amnon felt so frustrated about his sister Tamar that it made him ill, because she was a virgin, and it seemed to Amnon impossible to get in touch with her. ³But Amnon had a friend named Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, and Jonadab was a shrewd person. ⁴He observed to him, "Why this wasting away morning after morning, you king's son; would you

d) There seems to have been no floor.

e) A comforting truth for all believing parents who have lost children, revealing such faith in O.T. times.

f) I Chron. 3:5 shows that Solomon was the fourth son of David and Bathsheba; two sons and at least three years must have separated the birth of the child that died from that of Solomon.

g) Beloved of Jehovah.

h) Troy weight; Hebrew: one talent, or about 75 lb. avoirdupois. The crown could not have been worn by a man, Maltam being the leading Ammonite idol [Zeph. 1:5]. The name was also spelled Milcom [I Kings 11:5,33].

i) This depraved passion of David's oldest son for his half sister follows in the wake of David's own immoralities. Jonadab's "you king's son" [vs. 4], suggested that Amnon might take liberties similar to his father's.

not tell me?" Amnon confessed to him, "It is Tamar, sister of my brother Absalom; I am in love with her!" ⁵Jonadab went on to suggest to him, "Lie down on your couch, and make out that you are sick. Your father will come to see you; then say to him, 'Oh please, let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat. Have her fix the meal before my eyes, so that I may be able to see what I eat from her hand!'"

⁶Amnon, accordingly, lay down and pretended illness. When the king came to see him, Amnon repeated to him, "Oh please, let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes before my eyes; then I may be able to eat from her hand!" ⁷David sent to the palace to Tamar,¹ with the instructions, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him." ⁸So Tamar came to the house of her brother Amnon, where he was lying, took the dough, kneaded it, made cakes before his eyes, and baked them. ⁹But when she took the pan and served them up before him, he refused to eat. Instead, Amnon demanded, "Every man out of my presence!" So they all withdrew.

¹⁰Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the bedroom so I may eat from your hand." Tamar accordingly took the cakes she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. ¹¹But when she offered them to him to eat, he took hold of her and ordered her, "Come in, my sister, lie with me!" ¹²She pleaded with him, "Oh no, my brother, do not force me; for this sort of thing must not be done in Israel! Not this disgraceful act!" ¹³As for me, where could I get rid of my shame? And you, on your part, would you become like one of that immoral pack in Israel? Just speak to the king now, because he would not refuse my becoming yours." ¹⁴But he would not listen to her words; he was stronger than she and forced her, lying with her.

¹⁵Then at once Amnon's feelings turned to bitterest hatred; indeed, the hatred with which he hated her surpassed the love with which he had loved her.^k Amnon dismissed her, "Get up, and get out!" ¹⁶She cried to him, "Surely you would not be the cause of such a wrong, more terrible even than the other you have done to me, to drive me away!" But he would not listen to her ¹⁷and called the attendant who waited on him, "Come, get this woman outside, out of my sight; and lock the door behind her!"

¹⁸Now she had on a long-sleeved dress that reached to the feet, because that was the sort of robe the virgin daughters of the king were accustomed to wear. And his attendant drove her outside, bolting the door after her. ¹⁹Tamar sprinkled ashes on her head, tore the seams of the full-length dress she was wearing, placed her hand on her head,¹ and went wailing on her way.

²⁰Her brother Absalom talked with her, "Was it your brother Amnon who was with you? Now, my sister, calm yourself; he is your brother; do not take this deed so much to heart!" But Tamar remained a desolate woman in her brother Absalom's house. ²¹When King David heard of all these things, he was furious; ²²but Absalom exchanged not a word with Amnon, either bad or good; for Absalom lived in hatred of Amnon because of the way he had forced his sister Tamar.

²³Two full years later, when Absalom had sheepshearers^m at Baal-hazor near Ephraim, it came about that Absalom issued an invitation to all the king's sons. ²⁴He came in before the king with the request, "See now! Your servant has some men shearing sheep; may the king and his attendants be pleased to come with your servant." ²⁵David replied to Absalom, "I am sorry, my son; but if we all came it would be too great a burden on you." Even when he pressed him, the king

j) David of all men should have seen through the scheme, but his sin had deadened his discernment.

k) There had been no love, but only animal desire; hence the repulsive feeling when that desire had been satisfied. 1) Signs of deep mourning [Esther 4:1; Jer. 2:37].

m) A tirae for keeping festivals [I Sam. 25:2,8].

would not go, though he did wish him well. ²⁶So Absalom went on to suggest, "If you cannot, at least let my brother Amnon come with us." The king questioned him, "And why should he go with you?" ²⁷But when Absalom insisted, he sent Amnon with him, together with all the king's sons.

²⁸Absalom proceeded to issue instructions to his servants, "Keep watch now as Amnon's heart gets merry with wine and when I tell you, 'Strike down Amnon,' then kill him. Be not afraid; am I not the one who gives you the orders? Have courage; be brave!" ²⁹Absalom's servants did to him as Absalom had ordered, at which all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules, and fled.ⁿ

³⁰While they were still on the way, the report reached David, "Absalom has struck down all the sons of the king; not one is left!" ³¹The king arose, tore his clothes, and fell prostrate to the ground, with all his attendants standing around with their garments similarly rent. ³²Then Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, spoke up, "Let not my sovereign suppose that they have killed all the young men, the king's sons; because it is Amnon alone who is dead. Judging from Absalom's looks, this has been planned from the day he forced his sister Tamar. ³³Now let there not weigh upon the heart of my master the king any such thought as, 'All the sons of the king have perished'; because it is really Amnon alone who is dead."

³⁴Then, as Absalom was getting away, the young man who was on watch looked up and saw a large company approaching from the way of the mountain side behind him. ³⁵Jonadab explained to the king, "See, the king's sons have arrived; it was as your servant said." ³⁶He had barely finished his speaking when the king's sons arrived. They raised their voices in weeping; the king too, with all his attendants, wept most loudly. ³⁷Absalom, mean-

while, made good his escape and came to Talmai son of Ammihur, the king of Geshur.^o David kept mourning over his son day after day; ³⁸but Absalom, having fled and having reached Geshur, stayed there for three years. ³⁹Then King David's heart longed for Absalom, for in time he had reconciled himself to the death of Amnon.

14 **JOAB THE SON OF ZERUAH** knew that the king's heart went out toward Absalom. ²So Joab sent to Tekoa and from that place he summoned a certain wise woman. He requested of her, "Come, play the part of a mourner; dress yourself now in mourning clothes; do not anoint yourself with oil, but be like a woman who has been many days in mourning over someone dead. ³Then appear before the king and address him as follows," and Joab put the words into her mouth. ⁴So the Tekoa woman came in before the king. After she had bowed with her face to the ground and prostrated herself, she presented her message, "Save me, O king!" ⁵The king asked her, "What is your trouble?" "Alas, I am a widow," she said. "My husband is dead ⁶and your maidservant had two sons. But the two fought each other in the field; there was nobody to separate them, and one of them struck the other down and killed him. ⁷Now the whole family has risen up against your maidservant, demanding, 'Hand over the man who struck down his own brother, so we can execute him for the life of the brother he murdered'; — and at the same time destroy the heir. They would even put out my one burning coal that is left, so as to leave my husband neither name nor heir on the face of the earth!"

⁸The king assured the woman, "Go back to your house, and I will give orders on your behalf." ⁹But the Tekoa woman persisted with the king, "On me be the guilt and on my father's house, my master and king, while the

n) Incest, then murder. As David had ruined a home, so was his home ruined — the law of retribution. o) His maternal grandfather [3:3].

king and his throne stand innocent."^p
¹⁰The king replied, "Whoever raises a question with you, bring him to me, and he will not give you any more trouble!" ¹¹Still she continued, "Oh, let the king invoke the LORD your God so that the avenger of blood^q may not add to the slaughter and so they will not destroy my son." "As the LORD lives," he then said, "not a hair of your son shall fall to the ground."

¹²Upon this, the woman said, "I pray you then, allow your maidservant to mention a matter to my master the king." "Talk on," he agreed. ¹³"Why is it," asked the woman, "that you have considered such a thing as you have against the people of God? In the king's pronouncing this judgment just now, he becomes one who condemns himself, because the king does not bring back his own who has been driven away. ¹⁴For we all must die and are then like water spilled on the earth which cannot be recovered. God, however, does not sweep away life, but rather takes measures so as not to keep the banished away from Himself."

¹⁵So now, my coming to present this case to the king my master was because the people made me afraid; and your maidservant resolved, 'I am going to speak to the king. Perhaps the king will perform his servant's request.' ¹⁶Surely the king will agree to rescue his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy both myself and my son from God's inheritance.^s ¹⁷So your maidservant has requested, 'Please, may the decision of my master the king be one that sets the situation at ease; because as the Angel of God,^t so is my master the king, to discern right and wrong.' The LORD your God be with you."

¹⁸Then the king answered the woman, "Please do not hide from me what I am going to ask you." The woman replied, "Oh, let my master the king speak!" ¹⁹The king went on, "Is the hand of Joab behind you in all this?"^u The woman therefore confessed, "As sure as your life, O my master and king, one cannot turn to either the right or the left from exactly what my master the king has said! For it was your servant Joab who gave me the orders; he is the one who put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant. ²⁰It was to place the matter in a different light that your servant Joab did this thing, but my master has perception like the wisdom of the Angel of God, so as to know everything on the earth!"

²¹David told Joab, "Look here! I have decided for this thing. So go and bring the young man Absalom back!" ²²Joab fell on his face to the ground, prostrated himself, and was profuse in his gratitude toward the king. "Today," Joab said, "your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, O my master and king, because the king has granted his servant's request." ²³Then Joab arose, went to Geshur, and brought back Absalom to Jerusalem. ²⁴Still, the king directed, "Let him turn aside into his house; he is not to see my face."^v

Absalom, accordingly, lived at his own house and did not come into the king's presence. ²⁵Throughout Israel there was not a man so much to be praised for his looks as was Absalom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was not a defect in him. ²⁶When he cut his hair, which he did at the end of every year because it became too heavy for him

p) A pardon from David for an unpremeditated crime would not have been sufficient to urge the king as reason why he should forgive Absalom. She therefore induced David to grant a pardon against a more serious guilt and to confirm it by invoking God in an oath. She thus left him no valid excuse for not similarly receiving Absalom back.

q) A close relative, who might take the punishing into his own hands [Num. 35:16-21].

r) That is, "If you do not seek Absalom soon, you may never be able to. Compare how God seeks wandering men." The woman then reverts to her original story. s) Israel; see I Sam. 26:19.

t) Israel's infallible guide [Exod. 23:20-21]. The Angel of God is more than an ordinary angel. Though distinct from God the Father, He is yet possessed of the attributes of deity and is identified with God, Christ pre-incarnate. Compare Gen. 16:7-13; Exod. 3:2-5.

u) It would therefore appear that Joab had made other efforts on Absalom's behalf; though why, we are not told.

v) Halfway forgiveness is worse than no forgiveness [vs. 32]. This must have contributed to Absalom's later rebellion.

and he had to cut it, the hair of his head weighed over three pounds^w according to the royal standard. ²⁷There were born to Absalom three sons^x and one daughter, named Tamar, who became a woman of beautiful appearance.

²⁸After he had lived in Jerusalem two full years without seeing the king's face, ²⁹Absalom summoned Joab to send him to the king; but Joab would not come to him. He sent a second time, but still the general would not come. ³⁰Therefore Absalom ordered his servants, "Look at Joab's field that adjoins mine, the one there with his barley; go and set fire to it!" So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. ³¹Joab leaped to his feet, and when he had come to Absalom at his house, he protested to him, "Why have your servants set fire to my field?" ³²Absalom answered Joab, "Now look! I sent to you with the message, 'Come here; so I can send you to the king to ask, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!"' Now therefore, let me go into the presence of the king, and if there is something wrong with me, let him put me to death!" ³³Then Joab went in and told the king, who summoned Absalom. Absalom came to the king and prostrated himself in his presence on his face to the ground before the king; and the king kissed Absalom.

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15 AFTER THIS ABSALOM APPOINTED for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men to run before him.^y ²Moreover, Absalom would get up early and stand by the entrance to the gate,^z and whenever a man had a suit to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call out to him, "From what city are you?" He would answer, "Your servant is from such and such of the tribes of Israel." ³Absalom would tell him, "See, your

claims are good and right; but you have nobody from the king to hear you." ⁴Absalom would go on to say, "Oh, if only I were set up as judge in the land! Then any man with a case or a judgment could come to me, and I would see that he got justice!" ⁵Furthermore, whenever a man approached to prostrate himself before him, he would extend his hand, lift him up, and kiss him. ⁶Absalom acted like this for all the Israelites who were coming to the king for judgment, and so he stole away the loyalty of the men of Israel.

⁷And so it was at the end of four years that Absalom said to the king, "Let me go, I beg of you, to perform my vow which I promised the LORD in Hebron. ⁸For your servant made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Syria, 'If the LORD will restore, will surely restore me to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.'"^a ⁹The king gave him permission, "Go in peace." So he left and went to Hebron.

¹⁰Absalom proceeded to place agitators throughout the tribes of Israel, bearing the message, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, 'Absalom has become king in Hebron!'" ¹¹With Absalom, however, there went two hundred men from Jerusalem who had been invited and accompanied him innocently, knowing nothing of the plot. ¹²At the time of his offering the sacrifices, Absalom also summoned Ahithophel of Giloh, David's counselor,^b from Giloh, his city. Thus the conspiracy spread and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

¹³When a messenger brought David word, saying, "The allegiance of the men of Israel has been transferred to Absalom," ¹⁴David ordered all his followers who were in Jerusalem with him, "Get up! We must flee or none of us shall escape from Absalom! Hurry and leave, lest he make speed and

w) Hebrew: 200 shekels.

x) The sons are not named, for they died before reaching maturity [18:18].

y) Signs of assuming royal power [I Sam. 8:11]. Weakness on the part of David is indicated by his failure to check his son. z) Where judicial cases were decided [Deut. 21:19; 22:15].

a) A hypocritical lie.

b) Both Ahithophel and his opponent, Hushai, had been members of David's "cabinet" [I Chron. 27:33]. Possibly Ahithophel's turning against David was because he was Bathsheba's grandfather; see 11:3 and 23:34.

overtake us, force disaster upon us, and cut down the city with the edge of the sword!" ¹⁵The king's servants then responded to their ruler, "Whatever my master the king decides, we are at your service." ¹⁶So the king departed, with all his household following him, though he left behind ten concubines to keep the palace.

¹⁷But as the king and all the people that were at his heels left, they paused at the last house. ¹⁸While all his attendants were passing along beside him, and all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites,^c and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath^d were marching in advance of the king, ¹⁹the king asked Ittai of Gath,^e "What are you doing, coming with us? Go back, and be with the king because you are a foreigner; indeed, you are an exile from your own land. ²⁰Your coming was but as yesterday and should I today force you to wander with us, when I am moving, who knows where? Return and take back your fellow countrymen. Kindness and faithfulness be with you!" ²¹But Ittai answered the king, "As the LORD lives and as surely as my master the king lives, wherever my master the king is, whether for death or for life, there shall your servant be!" ²²So David replied to Ittai, "Go, then; pass on!" Thus Ittai of Gath marched along with all his men, together with the children who were with him. ²³While all the people were passing by, the entire countryside was loudly weeping; and when the king crossed over the brook Kidron, all the people crossed too, in the direction of the desert.^f

²⁴Then see! Zadok and all the Levites with him, carrying the ark of God's covenant. They had set down the ark and Abiathar had come up, until

the people had all finished crossing over from the city. ²⁵But the king instructed Zadok, "Return God's ark to the city. If I find favor in the LORD's eyes, He will restore me and have me see both it and its shrine; ²⁶if, on the other hand, He says this: I have no pleasure in you, then here I am, and He can do with me whatever seems best to Him." ²⁷The king continued to Zadok, "Do you understand? Go back in peace to the city; but let your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan be with you, these two sons of you two. ²⁸See! I am going to be waiting at the desert fords^g until word comes from you bringing me information." ²⁹So Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there. ³⁰David, meanwhile, was climbing the Mount of Olives, making the ascent weeping, with his head covered and walking barefoot.^h Each man of all the people with him likewise covered his head and went up weeping as he climbed.

³¹Then someone brought David the announcement, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." And David petitioned, "LORD, I pray Thee, turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness." ³²Besides, when David reached the summit, where God was worshiped, there came to meet him Hushai the Archite, with his coat torn and earth on his head.ⁱ ³³David said to him, "If you keep on with me, you will become a burden to me."^j ³⁴But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I am willing to become your servant, O king; once I was your father's servant, now I am yours,' then you may be able to frustrate the advice of Ahithophel for me. ³⁵Will not the priests Zadok and Abiathar be there with you? In this way, anything you hear from the royal

c) See 8:18, note.

d) Originally, the 600 men that had made up David's outlaw band and fled with him to the Philistine city of Gath to escape Saul (I Sam. 27:2), and then continued with him in Ziklag, Hebron, and Jerusalem (I Sam. 30:1; II Sam. 2:3; 5:6). Now, 30 years later, there must have been changes in personnel; but "the 600 Gittites" maintained itself as a specially honored unit of faithful veterans.

e) From the high command assigned him in 18:2, he seems to have been an experienced Philistine general.

f) The road eastward from Jerusalem toward Jericho, through the northern end of the wilderness of Judah; see Luke 10:30. g) Of the Jordan; see 17:16.

h) All signs of mourning (Esther 6:12; Ezek. 24:17). i) Compare 1:2.

j) Perhaps because he was too old.

palace you can tell Zadok and Abiathar the priests. ³⁶You see, they have their two sons there with them, Ahimaaz of Zadok and Jonathan of Abiathar, and by their hands you can send me any word you hear." ³⁷So Hushai, David's confidant,^k came into the city at about the time Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

16 WHEN DAVID HAD GONE A SHORT distance beyond the summit, there to meet him was Mephibosheth's steward, Ziba, with a pair of saddled donkeys, loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred pieces of summer fruit, and a skin of wine. ²"What do you plan with these?" the king asked Ziba. Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fruit for the attendants to eat, and the wine to serve as drink for those who faint in the desert." ³"But where," asked the king, "is the son of your master?" ¹Ziba answered the king, "Ha, he is staying in Jerusalem, because he said, 'Today the people of Israel will restore to me the royal power of my father.'" ⁴The king, in return, told Ziba, "Well then, all that Mephibosheth had is now yours."^m "I prostrate myself before you, O my master and king," said Ziba. "Let me find favor in your eyes!"

⁵When King David came to Bahurim, there was a man named Shimei the son of Gera, who belonged to the family of Saul's house, coming out of that place, shouting curses as he came. ⁶He also pelted David and all the king's servants with stones though all the people, including all the heroes, were at the king's right hand and his left. ⁷In his cursing, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you bloody criminal, you worthless scoundrel! ⁸The LORD has brought back on your head all the

blood of the house of Saul, whose place as king you took. The LORD has given the kingship over into the hands of your son Absalom. Look at you now in your calamity! For you are a man guilty of blood!"ⁿ ⁹Zeruiah's son Abishai said to the king, "Why is this dead dog cursing my master the king? Let me go over and cut off his head!" ¹⁰But the king replied, "What do you and I have in common, oh, you sons of Zeruiah? If he curses, and it is the LORD who has told him, Curse David, who can question, 'Why have you done this?'" ¹¹David went on to tell his servants, including Abishai, "See, if my son, who came from my own body, tries to take my life, how much more this man of Benjamin?"^o Let him alone to shout his curses, because the LORD has told him to! ¹²Perhaps the LORD will consider my misery and render me good instead of the curse that falls on me this day." ¹³So David and his men went down the road, while Shimei was moving along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went, casting stones at him, and throwing dirt. ¹⁴The king, with all the people that accompanied him, arrived^p exhausted, and got refreshment there.

¹⁵Meanwhile Absalom entered Jerusalem with all the people, the men of Israel. And Ahithophel was with him. ¹⁶As soon as Hushai the Archite, David's confidant, reached Absalom, he called out to him, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" ¹⁷"Is this the loyalty you have toward your friend?" Absalom asked Hushai, "Why haven't you gone along with your confidant?" ¹⁸Hushai replied to Absalom, "Oh, no! Because it is the man chosen by the LORD, by this people and by all the men of Israel, whom I prefer; I will stay with him!" ¹⁹Furthermore, whom should I serve? Should it not be before his son's face? As I performed service

k) This had been his cabinet post with David [I Chron. 27:33].

l) Mephibosheth, the grandson of Ziba's former master, Saul, through Jonathan.

m) Too hasty a decision, for it later appears that Ziba was lying and that Mephibosheth's loyalty to David never wavered [19:24-28].

n) Referring to the seven descendants of Saul whom David had allowed to be killed by the Gibeonites at the time of the famine [21:1-9]. o) The tribe of Saul, whom David had replaced.

p) At the fords of the Jordan [15:28]. This flight through the wilderness of Judah is the setting of Psalms 3 and 63 by David.

before your father, so I will be in your presence!"

²⁰Then Absalom turned to Ahithophel, "All of you, give your counsel. What are we to do?" ²¹Ahithophel answered Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines whom he left to keep the palace. Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself detestable to your father and the hands of all those on your side will be strengthened." ²²So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and there in the sight of all Israel, Absalom went in to his father's concubines.^q ²³Ahithophel's judgment, which he gave as counsel in those days, was as if a man inquired of the word of God; so it was with every recommendation of Ahithophel, both with David and with Absalom.

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17 ¹AHITHOPHEL NEXT RECOMMENDED to Absalom, "Let me now select twelve thousand troops that I may set out and pursue David this very night. ²In this way I can overtake him while he is exhausted and still without resources and throw him into a panic, so that all the men with him will run. Then I can strike down the king as he is left alone ³and restore the entire nation to you.^r The one man you are after means the return of all; thus the whole nation will be at peace."^s ⁴The plan seemed good to Absalom, as well as to all the elders of Israel. ⁵But Absalom said, "Call, if you will, Hushai the Archite, too. Let us also hear what he has to say." ⁶When Hushai appeared before Absalom, Absalom told him, "Ahithophel has advised this way. Now, shall we do what he said? If not, you speak up, too!" ⁷Hushai replied to Absalom, "This time the plan recommended by Ahithophel is not wise." ⁸Hushai went on, "You know your father and his troops; they are fine soldiers, besides being embittered in their minds like a

bear that has been robbed of her cubs in the open. Furthermore, your father is an experienced fighter; he is not going to stop with the people for the night. ⁹See! Even now he has taken refuge in some hole or in one of the various places; and it will happen when some of our men fall in the first attack, that whoever hears the report will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the forces that follow Absalom.' ¹⁰Then even the powerful man with a lion's heart will completely melt away; for all Israel knows that your father is a great soldier and that those with him are men of power. ¹¹So I recommend that you muster all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba around you,^t troops as numerous as the sand by the sea, and you lead the march into battle in person. ¹²Then if we come upon him in one of the places where he may be found, we will spread over him like the dew falling on the ground; and there will be left of him and of all the men with him not a one! ¹³If, on the other hand, he withdraws into a city, all Israel will bring up cables to that city; and we will drag it down into the valley until there will not be found even a pebble there!"

¹⁴Absalom and all the men of Israel decided, "The advice of Hushai the Archite is better than that of Ahithophel."^u For the LORD had decreed the overthrow of Ahithophel's good counsel, so that the LORD might bring ruin to Absalom.

¹⁵Hushai informed Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel in such and such a way, and then I gave my recommendation of so and so. ¹⁶Now therefore, send quickly and give David the warning. 'Do not spend this night at the desert fords, but be sure to cross over, or it may mean the destruction of the king and all the people with him.'"^v ¹⁷Now Jonathan and Ahi-

q) The punishment Nathan had predicted for David [12:11-12]. It demonstrated the assumption by Absalom of the royal power [see note on 3:7], made reconciliation with David impossible, and so forced the people to take sides; it also was divinely forbidden.

r) The Septuagint adds "as a bride returns to her husband."

s) Had this plan been carried out, David's cause would have been utterly lost; but God works in human minds to work out His program.

t) The northern and southern limits of Palestine respectively.

u) David's prayer [15:31] was answered.

maaz were waiting at En-rogel; for a servant girl would go out and give them the messages with which they were to go and inform King David, because they must not be seen entering the city. ¹⁸But a boy observed them and reported it to Absalom; so they both traveled rapidly and got to the house of a man in Bahurim who had a well in his courtyard; and down into it they went. ¹⁹His wife took a covering and spread it over the well's mouth, then spread grain on it, which prevented discovery. ²⁰Absalom's officers came to the woman at the house and demanded, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" She told them, "They crossed the water brook." They went to look, but when they found nothing, they had to return to Jerusalem.

²¹After they had gone, the two came up from the well, traveled on, and brought the information to King David.* They told David, "Get up, cross the water quickly, because Ahithophel has advised in such and such a way against you!" ²²So David and all the people with him arose and crossed the Jordan, until by daybreak there was not one who had failed to get across the Jordan.

²³When Ahithophel saw that his recommendation had not been followed, he saddled his donkey, got up and went to his house in his own city, made arrangements for his household, and strangled himself.* So he died, and they buried him in his father's tomb.

²⁴Now David reached Mahanaim, and Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel accompanying him. ²⁵Absalom had appointed Amasa in Joab's place over the army. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite,^y who had gone in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, who was the

sister of Joab's mother Zeruiah. ²⁶So Israel and Absalom made camp in the land of Gilead.

²⁷As David, meanwhile, entered Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash, from Rabbah of the Ammonites, Machir the son of Ammiel from Lo-debar,^z and Barzillai of Gilead from Rogelim, ²⁸brought bedding, basins, pottery, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, parched lentils, ²⁹honey, curdled milk, flocks, and calves of the herd, for David and the people with him to eat. They had concluded, "The people will have gotten hungry, tired, and thirsty in the desert."^a

18 DAVID PROCEEDED TO ORGANIZE the forces that were with him and appointed over them commanders of units of a thousand and a hundred. ²He had the army advance, one third under the command of Joab, another third under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and the final third under the command of Ittai of Gath. But when the king informed his men, "I am surely going out with you myself," ³the people insisted, "You shall not go out! For if we are put to flight, they will not be concerned about us; even if half of us die, our fate will not matter. But you are worth ten thousand of us. So now, it will be better for you to be in position to send us support from the city." ⁴The king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." Then the king took his post beside the gate while all the troops marched out by hundreds and by thousands.^b ⁵But the king ordered Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom." All the people heard it too, when the king gave his order about Absalom to all the officers.

⁶The troops took to the field to en-

w) The detail of this incident has led to the suggestion that Ahimaaz may be the author of I Samuel and II Samuel.

x) He realized that the delay, which enabled David to consolidate his forces, would prove fatal for Absalom's cause.

y) As in I Chron. 2:17, "Jether the Ishmaelite." Amasa was thus Joab's cousin; their mothers were half sisters of David. z) The early protector of Mephibosheth [9:4].

a) Psalms 61 and 62 may have this period of David's flight into Transjordan as their setting.

b) Absalom's delay must have given David opportunity to summon many of his loyal troops from frontier and other duty.

gage Israel, and the battle was joined in the woods of Ephraim. ⁷At that place the forces of Israel were overthrown before the servants of David and the slaughter there that day was heavy, amounting to twenty thousand men. ⁸The battle, moreover, spread over the face of the whole country there, and the wooded terrain that day caused more destruction among the people than did the sword.

⁹Now Absalom was confronted unexpectedly by the servants of David. He had been riding his mule; but the mule had passed under a network of branches of a large tree, so that his head was caught in the tree and he was suspended between heaven and earth, while the mule on which he had been mounted trotted on. ¹⁰A certain man saw it and informed Joab, saying, "Look here! I have seen Absalom hanging on a tree!" ¹¹Joab replied to his informant, "You have really seen him? Then why did you not strike him down to the ground on the spot? It would have been up to me to reward you with ten pieces of silver and a belt!" ¹²"But if I were to hold in my palms a thousand pieces of silver," the man answered Joab, "I could not lift my hand against the son of the king; because in our hearing the king commanded you, Abishai, and Ittai to the effect, 'For my sake be sure to protect the young man Absalom.' ¹³Or again, could I have acted treacherously against his life, when there is nothing that lies hidden from the king? And you yourself would have left me to my fate." ¹⁴"I must not waste time with you this way," said Joab and, taking three darts in his hand, he drove them into the heart of Absalom while he was still alive in the center of the tree. ¹⁵Then ten young aides, who carried Joab's armor, gathered around and struck Absalom to death.

¹⁶Joab then sounded the trumpet and the troops, thus held in check by Joab, turned back from pursuing Israel. ¹⁷They took Absalom and threw him into the big pit that was in the woods,

on which they heaped a very large pile of stones,^d while all Israel ran, each man for his own tent. ¹⁸Now Absalom during his lifetime had already taken and set up for himself the pillar in the king's valley; for he had said, "I have no son to preserve my name." So he called the pillar after his own name, and to this day it is known as Absalom's monument.

¹⁹Ahimaaz the son of Zadok pleaded, "Let me run and bring the king the good news, that the LORD has executed judgment for him from the hands of his enemies!" ²⁰But Joab told him, "You are not the man for the news this day. You can bear the news some other time but not today, because the king's son is dead." ²¹Then Joab turned to a man from Cush, "Go, tell the king what you have seen!" The Cushite prostrated himself before Joab and ran off. ²²But Ahimaaz the son of Zadok kept pleading with Joab and asked again, "Come what may, please let me run, too, after the Cushite!" Joab asked, "Why do you want to run, my son? There is no news to bring you reward." ²³"Whatever be the case, only let me run!" "Run then," agreed Joab; and away ran Ahimaaz by the Jordan Valley road and passed the man from Cush.

²⁴Now David was sitting between the two gates,^e while the sentinel had gone up to the roof of the gateway by the wall. The latter lifted up his eyes, looked, and saw a runner coming alone. ²⁵The sentinel called out to inform the king and the king said, "If he is by himself, he must have news to tell!" He kept getting closer. ²⁶But then the sentinel saw another runner coming and he called out to the gatekeeper, "Look, here too, comes a single runner!" "He also must be bringing news," the king said. ²⁷The sentinel announced, "Now I can see the way the first man runs; it is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." "A good man, he," said the king. "He is coming with a good report." ²⁸Ahimaaz called out, greeting the king,

c) His luxurious locks were caught in its branches, or his head caught in a fork of the tree.
d) This was the inglorious end of the man who put his own lust for power ahead of the law of God; comp. Achan [Josh. 7:26]. e) The inner and outer gates of Mahanaim in Transjordan.

"All is well!" and prostrated himself to the king with his face to the ground. "Blessed be the LORD your God," he went on, "who has delivered up the men that lifted their hands against my master the king!" ²⁹David queried, "But is there safety for the young man, for Absalom?" To this Ahimaaz replied, "When Joab, the king's servant, dispatched me, your servant, I saw a great tumult but I did not know what it was about."^f ³⁰"Turn aside then and take your post here," the king indicated. So he faced about and stood still.

³¹Just then, in came the man of Cush, with the message, "Hear the good news, O my master the king! For the LORD has executed judgment for you today from the hands of all those that rose up against you." ³²"But," asked the king of the Cushite, "is there safety for the young man, for Absalom?" The man of Cush replied, "May the enemies of my master the king, and all that rise up in revolt to harm you, be like that young man!" ³³The king was deeply moved. He went up to the open room on the roof of the gateway and wept, lamenting as he went, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I myself had died instead of you! O Absalom! My son, my son!"^g

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19 THE INFORMATION WAS BROUGHT to Joab, "See, the king is weeping and lamenting over Absalom." ²For all the people, too, the day's victory was turned to sorrow because they heard it said that day, "The king is in grief over his son." ³The troops re-entered the city furtively that day, like people stealing away, who have been shamed by being routed in battle. ⁴The king meanwhile wrapped up his face and cried aloud, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom! My son, my son!" ⁵But Joab broke in on the king in the house, exclaiming, "You have today covered with shame the faces of all your men who have just now saved your life,

the lives of your sons and your daughters, your wives, and your concubines, ⁶by cherishing those who hate you and hating those who love you! You have made it clear this day that officers and men mean nothing to you, because now I know that, if Absalom were alive and all of us today were dead, it would be acceptable in your eyes! ⁷Come on, therefore, get up and go out; speak heartily to your men! For I swear by the LORD, if you do not go out, tonight there will not be a man left with you! This will turn out to be more disastrous for you than all the troubles you have experienced from your youth till now!"

⁸So the king got up and took his seat in the gate, and when they told all the troops, "Look, the king is sitting in the gate!" they all came before the king.

Now Israel had run, every man for his tent. ⁹And all the people were blaming each other throughout the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king saved us from the power of our enemies. He rescued us from the hand of the Philistines. But now he has fled the country on account of Absalom. ¹⁰Yet Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now why do you hesitate about bringing the king back?" ¹¹David, accordingly, sent to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, suggesting, "Ask the elders of Judah, 'Why are you so backward about restoring the king to his palace, when the invitations of all Israel have come to the king at his house?' ¹²You are my brothers, my very bone and flesh, so why should you be the last to bring back the king?"^h ¹³Then assure Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? So do God to me and more, if you do not become army commander in my presence instead of Joab from now on!'" ¹⁴So he swayed the hearts of all the members of Judah as if they had been one man; and they sent word to the king, "Come back, both you and all

f) Not an acceptable messenger.

g) David knew that his sin had started this train of calamities.

h) The reason was that they had taken a leading part in Absalom's revolt in their chief city, Hebron.

i) Compromise to win over Absalom's followers; also retaliation against Joab for having opposed David's weakness toward Absalom.

your servants!"

¹⁵So the king moved homeward. When he had gotten as far as the Jordan, Judah turned out to Gilgal to go and meet the monarch and escort him across the Jordan. ¹⁶Then Shimei son of Gera of Benjamin, who was from Bahurim, hurried to come with the men of Judah to meet King David, ¹⁷accompanied by a thousand men of Benjamin and by Ziba, Saul's family steward, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants.^j They rushed into the Jordan before the king, ¹⁸and they kept crossing the ford to bring over the king's household and to do whatever he thought good.

Shimei the son of Gera fell before the king as he was about to make the Jordan crossing, ¹⁹ imploring him, "O my master, do not hold me guilty! Do not retain in your memory the perverse way your servant acted the time my master the king left Jerusalem, that the king should keep it in mind! ²⁰For your servant acknowledges how I have sinned. See, I have come today as the first of all the house of Joseph^k to come down to greet my master the king!"

²¹Abishai son of Zeruiah interjected, "Is not Shimei to be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?" ²²But David replied, "What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? Truly you are today playing the opponent to me! Should anyone be put to death today in Israel? Do I not recognize that I am this day king over Israel?" ²³Then to Shimei the king declared, "You shall not die!" And the king confirmed it with an oath.^l

²⁴Next to come down and meet the king was Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul. He had neither cared for his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes^m from the time of the king's departure up to the day of his safe return. ²⁵But as at Jerusalem he came to meet the monarch, the

king asked him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" ²⁶"O my master and king," he replied, "my steward deceived me! You see, your servant said, 'I will surely have a donkey saddled for me to ride and go with the king,' because your servant is lame. ²⁷But he" has slandered your servant to my master the king. Still, my master the king is like an angel of God,^o so do what seems good in your eyes. ²⁸For the whole house of my father were nothing but men condemnable to death before my master the king, yet you set your servant among those who eat at your table. Now what further right do I have, or how could I appeal for anything more to the king?" ²⁹The king remarked to him, "Why talk any longer? I have decided, 'You and Ziba are to divide the land!'"^p ³⁰Then Mephibosheth answered the king, "Let him take it all, so long as my master the king has come in safety to his palace!"

³¹Now Barzillai of Gilead had come down from Rogelim and had accompanied the king to the Jordan to escort him over the Jordan, ³²though Barzillai was quite old, being eighty. He was also the one who had sent the king provisions during his stay in Mahanaim, because he was very well-to-do. ³³The king made Barzillai the offer, "You accompany me across, and let me maintain you with me in Jerusalem." ³⁴But Barzillai replied to the king, "How many days are left to the years of my life that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? ³⁵I am now eighty years old; could I distinguish good from bad, or could your servant appreciate what I might eat and drink, or could I enjoy listening any more to singing men and women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my master the king? ³⁶Your servant will simply cross the Jordan with the king. Why should the king compensate me with such a reward?"

j) See 9:10.

k) He counts his tribe of Benjamin as part of northern Israel [comp. vs. 11], under the leadership of the Joseph tribes Ephraim and Manasseh, differing from Judah in the south.

l) David had not really forgiven Shimei [comp. I Kings 2:8-9]; and Shimei's "repentance" seems to have been a matter of expediency.

m) Signs of mourning [Ezek. 24:17]. n) The retainer, Ziba [16:1-4].

o) To see the truth. Comp. 14:17 and the accompanying footnote.

p) David thus partly retracted his award of the property to Ziba in 16:4; but he did not fully restore the original arrangement of 9:9.

³⁷I beg of you, let your servant return to die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham,^a if he may go over with my master the king; and for him do whatever you think best."

³⁸"Chimham shall indeed go over with me," promised the king, "and I will do the things for him which you think best. Everything you choose for me to do for you, I will do."

³⁹After all the people had crossed the Jordan and the king had passed over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned home.

⁴⁰The king moved on to Gilgal, accompanied by Chimham; while all the people of Judah, as well as half the people of Israel, conducted the king across.

⁴¹But soon all the men of Israel were coming to the king with the complaint, "Why is it that our brothers, the men of Judah, have monopolized you, bringing the king and his household across the Jordan, and all David's men with him?" ⁴²"Because the king is related to us," was the retort of all the men of Judah to the men of Israel. "Why should you be put out about this? Have we gotten fat at the king's expense, or has there been any favoritism toward us?" ⁴³Then the men of Israel argued back against those of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king,^b so we have a greater part in David than you have! Why now have you despised us? Was not our business first to bring us back our king?" What the men of Judah said, however, was more violent than the charges of the men of Israel.

About 979 B.C.

20 NOW THERE HAPPENED TO BE there a worthless fellow named Sheba the son of Bichri, of Benjamin, who blew the trumpet, saying, "In David we'll have no more part; in

Jesse's last son, not a share! Depart, Israel's men, to your tents!"^c ²As a result all the men of Israel withdrew from David to follow Sheba the son of Bichri; but the men of Judah kept following their king, from the Jordan all the way to Jerusalem. ³When David entered his Jerusalem palace, the king took the ten concubines whom he had left behind to keep the palace and placed them in a house of confinement. He maintained them but did not go in to them; they were kept separated until the day of their death as in life-long widowhood.

⁴The king then ordered Amasa, "Summon me the men of Judah within three days and report here in person."

⁵Amasa went to assemble Judah, but he delayed beyond the time specified to him.^d ⁶David therefore told Abishai, "Sheba, son of Bichri is becoming more dangerous to us now than was Absalom. You take your master's men and pursue the man before he will have occupied fortified cities and eludes our observation!" ⁷So out with him marched the troops of Joab, the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty men, advancing from Jerusalem in pursuit of Sheba the son of Bichri. ⁸When they had arrived at the big stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa caught up and met them. Now Joab was dressed in his military coat with a belt over it, to which a sword in its sheath was fastened at his waist. But as he approached, the sword fell out. ⁹Joab addressed Amasa, "Is all well with you, my brother?" And Joab took hold of Amasa's beard with his right hand as if to kiss him. ¹⁰Amasa, however, did not notice the sword in Joab's hand, with which he struck him under the fifth rib, so that his intestines poured out on the ground. There was no second blow; he died.^e

Joab and his brother Abishai re-

q) One of the sons of Barzillai [I Kings 2:7].

r) David had not shown partiality toward his own tribe of Judah as Saul had shown to Benjamin [I Sam. 22:7].

s) That is, ten of the twelve tribes were counted in northern Israel. Disunity and jealousy had marked the tribal relations before [Judg. 12:1-6], and later split the kingdom [I Kings 12:16-17].

t) Meaning, each man independent in his own home.

u) Judah may have hesitated to respond to this former officer of Absalom, with whom David was trying to replace Joab.

v) This was the second rival commander whom Joab eliminated by treachery [I Kings 2:5]; comp. Abner's death [II Sam. 3:27].

sumed the pursuit of Sheba the son of Bichri. ¹¹But one of Joab's attendants was posted over the body to call out, "Whoever favors Joab, whoever is for David, follow Joab!" ¹²Amasa, meanwhile, lay wallowing in his blood in the center of the highway. The man saw that the people were standing still, so he pulled Amasa off the highway into the field and threw a garment over him, having noticed how everyone coming up to him was standing still. ¹³Once he was moved off the highway, all the troops marched on after Joab to chase Sheba the son of Bichri. ¹⁴He had marched toward Abel of Beth-maacah, passing through all the tribes of Israel along with all the Berites,^x who had gathered and had joined him. ¹⁵But they^y came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah, raising up a mound against the city until it stood even with the fortifications while all the troops under Joab were battering to break down the wall. ¹⁶But then a wise^z woman shouted from the city, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab now, 'Come here, so I can speak with you!'" ¹⁷When Joab got near her, the woman called, "Are you Joab?" "I am," came the reply. She said to him, "Listen to the words of your maidservant!" "I am listening," he assured her. ¹⁸So she addressed him, "In times past they used to say, 'Let them be sure to ask at Abel!'"^a And so a matter was settled. ¹⁹Now here am I, of a peaceful and a loyal people in Israel; but you, on your part, are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why will you swallow up the LORD's inheritance?" ²⁰Joab answered, "Far be it from me, far be it, to swallow up and to destroy.

²¹Such is not the case! But there is a man from the hill country of Ephraim,^b Sheba son of Bichri by name, who has lifted his hand against the king, against David. Give him up, only this one man, and I will withdraw from the city!" The woman answered Joab, "Look! His head will be thrown to you over the wall." ²²The woman then, in her wise way, went to all the citizens, who proceeded to cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and to throw it out to Joab. He then sounded the trumpet, so that the troops dispersed from the city, each man to his own tent, and Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king. ²³Joab, it should be noted, was over all Israel's armed forces; Benaiah son of Jehoiada commanded the Cherethites and the Pelethites; ²⁴Adoram was in charge of the labor gangs; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud, was recorder; ²⁵Sheva was secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; ²⁶Ira, too, from Jair, was chief assistant to David.^c

About 990 B.C.

21 IN THE DAYS OF DAVID THERE was a famine, year after year for three years.^d When David sought the LORD's presence, the LORD told him: It is because of Saul and his bloody house, for having put the people of Gibeon to death. ²So the king called in the people of Gibeon to speak with them. Now the Gibeonites were not a part of the nation of Israel, but of the survivors of the Amorites with whom the nation of Israel had pledged with an oath; but Saul, in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah, had tried to destroy them.^e ³David said to the men of Gibeon, "What am I to do in your behalf? By what means can I

w) To the troops brought up by Amasa.

x) A branch of the tribe of Asher [Num. 26:44], in the far north of Palestine.

y) Those with Joab.

z) "The wise" were a special group in Israel. Jeremiah 18:18 lists the three classes by which God guided His people: the wise man, with his "counsel"; the priest, who had "the law"; and the prophet, with "the word."

a) This itself appears to have been an early proverb, of the type with which the wise gave counsel. b) This area extended into Sheba's tribe of Benjamin [I Sam. 1:1].

c) The title *cohen*, usually given to priests, is also applied to David's sons [ch. 8:18]. See I Chron. 27:25-34 for further listings of David's ministers.

d) The exact date is not given; but it must have been after the coming of Mephibosheth to be with David in 995 B.C. [vs. 7]. Moreover, the deaths of vs. 8-9 seem to have been the subject of Shimei's cursing of David [16:7-8, which would put the famine before Absalom's revolt].

e) This event is not elsewhere described in Scripture but it violated the treaty of peace made by Joshua with the Hivites [the more general name of "Amorites" is here used, comp. Gen. 15:16] of Gibeon almost 400 years before [Josh 9]. Famines and other natural calamities may be caused by sin [Deut. 11:17].

atone for this, so you will invoke prosperity for the LORD's inheritance?"

⁴"We are not concerned with silver or gold in the matter of Saul and his family," the Gibeonites answered him, "nor do we have the right to put a man to death in Israel." "What do you say I should do for you?" he asked. ⁵They said to the king, "As for the man who destroyed us, who planned to exterminate us from having a place in all the territory of Israel, ⁶let seven of his sons be handed over to us, to expose their broken corpses to the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, this chosen one of the LORD!" "I will hand them over," agreed the king. ⁷Then, although the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the LORD's oath between them, between David and Saul's son Jonathan, ⁸the king did take Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she had borne to Saul, and the five sons of Saul's daughter Merab, whom she had borne to Adriel the son of Barzillai from Meholah, ⁹and gave them up into the hands of the men of Gibeon, who exposed their broken corpses on the hill in the presence of the LORD. The seven fell at one time, being put to death in the first days of reaping, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

¹⁰Rizpah the daughter of Aiah then took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until rain came pouring down from heaven on the bodies; ¹by day she let no bird of the air alight on them and by night no animal of the field. ¹¹When David was informed of

what Rizpah, daughter of Aiah and concubine of Saul, had done, ¹²he went and got the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the plaza of Beth-shan where the Philistines had fastened them up at the time they overcame Saul on Gilboa. ¹³David brought up from there the bones of Saul and those of his son Jonathan, and they gathered up the bones of the men who had been exposed; ¹⁴then they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in Zela in the land of Benjamin, in the grave of Kish his father. When they had done all that the king commanded, God afterward answered the prayers for the land.

1005 to 995 B.C.

¹⁵At a time when the Philistines again made war against Israel, ^kDavid together with his men went down and engaged the Philistines; but David became exhausted. ¹⁶Ishbi-benob, who was among the descendants of Raphah ¹and whose spear weighed over twelve pounds, ^mwas there too with new armor belted on, and he threatened to destroy David. ¹⁷But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his rescue; he attacked the Philistine and killed him. It was then that David's men adjured him, "You must no longer go out with us to battle, that you may not put out the lamp of Israel!" ¹⁸Later on there was war again with the Philistines at Gob; then it was that Sibbecai, ⁿfrom Hushah, struck down Saph, who also was among the descendants of Raphah. ¹⁹Another battle took place with the Philistines in Gob; and Elhanan the

f) A punishment sometimes prescribed for the worst criminals [Num. 25:4]. Sons of Saul were executed for their father's sin; but see Num. 35:33; Deut. 24:16. g) 1 Sam. 20:12-17.

h) For Rizpah, see 3:7; for Merab, which is the reading of the more correct manuscripts, see 1 Sam. 18:19.

i) Deut. 21:22-23 notes that bodies were not to remain hanging overnight; but in this case they were left until the rains ended the famine.

j) From the wall, beside which the public assembly place was located [1 Sam. 31:8-13]. Comp. II Chron. 32:6.

k) These events therefore follow the first Philistine wars, described in 5:17-25, but precede the God-given rest from foreign armies granted David by about 995 B.C. [7:1]. They may be associated with the campaigns noted in 8:1, which ended with David's capturing Gath.

l) The Rephaim were an ancient people [Gen. 14:5], noted for their size but, except for Og's kingdom in Bashan, they had died out by the time of Moses [Deut. 3:11].

m) Hebrew: 300 shekels or a little under ½ oz. each; the metal weight probably refers to the head of the spear only.

n) One of the "thirty" heroes [I Chron. 11:29] and commander of the eighth corps of David's army [I Chron. 27:11].

son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite overcame Beth-Hal-Lahmi with Goliath^o of Gath, whose spear had a staff like a weaver's bar.^p ²⁰Once more there was war in Gath, this time involving a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all; he too was born of Raphah. ²¹But when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of David's brother Shimei struck him down. ²²These four were born to Raphah in Gath, but they fell at the hands of David and his men.

22 DAVID SPOKE THE WORDS OF this song to the LORD at the time when the LORD delivered him out of the power of all his enemies,^q including the power of Saul. ²He said: The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress,
insuring deliverance for me,
³the God of my rock, whom I trust,
my Shield, saving Horn,^r and my Fort;
my Refuge, and Savior from harm.
⁴I call on my praiseworthy LORD,
and I shall be saved from my foes!
⁵When breakers have swept me toward death
and floods of the wicked dismayed,
⁶when cords of the grave closed me in
and snares holding death blocked my way,
⁷in anguish I cried to the LORD,
and unto my God I appealed.
My voice from His temple^s He heard;
my shouts carried into His ears.
⁸The earth then did tremble and quake,
and heaven's foundations did shake;
they reeled back and forth at His wrath.
⁹The smoke from His nostrils arose,
and fire from His mouth did consume;

David's Victory Song — Glory to God

live coals issued from Him in flame!
¹⁰He bent down the heavens to descend;
thick darkness was under His feet.
¹¹He rode on a cherub^t and flew,
appearing on wings of the wind.
¹²The dark He placed round Him as tents,
with masses of water and clouds.
¹³Yet brightness before Him so seared
that burning coals burst into flame.
¹⁴From heaven the LORD thundered forth;
the Most High did utter His voice.
¹⁵His arrow-shots scattered the foe,
with lightning He put them to flight.
¹⁶The sea channels came into view,
the world's deep foundations lay bare,
because of rebuke by the LORD,
by blasts from the breath of His nostrils.
¹⁷He reached; from on high I was grasped;
He drew me from waters that swelled.
¹⁸He saved from an enemy strong,
from haters more mighty than I,
¹⁹who blocked me when I was distressed;
yet I found the LORD my support.
²⁰He brought me out into the clear;
He saved, for His favor is mine!
²¹The LORD deals with me as I'm righteous,
rewarding, as my hands stay pure;
²²because I have kept the LORD's pathway,
not straying in sin from my God.
²³His judgments were looming before me;
His statutes — I left not their path.
²⁴Integrity marks me before Him;

o) This phrase seems originally to have read, "Lahmi the brother of Goliath," [I Chron. 20:5].

p) Heavy to hold the threads taut. See I Sam. 17:7.

q) This song therefore goes with ch. 7; see vs. 1, written shortly after Nathan's Messianic promise to David; comp. vs. 51 with 7:16. The king subsequently made slight changes in it, so it would be better adapted to public use and included it as Ps. 18 of the Psalter.

r) The source of strength and defense, as in horned animals, comp. I Sam. 2:1.

s) As in Ps. 11:4, meaning "heaven," for note the description of His descent from it like a storm in vss. 8-17. Such a manifestation of God took place in a storm at Mt. Sinai [Exod. 19:16-20] and was taken up in the later poetry; comp. Deut. 33:2, Judg. 5:2-5, etc., though here it is symbolical for God's deliverance of David by less spectacular means.

t) Cherubim are angelic beings, appearing in human form but also having wings [Ezek. 1:5; comp. 10:1]. God's "riding upon" one may have been taken from the fact of His glory appearing between the cherubim on the ark. [See 6:2; Exod. 25:20-21].

I have guarded my doings from
guilt.^u
25 The LORD thus rewarded my
rightness
as pureness was mine in His eyes.
26 With merciful men Thou art
gracious
with upright men endlessly so.
27 With pure men, Thou showest Thy
purity;
the twisted are twisted to Thee!
28 So Thou the afflicted dost save,
marking down, yes, demoting the
proud.
29 For Thou now, O LORD, art my
Lamp;
the LORD turns my darkness to light.
30 By Thee, I can charge through a
troop,
vault over a wall by my God.
31 This God, how complete is His way;
the word of the LORD, tried and
true!
He is a shield to all them that trust
in Him.
32 For who is a God, save the LORD,
and who is a rock, save our God?
33 This God is my Tower and Strength;
He levels for me His good way.
34 He places my feet like the deer
and stands me erect on the hills.
35 He teaches my hands to make war,
my arms to draw bows made of
bronze.
36 Thou grantest me Thy saving shield;
Thy gentleness has made me great.
37 Thou stretchest my stride on the
ground
on ankles that never grow weak.
38 My foes I pursue and destroy;
I turn not till they are consumed!
39 I waste them and crush them until
they rise not, but fall 'neath my feet!
40 Thou bindest on me strength for war,
dost under me challengers bend;
41 To me Thou dost make foes turn tail;
my haters I bring to an end!
42 They look and there is none to save.
The LORD? But He answers them
not!

43 I sift them like dust of the earth,
like street mud I trample them
down!
44 While saved from domestic
complaints,
of nations Thou keepest me chief,
and people unknown do my tasks.
45 Those foreign come cringing to me,
at hearsay obeying my will.
46 The foreigners shrink in despair
and, trembling, surrender their forts.
47 The LORD lives, and blessed be my
Rock!
Exalt God, my sure Rock of
salvation,
48 the God who avenges my cause
and under me nations subdues,
49 conducting me free from my foes!
From rivals Thou liftest me up,
from ruthless men rescuest me.
50 I therefore will praise Thee, O LORD,
'twixt nations, and sing to Thy name.
51 God heightens success for His king
and with His anointed keeps faith,
with David and offspring for aye.

970 B.C.

23 THESE, THEN, ARE THE LAST
words of David:^v
The statement of Jesse's son David,
the word of the man who was raised
on high,
anointed of the God of Jacob,
and noted as Israel's sweet psalmist:
2 The Spirit of the LORD spoke this
through me,
and His word was on my tongue.
3 He said — it was Israel's God did the
speaking,
it was Israel's Rock who revealed it
to me:
A ruler who is righteous shall rise over
men,
who holds His dominion through
reverence for God.
4 He will be like the morning light at
sunrise,
of a morning that breaks without
clouds,
when grass springs from earth by
sunshine after rain.

u) David did not claim to be perfect, or beyond sin; but he consistently sought God's will in His life, a fact not true of his enemies [I Sam. 26:23-24], but confirmed for David by God Himself [I Kings 14:8].

v) More than just a farewell, this song, like the final blessing of Jacob [Gen. 49], is an inspired prophecy of the Messiah to come and of the saving covenant of which He would be the Mediator. In form, David's song seems patterned on the similarly prophetic last message of Balaam [Num. 24:15-24].

⁵For is not my house so established with God?

Eternal the covenant He settled with me;

in every respect it is ordered and sealed.^w

It is all my salvation, though all His decreeing,

for will He not cause it^x to send forth a Branch?^y

⁶The worthless shall all be like

castaway thorn trees,

for one is not able to take them in hand.

⁷Whenever a man attempts even to touch them

He is furnished with iron or the shaft of a spear.

They shall with a fire be consumed where they dwell.^z

1003 B.C.

⁸These are the names of David's mighty men:^a Josheb-basshebeth, a man of Tachemon,^b known also as Adino of Ezen, chief of the military leaders. He stood up against eight hundred, whom he laid low at one time.

⁹After him, Eleazar the son of Dodai, a descendant of Ahoah, next among the three heroes, the men who were with David when they defied the Philistines. The enemy had mustered there for battle, and the Israelites had retreated upward; ¹⁰but he himself advanced and struck down the Philistines until his hand was exhausted and stuck to his sword. So on that day the LORD won a great victory, and the people rallied behind him only to take booty. ¹¹After him was Shammah the son of Agee of Harar. The Philistines had mustered into a combat group at a particular part of the field that was

full of lentils; the people had broken and run before the Philistines, ¹²but he took up a position in the middle of that section, recovered it, and struck down the Philistines; so again the LORD won a great victory.

¹³Now three of the thirty^c leaders had gone down at harvest time to join David in the cave of Adullam, during the camping of Philistines in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴At that time David was in the stronghold, but an outpost of the Philistines occupied Bethlehem. ¹⁵Then David felt a longing and said, "If only someone could get me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem there by the gate." ¹⁶So the three heroes broke into the Philistine camp, drew water out of the well by the gate of Bethlehem, took it, and carried it to David. But he would not drink any; he poured it out as an offering to the LORD ¹⁷with the exclamation, "Be it far from me, LORD, to do such a thing! Could I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" He would not, accordingly, drink any. This was what the three heroes did.^d

¹⁸Then there was Abishai, Joab's brother and son of Zeruiah, chief of the thirty, who wielded his spear to lay low three hundred men, and he gained a reputation along with the three; ¹⁹in fact, he was honored over the three by being made their superior^e though he was not actually considered with them. ²⁰Also Benaiah^f son of Jehoiada, who was the son of a worthy man of great accomplishments from Kabzeel. He was the one who struck down the two ariels^g of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in the

w) The contingency of faithlessness in David's descendants had been provided for by God, without invalidating the general covenantal promise of salvation in the final Messianic seed of David [7:12-16]. x) David's family of descendants.

y) A term which became a standard designation for the Messiah; comp. Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; and Zech. 3:8. z) In this same way, Christ describes the final punishment of the wicked [Matt. 13:30].

a) This list belongs to the time of David's accession over all Israel; see I Chron. 11:10-47, where it appears with variants in spelling, etc., and with sixteen additions at the end.

b) More correctly, "Jashobeam, son of a man of Iachmon" [I Chron. 11:11]; see also I Chron. 27:2 and 32, in which chapter the names of twelve of the heroes, including his, appear in the list of the commanders of the twelve corps of David's armed forces.

c) The initial number in this "legion of honor"? Actually 37, including the outstanding three and the two commanders, are here listed [vs. 39], perhaps because of subsequent additions to the original group. d) Which three heroes is not specified.

e) He had commanded with Joab against Abner [2:24] and later led divisions in the wars against the Ammonites [10:10], against Absalom [18:2], and against Sheba [20:6]. His heroism with David in Saul's camp is recorded in I Sam. 26:6. f) Commander of the professional Cherethites and Pelethites, that made up David's guard [8:18; 20:23], and Solomon's leading general [I Kings 4:4]. g) "Lions of God," probably a general term for heroes.

middle of the pit on a snowy day, ²¹and he destroyed an Egyptian of towering build, who had a spear in his hand; but he went at him with a club, snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²²These were things done by Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He too gained a reputation along with the three heroes; ²³but, though he was more honored than the thirty, he did not come up to the three. David appointed him over his guard.

²⁴Then came Asahel,^h Joab's brother and a member of the thirty; Elhanan son of Dodo, of Bethlehem; ²⁵Shammah and Elikai, both from Harod; ²⁶Helez from Beth-pelet; Ira son of Ikesh, from Tekoa; ²⁷Abiezer from Anathoth; Mebunnai from Hushah; ²⁸Zalmon, a descendant of Ahoah; Maharai, ²⁹and Heleb son of Baanah, both from Netophah; Ittai son of Ribai, from Gibeath of the people of Benjamin; ³⁰Benaiah; Hiddai from the valleys of Gaash; ³¹Abi-albon the Arbathite; Azmaveth from Bahurim; ³²Eliabha from Shaalbon; Bene-jashen; Jonathan son of ³³Shammah and Ahiam son of Sharar, both from Harar; ³⁴Eliphelet son of Ahasbai, the son of the man from Maacah; Eliam son of Ahithophelⁱ of Giloh; ³⁵Hesro from Carmel; Paarai from Arab; ³⁶Igal son of Nathan, from Zobah; Bani from Gad; ³⁷Zekek from Ammon; Naharai from Beeroth, who was armor-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruiah; ³⁸Ira and Gareb, both descendants of Jether; ³⁹and Uriah the Hittite,^j making a total of thirty-seven.

About 975 B.C.

24 BUT THE LORD'S ANGER WAS again inflamed against Israel,^k and one aroused David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah. ²The king proceeded to give orders to Joab, the commander of the army, who was present with him, "Make a survey

now among all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba and register the people, so that I may know the population figure." ³Joab tried to reason with the king, "May the LORD your God multiply the people a hundred times over what they are now, for the eyes of my master the king to see; but why should my master the king be pleased to do this thing?" ⁴The king's word, however, prevailed against Joab and the officers of the army; so Joab and the army officers went out from the presence of the king to register the people Israel.

⁵Having crossed the Jordan, they set up camp at Arero, south of the city that is in the middle of the valley of Gad, and then moved on to Jazer. ⁶Next they came to Gilead and the land of Tahtim-hodshi, then to Dan-jaan and so around to Sidon. ⁷They proceeded to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites, coming out finally in the south of Judah at Beer-sheba. ⁸Thus when they had surveyed the whole land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹Joab then turned over to the king the figures for the census of the people: Israel numbered eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand.^m

¹⁰But after he had taken the census of the people, David's conscience accused him, and David confessed to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, LORD, I pray Thee, take away the wrong of Thy servant, for I have indeed played the fool." ¹¹When David got up in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer: ¹²Go, tell David, This is what the LORD has decreed: I offer you three things;

h) Killed when pursuing Abner in David's war against Ish-bosheth [2:18-23].

i) David's counselor, who deserted to Absalom [15:12f.]. j) The husband of Bathsheba.

k) The former instance was the famine described in ch. 21, about 990 B.C. Israel's sin in this case seems to be their participation in the successive revolts of Absalom and Sheba against David, the LORD's anointed. The parallel record in I Chron. 21 adds that Satan was used by God to accomplish His purpose. Comp. Job 1:6-12 and I Kings 22:20-22.

l) There was nothing inherently wrong in a census, but in this case David was looking to the armed strength of his people [note vs. 9] rather than maintaining his faith in the promises of God. Compare I Chron. 27:23.

m) I Chron. 21:5 notes that the total for Israel of men who drew the sword was 1,100,000 and that the figure for Judah was 470,000.

choose one of them for Me to do to you. ¹³So Gad came to David with the information and presented him with this, "Shall there come sevenⁿ years of famine to you on your land, or three months of fleeing before your enemies with them pursuing you, or three days of a fatal malady in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I am to return to Him who sent me."

¹⁴David replied to Gad, "I am in deep distress; let us fall, I pray, into the hands of the LORD, because His mercies are great; but into the hands of man may I not fall." ¹⁵So the LORD sent a fatal malady upon Israel from the morning until assembly time;^o and from Dan to Beer-sheba there died seventy thousand men of the people. ¹⁶But when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD felt grief regarding the calamity and gave orders to the angel who was bringing the destruction among the people: Enough! Relax your hand now! This was when the LORD's angel was by the threshing floor of Araunah^p the Jebusite.

¹⁷When David saw the angel striking the people down, he appealed to the LORD, "See, I am the one who has sinned; it is I who have acted wrongly. But these, the flock,^q what have they done? Let Thy hand, I pray, be against me and my father's house!" ¹⁸On that day, Gad came to David and told him, "Go up, and erect an altar to the LORD

on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." ¹⁹So David, following Gad's word, went up as the LORD had commanded.

²⁰When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants crossing over to him, he went out and prostrated himself with his face to the ground before the king. ²¹Araunah then inquired, "For what reason has my master the king come to his servant?" "To purchase the threshing floor from you," David replied; "so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the fatal malady may be restrained from continuing on the people." ²²"Oh, but let my master the king," Araunah remonstrated with David, "take and offer up whatever seems good in his eyes! See the cattle^r for the burnt offering and the threshing sledges and cattle equipment for the wood. ²³All this, O king, Araunah is giving to the king." Araunah then added to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you favorably."

²⁴"No," the king answered Araunah; "I will certainly buy it from you at a price; I will not offer the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing!"^s So David bought the threshing floor and the cattle for about fifty silver dollars.^t ²⁵Then David built an altar there to the LORD and offered up burnt offerings and offerings of peace. So the LORD answered the prayers for the land, and the fatal malady was removed from Israel.

n) Certain Greek texts here have "three years," which seems to be the original and correct reading, not simply because of the "three years" in I Chron. 21:12, but also because of the parallel threats of "three months" and "three days."

o) Probably that of the regular evening sacrifice [Exod. 29:39]. p) In Chron., Ornan.

q) Scripture frequently compares leader and people to shepherd and sheep; see 5:2 and Ps. 23.

r) Used to pull the wooden threshing sledges over the grain.

s) So God expects the Christian to yield Him at a cost the best in his life, not just what involves no sacrifice. t) 1¼ lb. in silver, troy weight; Hebrew: 50 shekels. I Chron. 21:25 mentions a greater amount, paid for the whole area.

THE FIRST BOOK OF

KINGS

1 WHEN KING DAVID WAS OLD AND advanced in years, he could not keep warm, although they wrapped him in covers. ²So his servants said to him, "Let them seek for my master the king a young virgin who shall wait upon the king and be his nurse. When she lies in your bosom, my master the king will get warm." ³Therefore they searched all the territory of Israel for a beautiful young woman. Finally they found Abishag the Shunammite, whom they brought to the king. ⁴The girl was very beautiful and she became the king's nurse and served him; however, the king did not cohabit with her. 970 B.C.

⁵About that time, Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." He provided for himself a chariot and horsemen, with fifty men running before him.^a ⁶His father had never repressed him by asking, "Why do you do so and so?" Moreover, he also had a very fine physique and was born next after Absalom. ⁷So he consulted with Joab the son of Zeruah and with Abiathar the priest, for they were supporters of Adonijah. ⁸But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and David's mighty men were not on Adonijah's side.

⁹When Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and well-fed cattle near the Slippery Stone at En-rogel, he invited

all his brothers, the sons of the king, and all the Judean officers of the king. ¹⁰But Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the magnates, and Solomon he did not invite.

¹¹Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord does not know it? ¹²Now, then, let me give you advice, that you may preserve your life and the life of your son Solomon. ¹³Go at once to King David and say to him, 'Did you not, my master O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, "Solomon your son shall be king after me and shall occupy my throne?" Why then has Adonijah become king?' ¹⁴Then while you are still there speaking with the king, I will follow you in and support your words."^b

¹⁵Then Bathsheba went in to the king, into his own apartment, for the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was caring for him. ¹⁶When Bathsheba fell upon her knees and paid homage to the king, the king asked, "What do you wish?" ¹⁷She replied, "My master, you swore to your maidservant by the LORD your God, 'Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall occupy my throne.' ¹⁸And see, now Adonijah has become king, and you, my master, O king, do not know about it. ¹⁹He has sacrificed oxen, well-fed cattle, and sheep in

a) As Absalom had done. Adonijah was David's fourth son. With Amnon and Absalom dead, and Chileab not ambitious, his chances looked promising.

b) Ideally Israel remained a theocracy, in which the leading prophet and the high priest could, and should, exercise much authority.

abundance, and he has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the general of the army; but your servant Solomon he did not invite. ²⁰Now my master, O king, all Israel is looking to you to inform them as to who is to occupy the throne of my master the king after him. ²¹As it is, when my master the king lies with his fathers, I and my son Solomon will be considered as criminals."

²²While she was still talking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. ²³They informed the king, "Here is Nathan the prophet!" When he came before the king, he bowed to the king with his face to the ground, ²⁴and said, "My master, O king, did you say, 'Adonijah shall be king after me and shall occupy my throne?' ²⁵For he went down today and sacrificed oxen, well-fed cattle, and sheep in abundance, and invited all the sons of the king, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. Even now they are eating and drinking before him and shouting, 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶But me, your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Solomon your servant, he did not invite. ²⁷Has this thing been done by my master the king and you have not informed your servants as to who shall occupy the throne of my master the king after him?"

²⁸Then King David responded, "Call Bathsheba for me." When she came and stood before the king, ²⁹the king swore and affirmed, "By the life of the LORD who has redeemed me from all adversity, ³⁰since I have sworn to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall occupy my throne in my place'; I will perform it this very day." ³¹Then Bathsheba fell upon her knees with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king, saying, "May my master King David live forever."^c

³²King David said further, "Call for me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jeho-

iada." When they came into the presence of the king, ³³the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your master, and see to it that Solomon my son rides upon my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon."^d ³⁴There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; then sound the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵Then come up again after him, so that he may enter and occupy my throne; he shall be king in my place, for I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah."

³⁶Benaiah the son of Jehoiada replied, "So be it! May the LORD, the God of my master the king, so decree! ³⁷As the LORD was with my master the king, so may He be with Solomon and make his throne greater than the throne of my master King David." ³⁸Accordingly, Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went out and made Solomon ride upon King David's mule and brought him to Gihon, ³⁹where Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" ⁴⁰And all the people followed him, playing flutes and rejoicing so much that the earth was split^e by their noise.

⁴¹Adonijah and all his guests heard it just as they had finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, "Why the sound of the city in tumult?" ⁴²While he was yet speaking, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came in. Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a man of standing and surely bring good news." ⁴³But Jonathan replied to Adonijah, "No, for our master King David has made Solomon king, ⁴⁴and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and Pelethites, and they made him ride upon the king's mule. ⁴⁵And Zadok

c) David and Bathsheba seem to have drifted away from each other.

d) A spring less than ½ mile from Jerusalem, that supplied water for the city.

e) An earth-splitting noise.

the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; they have come up from there rejoicing so that the city is in tumult. That was the noise you heard. ⁴⁶Besides, Solomon has occupied the throne of the kingdom ⁴⁷and the servants of the king have already gone to compliment our master King David, saying, 'May God make Solomon more renowned than you and magnify his throne above yours.' Then the king did homage upon his bed^f and exclaimed, ⁴⁸'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has provided an occupant for my throne while I can still see it with my own eyes.'

⁴⁹All Adonijah's guests were afraid, arose, and went each one his way, ⁵⁰while Adonijah himself was so fearful of Solomon that he too arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar.^g ⁵¹Solomon then received this report: "Look, Adonijah is so fearful of King Solomon that he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear now that he will not kill his servant with the sword.'"

⁵²Solomon replied, "If he proves worthy, not one of his hairs shall fall to the ground; but if evil be found in him, he shall die." ⁵³So King Solomon sent and brought him down from the altar. When he came, he did homage to King Solomon. King Solomon said to him, "Go home."

970 B.C.

2 WHEN THE TIME OF DAVID'S death came near, he advised his son Solomon: ²"I am about to die. You must be strong and behave as a man. ³You must observe the charge of the LORD your God, by walking in His ways, by observing His statutes, commands, judgments, and testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, so that you may succeed in everything you do and in everything to which you may turn; ⁴and that the LORD may confirm the word which He spoke to

me: If your sons watch their steps, so as to walk before Me devotedly, with their whole heart and soul, there shall never be wanting for you a man upon the throne of Israel.

⁵"You also know how Joab the son of Zeruiah^h treated me and how he struck the two captains of the Israelite army, Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, and murdered them, thus shedding the blood of war in time of peace and putting the blood of war on the girdle about his loins and in the shoes on his feet. ⁶Now you must act wisely and not permit his gray head to go down to the grave peacefully. ⁷But to the sons of Barzilai the Gileadite you must be kind and let them be with those who eat at your table, for so they assisted me when I had to flee from Absalom your brother. ⁸Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, is also with you. He cursed me violently at the time I came to Mahanaim. When he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, 'I will not kill you with the sword.' ⁹So do not hold him innocent, for you are a wise man and know how to handle him; you must bring down his gray head in blood to the grave."

¹⁰Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹David was king of Israel for forty years; in Hebron he was king for seven years, and in Jerusalem he was king for thirty-three years. ¹²Solomon then occupied the throne of his father David and his kingdom was firmly established.

¹³When Adonijah the son of Hagith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, she said, "Is your coming peaceful?" He replied, "Peaceful," ¹⁴and continued, "May I have a word with you?" "Speak," she responded. ¹⁵He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel expected me to be king.ⁱ But now the

f) His death must have been near.

g) For law of asylum, see Ex. 21:13f.; and places of refuge Deut. 19:1-13. The horns were the most sacred part of the altar.

h) Retribution was in order for those who had misbehaved, and a purge was needed of those who were not loyal to Solomon.

i) A statement not in agreement with fact and Bathsheba must have known that, but she never displayed much moral stamina.

kingdom has gone to my brother because the LORD gave it to him. ¹⁶Accordingly I have but one request of you; do not refuse me." She said to him, "Go on." He went on, ¹⁷"Intercede please with King Solomon for he will not refuse you — that he give me Abishag, the Shunammite, as a wife."

¹⁸Bathsheba answered, "Very well, I will speak to the king on your behalf." ¹⁹So Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him in behalf of Adonijah.

The king rose to meet her and bowed to her. Then he sat down on his throne while another throne was provided for the mother of the king who sat at his right. ²⁰She said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." "Ask me, for I will not refuse you," replied the king. ²¹She went on, "Permit Abishag the Shunammite to become the wife of Adonijah your brother." ²²King Solomon responded to his mother, "Why do you ask for Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask also the kingdom for him! For my brother is older than I and Abiathar the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah are for him."^j ²³Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, "So may God do to me and even more, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against himself. ²⁴Now, then, as the LORD lives, who has confirmed me and made me to sit upon the throne of David my father and who has made me a house, as He promised, Adonijah shall be put to death today." ²⁵Thus King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, who struck him so that he died. ²⁶To Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to your property at Anathoth. You deserve to die, but I will not now put you to death because you bore the ark of the LORD God before my father David and because you endured all the afflictions my father suffered." ²⁷Solomon also removed Abiathar from the priesthood of the LORD, to confirm the word of the LORD spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

²⁸When the report reached Joab — for Joab had supported Adonijah, though he had not supported Absalom — Joab fled to the tabernacle^k of the LORD and took hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹When King Solomon was informed that Joab had fled to the tabernacle of the LORD and was there at the altar, Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, strike him down." ³⁰So Benaiah went to the tent of the LORD and said to him, "Thus has the king said, 'Come forth.'" He replied, "No; here I shall die." Then Benaiah brought word to the king, "Thus Joab spoke and thus he replied to me." ³¹The king responded, "Do as he said. Strike him down and bury him, so that you may remove from me and from the house of my father the blood which Joab shed without cause. ³²The LORD will cause his bloody deeds to return upon his own head because he struck down two men more righteous and noble than he and murdered them without my father David knowing about it: Abner the son of Ner, the captain of the army of Israel and Amasa the son of Jether, the captain of the army of Judah."

³³Now may their blood return upon the head of Joab and upon the head of his descendants forever, and may the peace of the LORD be forever on David, his descendants, his house, and his throne." ³⁴So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and slew him. And he was buried in his own house in the desert. ³⁵Then the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in charge of the army in his place; and Zadok the priest he appointed to take the place of Abiathar.

³⁶Next the king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Build for yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, but you must not go away anywhere; ³⁷for the day you go out and cross the brook Kidron, be assured that you shall certainly die; your blood shall be on your own head." ³⁸Shimei replied to the king, "The offer is good. Your

^j) Because of Abishag's relation to David, she could now be married only to a king.

^k) The temple not yet being built.

^l) Joab had murdered both men to keep the generalship for himself. Contrary to David's explicit orders, he had also slain Absalom.

servant will do as my master the king has ordered." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days.

³⁹It happened three years later that two of Shimei's servants ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath. When Shimei was informed, "Your servants are in Gath," ⁴⁰he arose, saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to look for his servants. So Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath. ⁴¹When Solomon was informed that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned, ⁴²the king summoned Shimei and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD and warn you thus, 'Be assured that on the day you depart or go anywhere, you shall certainly die? And you said to me, 'The offer is good; I have heard it.' ⁴³Now why did you not keep the oath of the LORD and the command which I laid upon you?" ⁴⁴The king said further to Shimei, "You are aware of all the evil which you knowingly did to David my father; may the LORD return your wickedness upon your own head; ⁴⁵but may King Solomon be blessed and the throne of David established before the LORD forever." ⁴⁶Then the king gave orders to Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, who went out and struck him down so that he died.^m So the kingdom was firmly established by the hand of Solomon.

3 SOLOMON ENTERED INTO A MARRIAGE alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, took the daughter of Pharaoh, and brought her to David's city until he could finish the construction of his house, the house of the LORD, and the wall around Jerusalem. ²But the people sacrificed on the high places because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD. ³Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father; only he continued sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. ⁴The king went to Gibeon

to sacrifice there — for it was a great high place; a thousand burnt offerings Solomon offered upon that altar. ⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said: Ask what I shall give you.

⁶Solomon replied, "Thou wert very kind to Thy servant David my father, when he walked before Thee in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee. Thou hast kept for him this great kindness by providing for him a son to occupy his throne this day. ⁷Now, O LORD my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king in place of David my father though I am a mere ladⁿ and do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people whom Thou hast chosen, a great people which cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹So give Thy servant an observant mind to judge Thy people rightly and to distinguish between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?"

¹⁰The request which Solomon made was pleasing in the sight of the LORD. ¹¹God said to him: Because you have made this request and have not requested for yourself long life, or riches, or the life of your enemies, but have requested for yourself understanding to recognize justice, ¹²I have done according to your word; I have given you a wise and perceptive mind, so that there has been no one before like you nor shall one like you arise after you. ¹³Moreover, that which you did not request I have given you, both riches and honor, so that throughout your days there shall be no king like you.^o ¹⁴If you walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commands, as David your father did, I will extend your days.

¹⁵When Solomon awoke, see, it was a dream! Then he came to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD and offered burnt offerings,

m) Benaiah—The LORD has built—a Levite, was among David's famous heroes. He killed a lion single-handed and with only a staff took a spear away from an Egyptian giant and killed him. He had captured David's bodyguard, at whose head he had escorted Solomon to his throne and now he was made commander-in-chief. n) I.e., in comparison with David.

e) Possessed of God-given wisdom, he should be able to handle wealth to God's glory.

made peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

¹⁶Then two women of ill repute^p came to the king and stood before him.

¹⁷The one woman said, "Oh, my master, I and this woman live in the same house, and I had a child while with her in the house. ¹⁸The third day after I had my child, this woman also had a child. We were together, and no one else was with us in the house; it was just we two in the house. ¹⁹The son of this woman died at night because she lay on it; ²⁰so she got up in the middle of the night, took my son from my side and, while your maid-servant was sleeping, laid him in her bosom and placed her dead son in my bosom. ²¹In the morning when I arose to nurse my son, look, he was dead! But when I could look at him closely in the morning, see, he was not my son whom I had borne."

²²The other woman retorted, "Not so; my son is the living one and yours is the dead one." But the first woman affirmed, "Untrue; your son is the dead one and mine the living one." So they argued before the king. ²³The king remarked, "This woman asserts, 'This living one is my son; your son is dead'; and that one replies, 'Not so; yours is the dead son and mine the living son.'"

²⁴Then he ordered, "Get me a sword." When they brought the sword before the king, ²⁵the king said, "Cut the living child in two and give half to the one and half to the other." ²⁶Then the woman whose was the living son said to the king — for her motherly compassion went out to her son — "Oh, my master, give her the living child; only do not kill him." But the other woman retorted, "He shall be neither mine nor yours! Cut him in two!" ²⁷The king replied, "Give the first woman the living child — you must not kill him — for she is his mother."^q ²⁸When all Israel heard about the decision the king had rendered, they respected the king be-

cause they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

4 KING SOLOMON WAS KING OVER all Israel. ²These were his leading men: Azariah the son of Zadok was the priest;^r ³Elihoreph and Abijah the sons of Shisha were scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was the recorder; ⁴Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was in charge of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; ⁵Azariah the son of Nathan was in charge of the officials; Zabud the son of Nathan was a priest and a friend of the king; ⁶Ahishar was in charge of the house; and Adoniram the son of Abda was in charge of conscript labor.

⁷Solomon also had twelve overseers in charge of all Israel,^s who supplied food for the king and his household, each one supplying food for one month in the year. ⁸These are their names: the son of Hur, in Mount Ephraim; ⁹the son of Deker, in Makaz, in Shaalbim, in Bethshemesh, and in Elonbeth-hanan; ¹⁰the son of Heshed, in Aruboth (he had Socoh and all the territory of Hephher); ¹¹the son of Abinadab, in all the highlands of Dor (Taphath, Solomon's daughter, was his wife);^t ¹²Baana the son of Ahilud in Taanach, Megiddo, and in all Bethshean beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Bethshean to Abel-Meholah, as far as the other side of Jokmeam; ¹³the son of Geber, in Ramoth-Gilead (he had the tent villages of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead and the territory of Argob which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars); ¹⁴Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; ¹⁵Ahimaaaz, in Naphtali and he married Basemath, Solomon's daughter. ¹⁶Baana the son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth; ¹⁷Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar; ¹⁸Shimei the son of Ela, in Benjamin; ¹⁹Geber the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the land of Sihon king of the

p) We would consider them "promiscuous." Rarely do modern prostitutes bear children.

q) Such a judgment indicates more than knowledge; it reveals feeling, intelligence and insight into a mother's heart. r) The high priest. s) Obviously one for each tribe.

t) Solomon was hardly past 20 when he took the throne. This statement probably names Abinadab's son as Taphath's future husband. She is mentioned only here.

Amorites and of Og king of Bashan; and one overseer was in the land.^u
²⁰Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea; they ate, drank and enjoyed life.^v

²¹Solomon was ruler over all the kingdoms from the River^w to the land of the Philistines, to the border of Egypt. They paid tribute and served Solomon as long as he lived. ²²Solomon's food supply for one day consisted of 195 bushels of fine flour, 390 bushels of meal, ²³10 fat cattle, 20 pasture-fed cattle, 100 sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowls. ²⁴For he had dominion over everything on this side of the River, from Tiphseh to Gaza, and over all the kings this side of the River; and he was at peace on all sides, ²⁵so that Judah and Israel lived in security — each under his own vine and under his own fig tree — from Dan to Beer-sheba, so long as Solomon lived.

²⁶Solomon also had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12,000 horsemen.^x ²⁷Those overseers, each in his month, supplied food for King Solomon and all who came to the table of King Solomon; they did not overlook a thing. ²⁸They brought barley and straw to the appointed place for the horses and the camels, each according to his allotment.

²⁹God gave Solomon wisdom, very deep understanding, and range of mind as broad as the sand on the seashore, ³⁰so that the wisdom of Solomon was superior to the wisdom of the Easterners and to all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹He was wiser than all other men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Chalcol, and Darda sons of Mahol;^y and his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. ³²He also was the originator of 3,000 proverbs and the author of 1,005 songs. ³³He discoursed on trees, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop which grows out of the city wall,

and he talked on beasts, birds, reptiles, and fish.^z ³⁴People from every nation, whose kings had heard about his wisdom, came to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.

5 WHEN HIRAM KING OF TYRE heard that they had anointed Solomon king in place of his father, he sent his servants to Solomon, because he had always been friendly with David. ²Then Solomon sent this message to Hiram, ³"You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which occupied him until the LORD put them^a under the soles of his feet. ⁴But now the LORD my God has given me rest all around; there is neither adversary nor opposition. ⁵So I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD revealed to David my father, saying: Your son, whom I am putting on the throne after you, he shall build the house for My name. ⁶Now then, give the order that cedars from Lebanon be cut for me; my servants shall work with your servants, and I will pay your servants whatever wages you ask, for you know that there is not a single person among us who can cut timber like the Sidonians."

⁷When Hiram received the message of Solomon, he was greatly delighted and said, "Blessed be the LORD today who has given to David a wise son to have charge of this great people." ⁸Hiram then sent this message to Solomon, "I have received your communication to me. I am ready to comply with your request for cedar and cypress lumber. ⁹My servants will bring them down from Lebanon to the sea, where I shall have them made into floats to be conveyed by sea to the place you designate where I will have them taken apart so that you can take them up.

u) In charge of all the officials.

v) Not intimating that the people thought of nothing else, but that, enjoying divine blessing, they were happy and content. w) So II Chr. 9:26, the Euphrates.

x) A dangerous accumulation [Deut. 17:16].

y) Ethan composed Ps. 89; Heman composed Ps. 88. They, with Chalcol and Darda, also Zimri, are mentioned in I Chron. 2:6, as five famous brothers of the tribe of Judah.

z) His writings required much thought and experience, and his discourses became possible as he grew intimate with people and with nature. Solomon heartily applied God's endowments.

a) His enemies.

You may pay me by supplying food for my household." ¹⁰So Hiram gave Solomon all the cedar and cypress wood he wanted. ¹¹And Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 sacks of wheat for food for his household and 20,000 barrels^a of pure oil. This was what Solomon gave to Hiram annually. ¹²The LORD gave Solomon wisdom as He had promised him, and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, for both of them had agreed to a treaty.

¹³Then King Solomon raised a battalion of conscript laborers from all Israel. It consisted of 30,000 men: 1410,000 a month he sent by turns to Lebanon; one month they worked in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram had charge of the conscript laborers. ¹⁵Solomon also had 70,000 transporters and 80,000 stonemasons in the mountains. ¹⁶Besides Solomon's chief overseers, who had charge of the work, there were 3,300 foremen directing the people who did the work. ¹⁷The king gave orders that large, costly stones be quarried to lay the foundation of the house with squared stone. ¹⁸Thus the builders of Solomon, the builders of Hiram, and the Gebalites^b quarried the stone and prepared both timber and stone for the construction of the house.

April-May 966 B.C.

6 IN THE 480TH YEAR AFTER THE children of Israel left the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv^c (which is the second month), he built the house of the LORD. ²The house which King Solomon built for the LORD was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. ³The porch in front of the temple itself was 30 feet long, as was the width of the house, and its width was 15 feet in front of the house. ⁴He made windows with narrow frameworks for the house. ⁵Against the wall of the house he built side rooms all around — all around the walls both of the temple and the inner

room^d and he made cells all around. ⁶The lowest side rooms were 7½ feet wide, the middle 9 feet wide, and the third 10½ feet wide, for he made recesses all around the outside of the house so that (the girders) should not be laid in the walls of the house.

⁷The house was built of stones dressed at the quarry; there was no sound of hammer, chisel, or any other iron tool while the house was being built. ⁸The door of the lowest side rooms was on the right side of the house and by winding steps one could go up to the middle side chambers and from the middle to the third. ⁹So he built the house and completed it; he paneled the house, beams, and pillars, with cedar. ¹⁰He made the side rooms of the house 7½ feet high, and they were fastened to the house with cedar lumber.

¹¹The word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: ¹²About this house which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, carry out My judgments, and observe all My commandments, I will fulfill My promise concerning you which I made to David your father. ¹³And I will abide with the children of Israel and will never leave My people Israel.

¹⁴So Solomon brought the house to completion. ¹⁵The inside walls of the house he covered with cedar boards from the floor to the rafters of the ceiling — he overlaid the inside with wood and covered the floor of the house with cypress boards. ¹⁶At the back of the house he enclosed a space of about 30 feet with cedar boards from the floor to the rafters and made for himself inside the house an inner room, a sanctuary. ¹⁷The house, the part of the temple before it,^e was 60 feet long. ¹⁸The cedar covering the inside of the house was decorated with designs of rosebuds and open flowers; only the cedar, and no stone, was visible. ¹⁹He then prepared a sanctuary in the innermost part of the house for the

a) Following the Septuagint.

b) From Gebal, 13 miles north of Beirut, on the coast, the present Byblos.

c) Corresponding approximately to May, when he began to build.

d) The Holy of Holies, second room of the sanctuary.

e) The first room of the sanctuary, usually called "the holy place."

ark of the covenant of the LORD. ²⁰In front of the sanctuary, which was 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 30 feet high and which he overlaid with solid gold, he made^f an altar of cedar. ²¹So Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with solid gold and put golden chains across in front of the sanctuary which he also overlaid with gold. ²²He completely overlaid the whole house with gold, as well as the entire altar of the sanctuary.

²³For the sanctuary^g he made two cherubim of olivewood, 15 feet high; ²⁴each wing of the one cherub was 7½ feet long, so that the distance from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other wing was 15 feet. ²⁵The other cherub also was 15 feet — both cherubim were of the same size and shape. ²⁶The height of one cherub was 15 feet, as was that of the other. ²⁷He put the cherubim in the inner room of the house, the wings of the cherubim being spread out so that the wing of one touched one wall and the wing of the other touched the other wall, while their wings touched each other in the center of the house. ²⁸The cherubim he also overlaid with gold.

²⁹The inside and outside walls of the house he decorated with engraved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, ³⁰and the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, inside and outside. ³¹For the entrance of the holy place he made double doors of olivewood, the lintel and the doorposts forming five sides and angles. ³²Both doors of olivewood he decorated with cherubic figures, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; the cherubim and palm trees he overlaid with beaten gold. ³³Then he made square doorposts of olivewood for the entrance to the temple, ³⁴and two doors of cypress wood, the two leaves of the one door folded, as did those of the other door. ³⁵He decorated them with

cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers and overlaid them with gold, evenly spread over the engraved work. ³⁶The inner court he constructed with three courses of dressed stones and one course of cedar beams. ³⁷The foundation of the house of the LORD was laid in the fourth year,^h in the month of Ziv, ³⁸and in the eleventh year, in Bul, the eighth month, the house was completed in every detail according to plan.ⁱ So he built it in seven years.

7 BUT IT TOOK SOLOMON 13 YEARS to complete the building of his own house.^j His house, constructed of Lebanese lumber, was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high, and rested upon four rows of cedar pillars with cedar rafters upon the pillars. ³It was covered with cedar above the rafters upon the 45 pillars, 15 to a row. ⁴There were three rows of window frames, with window facing window for the three rows; ⁵and all the doors and windows had square frames, window over against window for the three rows. ⁶He made a vestibule of pillars, 75 feet long and 45 feet wide with a porch in front of them and pillars and cornice in front. ⁷He constructed a throne porch, a porch of judgment, where he might pronounce decisions,^k and it was panelled with cedar from floor to roof. ⁸The house in which he was to live was in a court other than that of the porch of judgment but of the same workmanship; he also made a house like this porch for Pharaoh's daughter whom Solomon had married.

⁹All these buildings were constructed, from the foundation to the coping and from the outside to the great court, of expensive stones, cut according to measure and sawed on both sides. ¹⁰Even the foundation was made of expensive stones, large stones, stones of 15 feet and stones of 12 feet. ¹¹Above them lay expensive stones, cut

f) The altar for incense, outside the veil of the Holy of Holies and thus standing in the holy place, but belonging to the Holy of Holies.

g) The Holy of Holies; the cherubim above the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant.

h) Of Solomon's reign.

i) A reproduction but not a replica of the tabernacle. Essentially similar form and furniture but the framework of larger dimensions. j) Fewer workers or more elaborate construction.

k) The king was final judge, the "Supreme Court."

according to measure, in addition to cedar. ¹²The great court had three courses of dressed stone and a series of cedar rafters just as the inner court of the house of the LORD and the porch of the house.

¹³Then King Solomon had Hiram brought from Tyre.¹ ¹⁴He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali; his father had been a Tyrian bronze worker. He was intelligent, talented, and skilled in all types of bronze work. He came to King Solomon and did all his work. ¹⁵He cast two bronze pillars; the one was 27 feet high with a circumference of 18 feet and the other like it. ¹⁶Then he made two capitals of molten bronze for the top of the pillars, each 7½ feet high; ¹⁷also trelliswork designs — festoons and chainwork — for the capitals on top of the pillars, seven for each capital. ¹⁸Besides, he made the pomegranates,^m two rows around the one trelliswork to cover the capitals on top of the pillars; he made the same for the other capital. ¹⁹The capitals on top of the pillars in the porch were of lily design, six feet. ²⁰Moreover, the capitals on the two pillars above the adjacent circular projection on the trelliswork side had 200 pomegranates in rows around both capitals. ²¹Then he set up the pillars at the porch of the temple; when he set up the right pillar he called it Jachin,ⁿ and when he had set up the left pillar he called it Boaz.^o ²²On top of the pillars was a lily design. And so work on the pillars was finished.

²³Next he made the molten sea, which was 15 feet from brim to brim, perfectly round, 7½ feet high and 45 feet in circumference. ²⁴Rosebud decorations under the brim surrounding it extended around it, ten in a cubit,^p two rows of the rosebud decorations having been cast in the metal. ²⁵It rested on twelve oxen, three facing northward, three facing westward, three facing southward, and three facing eastward; the sea was mounted upon them, their back parts being

turned inward. ²⁶It was four inches thick; its brim was made like that of a goblet, like a lily blossom, and its capacity was 18,000 gallons. ²⁷Then he made ten bronze bases; each base was six feet long, six feet wide, and four and a half feet high.

²⁸This is the way the bases were constructed; they had borders; there were borders between the frames ²⁹and on the borders between the bases were lions, oxen, and cherubim, and on the frames the same; above and below the lions and oxen were punchwork rosettes. ³⁰Each base had four bronze wheels and bronze axles and the four corners had supports; the supports under the eaves were of cast metal with rosettes on the side of each. ³¹Its mouth inside the supports and up was a foot and a half; it was round like the work of a pedestal for two and a half feet. Also upon its mouth were engravings and its borders were square, not round. ³²The four wheels were under the borders, while the stays of the wheels were on the base. The height of a wheel was about two feet. ³³The wheels were made like chariot wheels; their stays, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. ³⁴There were four supports running to the far corners of each base, the support being part of the base. ³⁵At the top of the base was a round object nine inches high and on the top of the base its stays, the borders being part of the base. ³⁶On the plain spaces of the stays and upon the borders, he engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees and around the space still left rosettes. ³⁷He made the ten bases in the same way; they were all identical in cast, size, and shape. ³⁸He made ten bronze lavers, each with a capacity of 360 gallons and each measuring six feet; one laver was placed on each of the ten bases. ³⁹He then placed five of the bases on the right side of the house and five on the left side, and the sea he placed on the right side of the house to the east, facing the south.

1) Not to be confused with King Hiram. His mother was a Hebrew.

m) Imitations in stone as those on the high priest's robe were of cloth.

n) "He establishes." o) "In Him is strength." p) A foot and a half.

⁴⁰Hiram also made the lavers, the shovels, and the bowls. So Hiram finished all the work which he did for King Solomon for the house of the LORD: ⁴¹the two pillars, the two bowl-like capitals on top of both pillars, the two trellisworks covering the two bowl-like capitals on top of the pillars, ⁴²the 400 pomegranates for the two trellisworks, two rows of pomegranates for each trelliswork, to cover both bowl-like capitals on top of the pillars, ⁴³the ten bases, and the ten lavers upon the bases, ⁴⁴and the one sea and the twelve oxen under the sea. ⁴⁵The pots, the shovels, and the basins, and all these articles which Hiram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD were made of polished bronze. ⁴⁶He cast them in the clay molds in the Jordan district between Succoth and Zarethan.

⁴⁷Solomon left (unweighed) all the articles; the weight of the bronze could not be ascertained because it was past counting. ⁴⁸So Solomon made all the articles for the LORD's house; the altar was made of gold and so was the table of showbread.

⁴⁹The lampstands,^a five to the right and five to the left of the sanctuary, were made of solid gold; the blossoms, the lights, and the tongs also were made of gold. ⁵⁰The goblets, the snuffers, the bowls, the pans, the censers were made of pure gold; the hinges of the doors of the inside house, the Holy of Holies, and those of the doors of the house, the temple, were also made of gold. ⁵¹When all the work which King Solomon did on the house of the LORD was finished, he brought the dedicated things of David his father — the gold, the silver, and other articles — and deposited them in the treasures of the LORD's house.

⁵⁵⁹ B.C.

8 THEN SOLOMON BROUGHT TOGETHER the elders of Israel — all the heads of the tribes, all the princes of the clans of the children of Israel —

to King Solomon at Jerusalem, to transfer the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David, which is Zion. ²All the men of Israel came together to King Solomon for the feast in the month of Ethanim which is the seventh month.^r ³All the elders of Israel came and the priests took up the ark. ⁴So they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tent of meeting and all the sacred articles in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. ⁵King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel, assembled to him for the occasion, were with him in front of the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, so many they could not be numbered or counted. ⁶The priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place in the sanctuary of the house, in the Holy of Holies, under the wings of the cherubim; ⁷for the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark and formed a canopy over the ark with its carrying poles. ⁸The carrying poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the holy place in front of the sanctuary, though they could not be seen from the outside.^s They are there to this day. ⁹Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰When the priests emerged from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, ¹¹so that the priests were unable to keep on ministering to the LORD because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house.

¹²Solomon said, "The LORD said: He dwells in a heavy cloud. ¹³I have indeed built a lofty abode for Thee; a house for Thee to dwell in forever."

¹⁴Then Solomon turned around and blessed the whole congregation of Israel, while the whole congregation of Israel stood. ¹⁵He said, "Blessed be the

q) Mention of candlesticks in a Bible translation is unfortunate; there were no candles in Bible times and had there been, they would have been useless for God's house because oil in a bowl supplied the fuel for illumination, conveyed from the central bowl with wicks through golden pipes. r) Corresponding to October, in the rainy season.

s) They came through from the Holy of Holies, under the veil.

LORD God of Israel, who with His own mouth spoke to my father David and with His own hand has fulfilled it, saying: ¹⁶At the time I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I did not choose a city in any of the tribes of Israel where a house for My name should be built, but I chose David to have charge of My people Israel.¹⁷ When David my father was minded to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel, ¹⁸the LORD said to David my father: Although you were minded to build a house for My name — and you did well to be so minded — ¹⁹indeed you shall not build the house; but your son who comes from your loins shall build the house for My name. ²⁰Now the LORD has fulfilled the promise which He made; I have been elevated in the place of David my father and occupy the throne of Israel, as the LORD said. So I have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel, ²¹and I have made here a place for the ark wherein is the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers when He brought them up out of the land of Egypt."

²²Solomon stood in front of the altar of the LORD before the whole congregation of Israel and, spreading out his hands toward heaven, ²³said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven above or in the earth beneath, who loyally observes the covenant with Thy servants when they walk before Thee with perfect devotion. ²⁴Thou hast kept Thy promise to David my father; with Thy mouth Thou hast spoken, and with Thy hand Thou hast fulfilled as it appears today. ²⁵Now, O LORD, God of Israel, fulfill for Thy servant David my father what Thou didst promise him saying: You shall never lack before Me an occupant for the throne of Israel, provided, indeed, that your sons pay attention to their ways so as to walk before Me as you did. ²⁶Now, therefore, O God of Israel, confirm Thy word

which Thou gavest to Thy servant David my father.

²⁷"But can God really dwell upon the earth? Behold, the heavens cannot contain Thee, how much less this house which I have constructed."

²⁸Listen now, to the prayer and supplication of Thy servant, O LORD God, so that Thou mayest be responsive to the cry and prayer which Thy servant is uttering today in Thy presence; ²⁹that Thine eyes may be open night and day toward this house concerning which Thou hast said: My name shall be there, to hear the prayer Thy servant is offering toward this house. ³⁰Give ear, therefore, to the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel, which they are making toward this place, and when Thou hearest it in Thy dwelling place in heaven, give ear and forgive.

³¹"When a man wrongs his neighbor, is made to swear an oath, and comes and swears before Thine altar in this house, ³²then hear Thou in heaven and act to judge Thy servants; sentencing the wrongdoer so as to punish him for his wrong and acquitting the righteous because of his innocence.

³³"When Thy people Israel are routed before the enemy because they have sinned against Thee and they return to Thee, confess Thy name, pray, and implore Thy favor in this house. ³⁴then hear Thou in heaven, forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and allow them to return to the land which Thou gavest to their fathers.

³⁵"When heaven is sealed up so that it does not rain because they have sinned against Thee, and they pray toward this place, confess Thy name, and turn from their sin when Thou dost discipline them, ³⁶then hear Thou in heaven, forgive the sin of Thy servants, Thy people Israel — for Thou art instructing them in the good way which they are to go — and send rain upon the land which Thou gavest Thy people as an inheritance.

t) God prefers that we voluntarily honor Him.

u) The thought of God's omnipresence, of His infinity is not new. That He does make His presence felt where His people gather remains a never-ending wonder. Also that He so willingly dwells with a worshipping household.

37"When there is a famine in the land, when there is pestilence, when there is blight, mildew, locust, or grasshopper; when their enemy besieges them in any of their cities; when there is any plague or disease, ³⁸and any prayer or supplication is made by any one of all Thy people Israel who recognizes what his trouble is and stretches out his hands toward this place, ³⁹then hear Thou in heaven, Thy dwelling place, forgive, and act to reward each one, whose mind Thou knowest, in accordance with his conduct — for Thou alone knowest the mind of all men — ⁴⁰in order that they may revere Thee all the days that they live in the land which Thou gavest our fathers."

⁴¹"The foreigner" too, who is not one of Thy people Israel, but comes from a faraway land for Thy name's sake — ⁴²for they will hear of Thy great name, Thy mighty hand, and Thine outstretched arm — when he shall come to pray at this house, ⁴³hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place and do everything the foreigner requests of Thee, so that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, revere Thee as Thy people Israel do, and know that Thou hast accepted this house which I have built.

⁴⁴"Whenever Thy people go out to fight their enemy, wherever Thou mayest send them, and they pray to the LORD toward the city Thou hast chosen and the house I built to Thy name, ⁴⁵then hear Thou in heaven their prayer and supplication and support their cause. ⁴⁶When they sin against Thee — for there is no one who does not sin — and in Thy wrath Thou dost abandon them to the enemy, so that their captors take them away as prisoners into a foreign land, near or far, ⁴⁷and then they think it over in the land where they have been taken as prisoners, repent, and implore Thy favor in the land of their captors, saying, 'We have sinned, done wrong, and

transgressed,' ⁴⁸repenting with all their heart and soul in the land of their captors, where they took them, and pray to Thee toward their land which Thou gavest their fathers, the city Thou hast chosen and the house which I have built to Thy name, ⁴⁹then hear Thou their prayer and supplication in heaven, Thy dwelling place, support their cause, ⁵⁰forgive all the transgressions of Thy people who have sinned and transgressed against Thee, and grant them compassion before their captors so that they may show mercy toward them — ⁵¹for they are Thy people, Thy heritage, whom Thou hast brought out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace.

⁵²"May Thine eyes^x be open to the supplication of Thy servant and to the supplication of Thy people Israel so as to listen to them whenever they call to Thee. ⁵³For Thou didst set them apart from all the peoples of the earth as Thy heritage, as Thou didst say through Moses Thy servant when Thou didst bring our fathers from Egypt, O LORD GOD."

⁵⁴When Solomon had finished all this prayer and supplication, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven, ⁵⁵and, standing, he blessed the whole congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, ⁵⁶"Blessed be the LORD who has given rest to His people Israel in accordance with His word; not a single detail of His good words spoken through Moses His servant has failed. ⁵⁷May the LORD our God be with us as He was with our fathers; may He neither forsake us nor abandon us, ⁵⁸but turn our hearts toward Himself, that we may walk in His ways and observe His commandments, His statutes, and judgments which He prescribed for our fathers. ⁵⁹May these words of mine with which I have prayed before the LORD be near to the LORD our God, night and day, to maintain the cause of His servant and of His people Israel in accordance with

v) Solomon is a true leader in prayer for he expresses the hopes and the needs of his people. As a nation is worshiping with him, this is a national prayer.

w) Not only the stranger living in the land, but also the one coming from afar to worship. A considerate prayer has to become missionary; it includes outsiders.

x) Gk. ears.

daily needs, ⁶⁰so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God, for there is no other.^y ⁶¹May you too be of one mind with the LORD our God so as to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments as today."

⁶²Then the king together with all Israel offered sacrifices to the LORD. ⁶³Solomon offered in peace offerings to the LORD 22,000 cattle^z and 120,000 of the flocks, when the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. ⁶⁴At that time the king had set apart the center of the court before the house of the LORD where he offered the burnt offering, the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offering, because the bronze altar before the LORD was too small to hold the burnt offering, the meal offering and the fat of the peace offering.

⁶⁵So Solomon together with all Israel (a great congregation assembled from the Hamath pass to the Brook of Egypt) held a feast before the LORD our God^a for seven days and seven more days. ⁶⁶On the eighth day,^b when he dismissed them, they blessed the king. Then they went to their tents^c rejoicing and happy over all the goodness of the LORD to David His servant and Israel His people.

9 WHEN SOLOMON HAD COMPLETED the building of the house of the LORD and the palace of the king, and all the other things Solomon had wanted to construct, ²the LORD appeared to Solomon again as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³The LORD said to him: I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built by placing My name there forever; My eyes and My heart shall be there con-

tinually. ⁴As for you, if you will walk before Me as David your father walked, with absolute integrity of heart, doing everything I command you, and keeping My statutes and judgments, ⁵then I will make secure the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying: There shall never fail you an occupant for the throne of Israel.

⁶If, however, you or your sons turn away from Me and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have placed before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷then I will cut off Israel from the land I gave them, and the house I consecrated to My name I will put out of My sight; Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all the peoples. ⁸This house shall become a ruin,^d and every one passing by shall whistle in astonishment and exclaim, "Why has the LORD so treated this land and this house?" ⁹And they will reply, "Because they forsook the LORD their God who brought their fathers from the land of Egypt; they embraced other gods and worshiped and served them; that is why the LORD brought all this misfortune upon them."^e

950 B.C.

¹⁰At the end of twenty years, during which time Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the house of the king, ¹¹since Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber, and with as much gold as he wanted, King Solomon transferred twenty cities in Galilee to Hiram.^f ¹²When Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities Solomon had transferred to him, he was displeased with them ¹³and complained, "What kind of towns are these which you have given me, my brother?" So

y) Beginning with the call of Abraham [Gen. 12:3], invariably God makes clear that He purposes those whom He blesses to be a blessing.

z) Oxen as we think of them are mutilated animals; therefore not acceptable for sacrifice.

a) Solomon succeeded in sharing with his people a sense of godly fellowship, so they were of one mind toward God and toward one another. They could think and speak of "our God."

b) The day after the second week.

c) Then, to their homes. And they returned there a different, a better people, for whom worshiping God had grown more natural and satisfying. No wonder they "blessed the king."

d) See Mic. 3:12 and Jer. 26:18.

e) God never ceases instruction, because we never learn more than we need. The Bible is a textbook that requires continued, repeated reading and rethinking.

f) Illegally, delivering Hebrews to pagans, contrary to God's program.

they call them the territory of Cabul^g to this day. ¹⁴Hiram had paid the king 3,500,000 dollars in gold for them.^h

¹⁵Now this is the way King Solomon conscripted the labor corps to build the house of the LORD, his house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer — ¹⁶Pharaoh king of Egypt had come up and captured Gezer, burned it down, and killed the Canaanite population of the city; then he gave it as a dowry to his daughter, the wife of Solomon. ¹⁷So Solomon built Gezer, Lower Beth-horon, ¹⁸Baalath, Tamar in the desert land, ¹⁹all of Solomon's store-cities, the chariot-cities, the house-cities and whatever other structures he desired in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his dominion. ²⁰Solomon conscripted his labor corps, as they do now, from all the people who survived from the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites who were not Israelites — ²¹they were the descendants of those whom the Israelites were unable to exterminate. ²²But Solomon never made slaves of Israelites; they were his warriors, his courtiers, his officers, his captains, his chariot officers, and his cavalry officers. ²³These were the chief officials who supervised Solomon's work — 550 of them — who directed the people who did the work.

²⁴As soon as Pharaoh's daughter had come up from David's city to her house, which he had built for her, he built the Millo.ⁱ

²⁵Three times annually Solomon used to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar he had made for the LORD; he also used to burn incense with it before the LORD. So he finished the house.

²⁶King Solomon also built a fleet at Ezion-geber near Eloth^k on the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom. ²⁷Hiram sent his servants, skilled sailors who knew the sea, to man the fleet

with the servants of Solomon. ²⁸They went to Ophir where they procured 12,350,000 dollars worth of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

10 WHEN THE QUEEN OF SHEBA heard about the fame of Solomon in relation to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with perplexing questions. ²She came to Jerusalem with an immense train of camels bearing spices, piles of gold and precious stones. As soon as she came to Solomon, she disclosed to him everything that was on her mind. ³Solomon, in turn, answered all her questions. Nothing was obscure to the king which he could not explain to her.

⁴When the queen of Sheba^l grew fully aware of all the wisdom of Solomon, the house he had built, ⁵the food of his table, the seating of his courtiers, the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he used to offer in the house of the LORD, she was breathless. ⁶She said to the king, "The report about your understanding and wisdom that I heard in my land was true; ⁷I did not believe it until I came and my own eyes saw it. Truly the half has not been told me; your wisdom and wealth exceed the report I heard. ⁸Fortunate are your men; fortunate these courtiers of yours who are continually present with you, hearing your wisdom. ⁹Blessed be the LORD your God who was pleased to give you the throne of Israel. Because the LORD loved Israel eternally, He made you king to rule justly and righteously." ¹⁰Then she presented to the king 3,500,000 dollars in gold, a huge quantity of spices and precious stones — never again did such an amount of spices come in as that which the queen of Sheba presented to King Solomon.

¹¹The ships of Hiram that transported gold from Ophir also brought a very great quantity of almu^m wood^m

g) Unproductive land.

h) What he had contributed toward Solomon's buildings. i) Uninhabited country.

j) A fortress connected with Jerusalem, probably to control the remaining Jebusites; also to protect the city against outside enemies. k) Meaning terebinth; now Aqabah.

l) A southwestern Arabian people, possibly descended from Abraham through Jokshan, by Keturah [Gen. 25:1-3].

m) Called almu wood [II Chron. 9:10]; resembling fig tree wood but whiter and more shiny; also fragrant enough for incense.

and precious stones.¹² The king used the almag wood to make pillars for the house of the LORD and the house of the king, and lyres and harps for the singers—such almag wood has not come in nor been seen to this day.¹³ In return, King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted or asked for, aside from what he gave her from the royal bounty.¹⁴ Then she, together with her courtiers, returned to her country.

¹⁴Solomon received about 20,000,000 dollars in gold annually¹⁵ besides what came in from mercantile taxes and the profits from trade with the Arabian kings and the governors of the land.¹⁶ Solomon also made 200 bucklers of hammered gold, each buckler containing 6000 dollars worth of gold,¹⁷ and 300 shields of hammered gold, each shield containing 1800 dollars worth of gold. The king put them into the house of the forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸The king made a large ivory throne which he overlaid with pure gold.¹⁹ The throne had six steps, and on the top rear of the throne was a rounded head; on each side of the seat were arms and beside them stood two lions.²⁰ Twelve lions stood there, one on either end of each of the six steps. Nothing like it was made in any other kingdom.²¹ All of King Solomon's drinking utensils were made of gold, and all the utensils of the house of the forest of Lebanon were made of solid gold; none were made of silver because silver was not considered of value in the days of Solomon.²² For the king's Tarshish fleet was in partnership with Hiram's fleet; once every three years the Tarshish fleet brought gold, silver, ivory, apes, and baboons.

²³So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom.²⁴ The whole world consulted Solomon to benefit from the wisdom with which God had endowed him.²⁵ They brought, each one, his tribute—utensils of silver, vessels of gold, robes,

spices, horses, and mules—a fixed amount each year.²⁶ Solomon also acquired chariots and horses so that he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses quartered in chariot-cities or in Jerusalem with the king.²⁷ The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem and cedar as plentiful as sycamore trees in the Shephelah.²⁸ Solomon's horses came from Egypt and Cilicia;^{*} the royal merchants brought [them] from Cilicia at the prevailing price—²⁹an Egyptian chariot for 400 dollars in silver and a horse for 100 dollars—and so they delivered them by their hand[†] to all the Hittite and Syrian kings.

11 KING SOLOMON LOVED, IN ADDITION to the daughter of Pharaoh, many foreign women, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,² from the nations concerning which the LORD had warned the Israelites: You must not cohabit with them, nor they with you, for they will certainly turn your hearts to their gods. Solomon held fast to them in love.³ He had 700 official wives and 300 concubines who perverted his mind.⁴ When Solomon became old, his wives turned his heart to other gods, so that his heart was no longer true to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.⁵ Solomon was submissive to Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and to Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites.⁶ So Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD and was not true to the LORD as David his father had been.⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom,⁸ the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain in front of Jerusalem.⁸ Thus Solomon provided for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

⁹The LORD was angry with Solomon, because his mind turned against the LORD God of Israel who had ap-

n) Oriental fashion, the recipient of gifts should do somewhat better in return.

o) These tributes came from peoples whom David had conquered.

p) Which was divinely forbidden [Deut. 17:16]. q) The foothills of Judah, westward.

r) Solomon's backsliding evidences the difference between intelligence and devotion. His head and his heart did not fully harmonize. s) See II Kings 23:13.

*) The Hebrew has "from Egypt and Keveh," the latter being interpreted as Cilicia.

†) i.e., by their agency.

peared to him twice, ¹⁰and had instructed him specifically about this thing, that he must not submit to other gods. But he did not observe the LORD's instruction. ¹¹The LORD said to Solomon: Because you did this and have not observed My covenant and My statutes which I commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹²However, I will not do it as long as you live for your father David's sake; I will tear it away from the hand of your son. ¹³Moreover, I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for my servant David's sake and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.^t

¹⁴Then the LORD confronted Solomon with an opponent, Hadad the Edomite, who was a member of the royal family of Edom. ¹⁵It happened when David was busy with Edom, and Joab the captain of the army had gone to bury the dead and cut down every male in Edom — ¹⁶for Joab and all Israel stayed there for six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom — ¹⁷that Hadad, who was just a small boy, together with some Edomite servants of his father's, fled to Egypt. ¹⁸They went from Midian to Paran and, taking with them some men from Paran, they came to Egypt to the Pharaoh of Egypt, who gave him a house, ordered provisions for him, and gave him land. ¹⁹Hadad became a favorite with the Pharaoh, so that he gave him his sister-in-law, the sister of Tahpenes the queen, as wife. ²⁰The sister of Tahpenes bore Genubath, his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. Genubath remained in the house of Pharaoh with Pharaoh's sons. ²¹When Hadad heard in Egypt that David had been laid to rest with his fathers and that Joab, the captain of the army, was dead, he said to Pharaoh, "Let me go to my country." ²²Pharaoh replied, "What are you in need of that you want to leave and go to your

country?" "Nothing," he affirmed, "just let me go."

²³God confronted him with another opponent,^u Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, Hadadezer, king of Zobah. ²⁴He then associated to himself some men, so that he became the leader of a group of raiders who, when David would kill them, went to Damascus. He remained there and became king in Damascus. ²⁵He was Israel's opponent throughout the lifetime of Solomon — doing harm as Hadad did — and he loathed Israel when he was king in Edom.

²⁶Then there was Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite from Zeredah (whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow), a servant of Solomon who rebelled against the king. ²⁷This is how he rebelled against the king. Solomon built the Millo and closed the breaks in the city of David his father. ²⁸Jeroboam was a very able man, and when Solomon saw how energetic the young man was, he made him overseer of all the conscript labor of the house of Joseph. ²⁹One time as Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him and turned him aside. He had on a new robe, and when the two of them were in the field alone, ³⁰Ahijah took the new robe he had on, tore it into twelve pieces, ³¹and said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces yourself, for thus says the LORD God of Israel: I am tearing the kingdom out of the hands of Solomon, and I will give you the ten tribes (³²but he shall retain one tribe^v for my servant David's sake and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I selected from all the tribes of Israel), ³³because he has forsaken Me, worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and has not followed My instructions to do what is right in My sight and to keep My statutes and My judgments as David his father did.

t) Children of a godly home start and continue life at a great advantage, their training and the remembrance of them before the throne of grace by their parents, which is infinitely enhanced where they cooperate.

u) Although even the appointed man had no idea that God's hand was in it, nevertheless Rezon was His agent and so was Jeroboam. v) Always including most of the Simeon tribe with Judah.

³⁴Yet I will not take the whole kingdom from him; I will make him prince throughout his lifetime for My servant David's sake, whom I chose and who observed My commandments and My statutes. ³⁵But I will take the kingdom from his son's hand and give it to you, that is, ten tribes of it. ³⁶To his son I will give one tribe in order that there may be a Davidic light before Me continually in Jerusalem, the city where I Myself chose to put My name. ³⁷And I will make you king over all that you desire—you shall be king over Israel. ³⁸If you obey what I command you, follow My instructions, and do what is right in My sight, observing My statutes and My commandments as David My servant did, I will be with you and establish your dynasty firmly as I did David's. I will give you Israel. ³⁹Because of this I will humble David's descendants, though not permanently."

⁴⁰When Solomon attempted to kill Jeroboam,^w he escaped to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, where he remained until the death of Solomon. ⁴¹The rest of the acts of Solomon, everything he did and his wisdom, are they not recorded in the book of the acts of Solomon? ⁴²Solomon was king in Jerusalem, over all Israel, for a period of forty years. ⁴³So Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father, and Rehoboam his son became king in his place. 930 B.C.

12 REHOBAM WENT TO SHECHEM where all Israel came to make him king.^x ²Now Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard about it (for he was still in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon), ³and they sent for him. When Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel arrived, they addressed Rehoboam, saying, ⁴"Your father made our yoke unbearable. Now lighten the unbearable service of your father and the heavy yoke he laid upon us, and we will serve you." ⁵He responded,

"Give me three more days; then return to me."

When the people left, ⁶Rehoboam conferred with the elders who had stood by Solomon when he was still alive, saying, "How would you advise me to reply to the people?" ⁷They advised him, "If you will be a servant to this people now and serve them and reply to them with kind words, they will always be your servants." ⁸But he rejected the advice which the elders gave him. Then he conferred with the young men who grew up with him and who stood by him. ⁹"What do you advise us to say to this people who petitioned me, 'Make lighter the yoke your father laid upon us?'" ¹⁰The young men who grew up with him replied, "Thus you must say to this people who petitioned you, 'Your father made heavy our yoke; do make it lighter for us'; you must say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins.'" ¹¹Now my father has laid upon you a heavy yoke; I will add to your yoke. My father flogged you with whips; I will flog you with scorpions."

¹²Jeroboam and all the people came back on the third day to Rehoboam as the king had directed, saying, "Return to me on the third day." ¹³The king spoke harshly to the people, disregarding the advice given him by the elders. ¹⁴He spoke to them as the young men had advised, "My father made heavy your yoke; I will add to your yoke. My father flogged you with whips; I will flog you with scorpions." ¹⁵So the king paid no attention to the people; for this turn of events was from the LORD so that His word spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat might be established.^z ¹⁶When all Israel saw that the king paid no attention to them, the people sent back this message to the king: "What share have we in David? We have no heritage in Jesse's son. To your tents, O Israel! Look now after

w) There is no evidence that Jeroboam had rebelled against Solomon when he fled to Egypt. Obviously, Solomon learned of God's choice and tried to prevent its execution. His loyalty to God had dwindled.

x) The odds seemed in favor of his being crowned, but he managed to turn them against himself. y) There is untold value in experience, especially because normally it softens personal attitudes.

z) Ahijah had spoken because such was God's program.

your own house, O David!" So Israel went to their tents.

¹⁷Rehoboam continued to be king over the Israelites who lived in the cities of Judah.^a ¹⁸When King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of conscript labor, all Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam managed to escape in his chariot to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. ²⁰When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they requested him to come to the assembly where they made him king over all Israel. Only one tribe, that of Judah, continued with the house of David.

²¹As soon as Rehoboam arrived at Jerusalem, he assembled the whole house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin with 180,000 picked soldiers to force the house of Israel to return the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. ²²Then the word of God came to Shemaiah, a man of God, saying: ²³Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to the whole house of Judah, Benjamin, and the rest of the people, ²⁴Thus says the LORD: You must not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Let each one of you go home, for I am causing this affair. Then they listened to the word of the LORD and went back home according to the word of the LORD.

²⁵Jeroboam fortified Shechem in Mount Ephraim where he lived. In addition he fortified Penuel. ²⁶Jeroboam said to himself, "Now the kingdom will revert to the house of David; ²⁷if this people go to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, their hearts will be turned to their master Rehoboam king of Judah, so that they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah."^b ²⁸After counseling over it, the king made two golden calves and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; here are your gods, O Israel,

who have brought you out of Egypt."^c ²⁹So he set up the one at Bethel and the other at Dan. ³⁰This matter occasioned sin; for the people went before the one as far as Dan. ³¹He also constructed shrines at high places and ordained priests from the rank and file of the people who were not Levites. ³²Jeroboam set a festival for the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the one celebrated in Judah, at which time he offered sacrifices upon the altar to the calves he had made at Bethel. Moreover, he installed the priests of the high places at Bethel. ³³He offered sacrifices upon the altar he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month—a date set by himself.^d He made it a festival for the Israelites and offered sacrifices upon the altar and burned incense.

13 WHILE JEROBOAM WAS STANDING by the altar burning incense, a man of God came from Judah to Bethel at the LORD's direction. ²At the LORD's direction he spoke against the altar, saying, "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: A child by the name of Josiah born to the house of David shall sacrifice upon you the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and human bones they shall burn upon you."^e ³Then he offered a sign, saying, "This is the sign which the LORD has given: The altar shall be split and the ashes upon it poured out."^e

⁴When the king heard the message, which the man of God delivered against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" But the hand he stretched out against him became paralyzed,^f so that he was unable to pull it back. ⁵Also the altar was split and the ashes on the altar poured out, in accordance with the sign which the man of God had offered at the LORD's direction.

a) Much of the tribe of Simeon was included; also more than half of Benjamin and most of the priests and Levites.

b) Their worship at the temple had served to make Israel a united nation. Jeroboam was clever, but not wise. Idolatry is essentially selfish and not social-minded. The ten tribes lost their solidarity.

c) The very words used near Mt. Sinai, when in the absence of Moses the people worshiped the golden calf [Ex. 32:4], a dishonoring of God which was plainly forbidden and severely punished.

d) A counterfeit religion from start to finish.

e) Our infinitely patient God is willing to prove His veracity with a sign. f) Heb., "withered."

⁶The king begged the man of God, "Plead with the LORD your God and pray on my behalf, that my hand may be restored." So the man of God interceded with the LORD, and the hand of the king was restored to its former condition.⁶ ⁷The king then said to the man of God, "Come to my house with me, take some refreshment, and I will reward you." ⁸But the man of God said to the king, "Though you gave me half of your house, I would not go with you, nor eat bread or drink water in this place. ⁹For I was directed by the word of the LORD: You must neither eat bread nor drink water nor return the way you came!" ¹⁰So he went by another way and did not return on the road by which he came to Bethel.

¹¹Now an old prophet was living at Bethel, whose sons came and recounted to him all the man of God did that day in Bethel; everything he said to the king they related to their father. ¹²Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons had seen the way the man of God who had come from Judah went. ¹³Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me!" When they had saddled the donkey for him, he rode away on it, ¹⁴following the man of God, whom he found sitting under the oak. He said, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" He replied, "I am." ¹⁵"Come with me to my house," said he, "and eat bread." ¹⁶But he replied, "I cannot return and go with you, nor can I eat bread or drink water with you in this place, ¹⁷for the LORD's direction to me was: You must not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came."

¹⁸He said to him, "I too am a prophet like you. An angel said to me at the LORD's direction, 'Bring him back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" He lied to him.^h ¹⁹So he went back with him and ate bread at his house and drank wa-

ter. ²⁰While they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who brought him back, ²¹and he called out to the man of God, who came from Judah, "Thus says the LORD: Because you rebelled against the word of the LORD and did not observe the commandment which the LORD your God gave you, ²²but went back, ate bread, and drank water in the place where I told you not to eat bread or drink water, your corpse will never come to the grave of your fathers."ⁱ

²³After he ate bread and drank, he saddled the donkey for the prophet he had brought back. ²⁴Then he left, but a lion met him on the road and killed him—his corpse was lying on the road, the donkey and the lion standing beside it.^j ²⁵Travellers saw the corpse lying on the road and the lion standing beside the corpse; they came and reported it in the city where the old prophet lived.

²⁶When the prophet, who had caused him to turn from the way, heard it, he said, "That is the man of God who rebelled against the word of the LORD; so the LORD gave him to the lion, who has torn and killed him in accordance with the word of the LORD which He spoke to him." ²⁷He said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me," and they saddled it. ²⁸He then went and found his corpse lying along the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse. The lion had not devoured the corpse nor torn the donkey. ²⁹The prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it upon the donkey, and brought it back to the city of the old prophet for proper burial. ³⁰He laid his corpse to rest in his own grave and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother." ³¹After he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I am dead, bury me in the grave occupied by the man of God: lay my remains to rest beside his;^k ³²For the message which the man of God delivered at the LORD's direction

g) Even where punishment is deserved and administered, God is ready to heal.

h) God never contradicts Himself, though we may misunderstand Him.

i) Our own personal conviction, not another's, must control our actions.

j) All God's creatures are His servants and at His command.

k) This prophet resembles those lying spirits of ch. 22:22-28—also under God's control.

against the altar at Bethel and all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will surely be fulfilled."

³³Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way after this experience but continued to select priests for the high places from the rank and file of the people, ordaining whomever he wished to be priests of the high places. ³⁴Persistence in this became sin to the house of Jeroboam, leading to its annihilation and destruction from the earth.¹

14 AT THAT TIME ABIJAH, JEROBOAM'S son, fell ill. ²Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise now, disguise yourself, so that no one may know you are Jeroboam's wife,^m and go to Shiloh where Ahijah the prophet lives—the one who announced that I would be king over this people. ³Take with you ten loaves of bread, some cakes, and a jar of honey and go to him; he will tell you how the lad will fare."

⁴The wife of Jeroboam did so; she arose, went to Shiloh, and arrived at the house of Ahijah. Since Ahijah could not see—his eyes were dimmed by age—⁵the LORD informed Ahijah: The wife of Jeroboam is coming to seek an oracle from you because of the condition of her son, who is ill. Thus and so you must say to her, for when she comes she will pretend to be another woman.

⁶When Ahijah heard the sound of her footsteps as she was coming in the door, he said, "Come in, O wife of Jeroboam! Why do you pretend to be another woman? I have been sent to give you bad news. ⁷Go! Tell Jeroboam, Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Because I exalted you from the midst of this people, made you a leader of My people Israel, ⁸tore away the kingdom from the house of David and gave it to you, and you were not like My servant David, who observed My commandments, who followed Me with his whole heart, doing only what was right in My sight, ⁹but you did worse

than all those before you, went after and made for yourself other gods, molten images, to irritate Me, and turned your back on Me; ¹⁰therefore I will bring calamity on the house of Jeroboam; I will divest Jeroboam of male children, both bond and free in Israel, and I will sweep away the house of Jeroboam as refuse is swept away completely. ¹¹Jeroboam's dead in the city the dogs shall eat; the dead in the fields the birds of heaven shall devour. So the LORD has spoken. ¹²Now get up and go home! While your feet are approaching the city, the child will die. ¹³All Israel shall bewail him and bury him, because he will be the only one of Jeroboam's house to have a grave; for some good is found in him alone of Jeroboam's house toward the LORD God of Israel.ⁿ ¹⁴The LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam. ¹⁵Today and from now on the LORD will beat Israel like a reed whipped by the waters; He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers and disperse them to the other side of the River,^o because they angered the LORD by making their Asherim. ¹⁶He will give up Israel because of the sins committed by Jeroboam, by which he led Israel to sin."

¹⁷Then Jeroboam's wife rose and departed for Tirzah; and when she arrived at the threshold of the house, the child died. ¹⁸When they buried him, all Israel mourned for him in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by His servant Ahijah the prophet. ¹⁹The rest of the acts of Jeroboam, his wars and his reign, are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. ²⁰Jeroboam was king for a period of twenty-two years, after which he slept with his fathers and Nadab his son was king in his place.

²¹Meanwhile Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was king over Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king and he was king for seven-

1) As man's spirit is the most vital factor in his make-up, so the education of man's inner self is his most vital training. The spiritual leaders of northern Israel did not represent God and could not contribute to spiritual growth.

m) He was a godless hypocrite; he did not want his people to know that in trouble he needed God. n) For those of us who mourn the loss of a child, this incident is worth remembering. God may be saving the loved one from a troublous life and therefore called him, or her, home early.

o) The Euphrates.

teen years over Jerusalem, the city which the LORD selected from all the tribes of Israel as a place for His name. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

²²Judah, too, did evil in the sight of the LORD, exciting His ardent anger far more than their fathers did by the sins they committed. ²³They also made for themselves high places, pillars, and Asherim, symbols on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree, ²⁴and male prostitutes were found in the land; they followed all the abominations of the peoples which the LORD dispossessed for the Israelites.

²⁵During the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, Shishak king of Egypt made an attack on Jerusalem, ²⁶taking the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the house of the king; he took everything. He also took away the golden shields that Solomon had made.^p ²⁷King Rehoboam made substitute shields of bronze and delivered them to the captains of the guard who watched the entrance to the king's house. ²⁸As often as the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards took them up; afterwards they returned them to the guard chamber.

²⁹The rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all he did, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ³⁰There was continuous war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹So Rehoboam slept with his fathers with whom he was buried in David's city. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess and his son Abijam became king in his place.

913 B.C.

15 IN THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam was king over Judah. ²He was king in Jerusalem for three years. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. ³He, too, was guilty of all the sins committed by his father before him; his mind was not at one with the LORD his God as the mind of David his father had been. ⁴Yet for David's sake, the LORD

his God gave him a lamp^t in Jerusalem, to elevate his son after him and to preserve Jerusalem. ⁵For David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, not turning away from anything. He commanded all the days of his life, except in the affair with Uriah the Hittite. ⁶There was continuous war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ⁷The rest of the acts of Abijam and all he did, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. ⁸So Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in David's city and Asa his son was king in his place.

910 B.C.

⁹Asa began to reign as king of Judah in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel. ¹⁰He was king in Jerusalem for forty-one years; his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom.^q ¹¹Asa did what was right in the sight of the LORD as David his father had done. ¹²He drove out the male prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols which his fathers had made. ¹³He also removed Maacah his mother from her position as queen mother, because she had made a detestable image to Asherah; Asa cut down her lewd image and burned it in the Kidron valley. ¹⁴Though the high places were not removed, yet his heart was at one with the LORD as long as he lived. ¹⁵He brought to the house of the LORD the dedicated objects of his father and those which he himself dedicated—silver, gold, and utensils.

¹⁶There was lifelong war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel. ¹⁷Baasha king of Israel proceeded against Judah by strengthening Ramah so that no one could go out to, or come in from, Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸So Asa took all the silver and gold remaining in the treasuries of the LORD's house and in the treasuries of the king's house and put it into the hands of his servants. Then King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon, son of Hezion, king of Syria, who resided at Damascus, with

p) God is the supreme disciplinarian. His children need correction and in loving-kindness He applies it. How do we respond? t) Represents a light or a witness.

q) That is, Absalom, whose mother too was named Maacah [II Sam. 3:3], Asa's grandmother; he must have had a better mother.

this request: ¹⁹"There is a treaty between me and you, as there was between my father and your father; now I have sent you a gift of silver and gold. So go, cancel your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he may go away from me." ²⁰Ben-hadad responded favorably to King Asa's request. He sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel and captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-Maacah, all of Chinneroth and all the territory of Naphtali.^r

²¹When Baasha heard about it, he left off building Ramah and went back to Tirzah. ²²Then King Asa conscripted all Judah—no one was exempt—to remove the stones and timber with which Baasha had strengthened Ramah. King Asa strengthened Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah with them. ²³The rest of the acts of Asa, all the great things he did and the cities he built, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Yet, in his old age he was diseased in his feet. ²⁴Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son became king in his place.

910 B.C.

²⁵Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa's reign in Judah and was king for two years. ²⁶He did evil in the sight of the LORD, going the way of his father, in the sin into which he had led Israel. ²⁷Baasha son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him, and Baasha killed him at Gibbethon among the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. ²⁸Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa's reign in Judah and became king in his place. ²⁹When he became king, he killed the whole house of Jeroboam; not one soul belonging to Jeroboam did he spare or fail to destroy, in accordance with the word of the LORD proclaimed by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite,^s ³⁰be-

cause of the sin which Jeroboam committed and in which he led Israel to sin and because of his provocation of the LORD God of Israel.

909 B.C.

³¹The rest of the acts of Nadab together with all he did, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ³²There was continual war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel. ³³In the third year of Asa's reign in Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah began his twenty-four years' reign over all Israel at Tirzah. ³⁴He did evil in the sight of the LORD, going the way of Jeroboam in the sin into which he had led Israel.

16 THEN THE WORD OF THE LORD concerning Baasha was revealed to Jehu the son of Hanani: ²Despite the fact that I raised you^u out of the dust and made you a leader of My people Israel, you walked in the way of Jeroboam and made My people Israel sin, angering Me by their sins. ³I will completely destroy Baasha and his house; I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. ⁴The dogs shall consume those of Baasha's house who die in the city, and the birds of heaven shall devour those who die in the field. ⁵The rest of the acts of Baasha, his works and achievements, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁶Then Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried at Tirzah, and his son Elah became king in his place. ⁷So the word of the LORD delivered to Baasha and his house by Jehu son of Hanani was fulfilled because of all the evil he did in the sight of the LORD, angering Him by the work of his hands and doing just as the house of Jeroboam had done, despite the fact that he^v overthrew it.^v

886 B.C.

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign in Judah, Elah the son of Baasha began his two-year reign over Israel at

r) Which strengthened Syria against north and south Israel and rendered the two kingdoms of Israel weaker. It was a crippling move.

s) Revolutions and assassinations galore; and why not, when God is left out of the picture? Yet even in their wickedness, those godless leaders were led to carry out God's national program.

u) Baasha. v) The house of Jeroboam. Used of God to punish it for its sin; then walking the same road to destruction.

Tirzah. ⁹His servant Zimri, the captain of half of his chariotry, conspired against him while he was intoxicated at the house of Arza, overseer of the palace at Tirzah. ¹⁰Zimri came, struck him down and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa's reign in Judah, and became king in his place. ¹¹When he became king and occupied the throne, he struck down the entire house of Baasha, leaving him no male, either of his family or of his friends. ¹²So Zimri destroyed the entire house of Baasha in accordance with the word of the LORD delivered to Baasha by Jehu the prophet, ¹³because of all the sins which Baasha and Elah his son had committed and by which they led Israel to sin, angering the LORD God of Israel with their vain idols. ¹⁴The rest of the acts of Elah and all his deeds, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 885 B.C.

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of Asa's reign in Judah, Zimri was king for seven days in Tirzah. Meanwhile the people were engaged in a campaign against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. ¹⁶When the people engaged in the campaign heard that Zimri had conspired and had struck down the king, all Israel made Omri, captain of the army, king over Israel that very day there in the camp.^x ¹⁷Then Omri together with all Israel returned from Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah. ¹⁸When Zimri saw that the city was captured, he went to the citadel of the king's palace, set fire to the king's palace around him and so died, ¹⁹because of the sins which he committed, doing evil in the sight of the LORD by walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin whereby he led Israel to sin. ²⁰The rest of the acts of Zimri and his conspiracy, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

²¹Then the Israelite nation was divided; half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath and made him king; the other half followed Omri.

²²But the people who followed Omri prevailed over those who followed Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became king. ²³In the thirty-first year of Asa's reign in Judah, Omri began his twelve-year reign over Israel, reigning from Tirzah for six years. ²⁴He purchased the hill of Samaria from Shemer for 4,250 dollars in silver and built on the hill; he named the city he built Samaria, after Shemer the owner of the hill. ²⁵Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, behaving worse than all who had been before him. ²⁶He walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in the sin by which he had led Israel to sin, angering the LORD God of Israel by their vain idols. ²⁷The rest of the acts of Omri, his works and achievements, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ²⁸Then Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab became king in his place. 874 B.C.

²⁹Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign in Judah, and Ahab son of Omri was king over Israel at Samaria for twenty-two years. ³⁰Now Ahab son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more so than all who were before him. ³¹As if his following in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat had seemed trifling, he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians and then went on to serve and worship Baal. ³²He erected an altar to Baal in the temple for Baal which he built at Samaria. ³³Ahab also made an Asherah^y and so continued to anger the LORD God of Israel more than all the kings of Israel before him had done.

³⁴In his time Hiel the Bethelite rebuilt Jericho; he laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram, his first-born son, and set its gates at the cost of Segub, his youngest son, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.^z

^x) Not the elders, as had been divinely arranged, but the soldiery undertook to represent the people.
^y) A shame image, such as Gideon destroyed at God's command—a tree stump on one side of the altar, carved to portray the secret parts of a woman, and a tree stump on the other side of the altar portraying a man's secret parts. ^z) Josh. 6:26.

17 THEN ELIJAH THE TISHBITE, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab,^a "As sure as the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there will be neither dew nor rain in these years except by my word." ²The word of the LORD came to Elijah: ³Go away from here, turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, east of the Jordan. ⁴You may drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to supply you with food there. ⁵So he went and did according to the word of the LORD; he went and stayed by the brook Cherith, east of the Jordan, ⁶where the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening and where he drank from the brook.

⁷After a time, however, the brook dried up because there was no rain in the land. ⁸Then the word of the LORD came to him: ⁹Rise, go to Zarephath in Sidon and stay there, for I have commanded a widow there to supply you with food. ¹⁰So he rose and went to Zarephath.

When he arrived at the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks. He called and said to her, "Get me a little water in the jar to drink." ¹¹When she went to get it, he called to her again and said, "Bring along for me a little bread, too." ¹²She replied, "As sure as the LORD your God lives, I have nothing^b except a handful of flour in the jar and a little oil in the jug, and I was just gathering a few sticks to prepare it for me and my son to eat—then we must die."

¹³Elijah said to her, "Have no fear! Go, and do as you have said. But make me first a little loaf from it, and bring it to me, then make one for yourself and your son." ¹⁴For thus has the LORD God of Israel said: The jar of flour shall not be empty nor shall the jug of oil give out until the day when the LORD provides rain for the land."

¹⁵Then she went and did as Elijah told her. So she, he, and her household

ate for a long time.^c ¹⁶The jar of flour was never empty nor did the jug of oil give out, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken through Elijah.

¹⁷Afterwards the son of the woman who was mistress of the house became ill; his illness was so severe that no breath was left in him. ¹⁸So she said to Elijah, "O man of God, what is there between me and you?" ¹⁹Have you come to recall to me my sin and to kill my son?" ²⁰Elijah answered, "Give me your son." Then he took him from her lap, carried him to the upper room, where he stayed, and laid him on his bed. ²¹He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, hast Thou brought misfortune also upon the widow with whom I am staying, by slaying her son?" ²²Stretching himself over the child three times,^e he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, let now the life of this child return to him."

²³The LORD heard the prayer of Elijah; the life of the child returned to him, and he lived again. ²⁴Then Elijah took up the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house. When he gave him to his mother, Elijah said, "Look! your son is alive." ²⁵The woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD coming from your lips is true."

18 MANY DAYS LATER, IN THE third year, the word of the LORD came to Elijah: Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the land.^f ²So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was so severe in Samaria ³that Ahab called Obadiah the steward of his house—Obadiah revered the LORD ⁴so much that when Jezebel cut down the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and provided them with bread and water^g—⁵and Ahab said to

a) At least as unexpected to Ahab as to one who reads this for the first time.

b) Not to be fed at a wealthy home, but where starvation threatened.

c) Like Rahab of Jericho she had faith in God and acted on it [Josh. 2:11].

d) The very words which Jesus spoke to His mother at Cana of Galilee [John 2:4].

e) God's life-giving power and Elijah's personal contact were needed.

f) Upon Elijah's prayer [Jas. 5:17, 18].

g) Obadiah was one of the 7,000 faithful with whom Elijah failed to reckon [ch. 19:18].

Obadiah, "Come, let us go about the land and look for all the springs and all the brooks; perhaps we may find pasture to keep alive horses and mules and not be deprived of the cattle." ⁶So they divided the land between them, to go about in it; Ahab went one way by himself while Obadiah went another way by himself.

⁷As Obadiah was going his way, Elijah met him; and when he recognized him, he fell on his face and said, "Is that you, my master Elijah?"

⁸He answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your master, 'Elijah is here.'" ⁹He said, "Wherein have I sinned that you want to give your servant into Ahab's hands to kill me?" ¹⁰As sure as the LORD your God lives, there is not a nation or kingdom where my master has not sent, searching for you. When they said, 'He is not here,' he made the kingdom or nation swear that it found no trace of you. ¹¹And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, Elijah is here.'

¹²As soon as I leave you, the Spirit of the LORD will bear you away to a place unknown to me, so that when I inform Ahab and he then fails to find a trace of you, he will kill me — though I, your servant, have revered the LORD from my youth. ¹³Have you not been informed about what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid the prophets of the LORD, a hundred in number, by fifties in a cave and provided bread and water for them?" ¹⁴And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, Elijah is here'; he will kill me." ¹⁵Elijah said, "As sure as the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, today I will show myself to him." ¹⁶Then Obadiah went to inform Ahab, and Ahab came to meet Elijah.

¹⁷When Ahab caught sight of Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, O troubler of Israel?" ¹⁸He retorted, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house, by forsaking the commandments of the LORD and going after the Baals. ¹⁹Now send for and assemble to me all Israel at Mount Carmel together with the 450 prophets

of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

²⁰Ahab then sent to all Israel and assembled the prophets at Mount Carmel.

²¹Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you lean to both sides? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if it is Baal, follow him." The people said nothing to him. ²²So Elijah said to the people, "I alone remain as a prophet of the LORD, while the prophets of Baal number 450 men. ²³Let them provide two bullocks for us; then let them select one of the bullocks, cut it up, lay it on the wood, but set no fire to it. I, too, will prepare one of the bullocks, put it on the wood, but set no fire to it. ²⁴You must call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD. The God who responds with fire is the true God." All the people answered, "The plan is excellent."

²⁵Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Select one of the bullocks for yourselves and prepare it first—for you are many—and then call upon the name of your god; but you must set no fire to it." ²⁶So they took the bullock he gave them, prepared it, and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!"; but there was no sound or response. They hopped about the altar they had made. ²⁷About noon Elijah began to taunt them, "Shout louder, for he is a god; he is in conversation or he has gone out; he is on a trip; or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." ²⁸So they shouted more loudly and cut themselves with swords and lances, as they were accustomed to do, until the blood ran out over them. ²⁹After noon they continued to rave until the time for the evening sacrifice; but there was no sound, no answer, no recognition.

³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." When the people drew near, he repaired the LORD's ruined altar. ³¹Elijah took twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes of the children of Jacob to

h) Obadiah had risked his life to save the lives of his fellow worshippers.

j) God's representative could give orders to the king, who felt he had to obey because God was in it.

j) Ruined by Jezebel or by the people's neglect.

whom the word of the LORD came, saying: Your name shall be Israel. ³²He erected an altar with the stones to the name of the LORD. He dug a trench around the altar big enough to hold two bushels of seed.^k ³³Next he arranged the wood, cut up the bullock, and laid it on the wood. ³⁴Then he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it over the sacrifice and over the wood." He said, "Do it again," and they did it again. He said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time; ³⁵so that the water ran all around the altar and the trench was full of water, too.

³⁶At the time for the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came up and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, today let it be known that Thou art God in Israel, that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all this in accordance with Thy word. ³⁷Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may see that Thou, O LORD, art God and that Thou hast turned their hearts back again."^l ³⁸Then fire from the LORD came down and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust; it even licked up the water in the trench.

³⁹When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and shouted, "The LORD, He is God! the LORD, He is God!" ⁴⁰Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not permit one of them to escape." So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon where he slaughtered them.^m

⁴¹Elijah said to Ahab, "Get up! Eat and drink, for there is the sound of a downpour of rain." ⁴²So Ahab got up to eat and to drink, while Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent over toward the earth, put his hands between his knees, ⁴³and said to his servant, "Get up now; look toward the sea." He got up, looked, and said, "There is nothing at all." He said seven times.ⁿ "Go back." ⁴⁴The seventh

time he said, "There is a small cloud, the size of a man's hand, coming up out of the sea." He said, "Be gone. Tell Ahab, 'Hitch up and go down so that the rain does not detain you.'" ⁴⁵Before long the heavens darkened with clouds and wind, and a heavy rain fell, while Ahab drove toward Jezreel. ⁴⁶The hand of the LORD was with Elijah so that, with loins girded, he outran Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

19 WHEN AHAB REPORTED TO JEZEBEL everything Elijah had done and about his killing all the prophets with the sword, ²Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "As certainly as you are Elijah and I am Jezebel—may the gods do so to me and even more—by this time tomorrow I will make your life as the life of one of them." ³And he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life, coming to Beer-sheba in Judah where he left his servant.^o ⁴He went on into the desert a day's journey. There he sat down under a broom bush and prayed that he might die,^p saying, "Enough now, LORD; take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers."

⁵When he lay down, he fell asleep under a broom bush; and see, an angel touched him and said, "Arise and eat." ⁶When he looked, there was a cake baked on hot stones and a jug of water at his head. He ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷The angel of the LORD came again and touched him, saying, "Arise and eat, or the journey will be too much for you." ⁸So he arose, ate and drank, and on the strength of that meal he traveled forty days and forty nights, as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹When he arrived there, he lodged in a cave.

Presently the word of the LORD came to him: What are you doing here, Elijah? ¹⁰He replied, "I have been most zealous for the LORD God of hosts; the Israelites have forsaken Thy covenant, Thy altars they have wrecked,

^k) Cannot mean two bushels altogether; probably means the width of the trench all around the altar, an ample yard or so. ^l) No claim to personal power; it all rested with God.

^m) Not the N. T. way; but those false prophets deserved it; they had killed many a servant of God and had led the people away from God.

ⁿ) An example of persistent prayer, such as our Lord teaches [Luke 11: 5-10; 18:1-8].

^o) It would have been foolish to let Jezebel kill him. ^p) This prayer too was heard.

Thy prophets they have slain with the sword, until I alone am left, and they are attempting to take my life."^q

¹¹He said: Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD. The LORD passed by. A strong, powerful wind tore off portions of the mountain and dashed rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. An earthquake followed the wind, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. ¹²Following the earthquake there was fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire came the sound of a light whisper. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his coat, went out, and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then a voice came to him: What are you doing here, Elijah? ¹⁴He replied, "I have been most zealous for the LORD God of hosts; the Israelites have forsaken Thy covenant; Thy altars they have wrecked; Thy prophets they have slain with the sword, until I alone am left, and they are trying to take my life."

¹⁵The LORD said to him: Go back by the desert road to Damascus and, when you arrive, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; ¹⁶anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king over Israel; ^r also anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abelmeholah to be prophet in your place. ¹⁷Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. ¹⁸However, I will spare 7,000 in Israel, none of whose knees have bowed to Baal and none of whose lips have kissed him.^s

¹⁹So he went away and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve teams ahead of him—he was with the twelfth. Elijah went over to him and threw his mantle upon him. ²⁰Then he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, saying, "Let me first kiss my father and mother; then I will follow you." He replied, "Go back; what have I done to you?"^t ²¹When he re-

turned, he took the team of oxen and sacrificed them, using the yokes of the oxen to boil their flesh, and gave to the people to eat. Afterwards he arose, followed Elijah, and became his servant.

857-6 B.C.

20 BENHADAD KING OF SYRIA MUSTERED his army—thirty-two kings were allied with him—and his cavalry and chariots; then he moved against Samaria, besieging and fighting against it. ²He also sent messengers into the city to Ahab, king of Israel, and said to him, "Benhadad says, ³Your silver and your gold belong to me; your choicest wives and children, too, are mine."^u ⁴The king of Israel responded, "As you say, my master, O king, yours am I and all I have."^v ⁵When the messengers returned, they said, "Benhadad says, 'I sent to you requesting your silver and your gold, your wives and your children, ⁶but about this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you; they will plunder your home and the houses of your servants, laying hold of everything dear to you and taking it.'"

⁷The king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said, "Just observe and see how this fellow is trying to make trouble! When he demanded my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold, I did not refuse him."⁸ All the elders and all the people replied, "Pay no attention to him, do not give in."⁹ He answered the messengers of Benhadad, "Tell my master, the king, that I will agree fully to the first request; but this thing I cannot do." So the messengers brought back to him the report. ¹⁰Benhadad sent him word, "So may the gods do to me and even more, if there is sufficient dust in Samaria to provide each of my followers with a handful."¹¹ The king of Israel answered, "Tell him; Let not the man who girds on his armor boast like the man who lays it down."^v

¹²When Benhadad heard this, he

q) Elijah's great failure was not to secure a helper for this great task; Elisha, the less vigorous man, accomplished more by co-operation.

r) God's sovereignty not over Israel alone, for He is King of kings.

s) We err when we compute the number of believers, as Jesus tells us [Matt 8:11; Luke 13:29].

t) A bit puzzling for the great prophet to anoint a successor from behind the plow.

u) A cowardly and unwarranted submission, unfair to family and subjects.

v) Though from the lips of a godless man, this sentence deserves memorizing, for starting and accomplishing are two different matters.

and the kings were drinking in their tents. He said to his servants, "Attack!" and they attacked the city. ¹³Then a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and said, "The LORD says: Do you see this vast army? I am giving it into your hand today that you may know that I am the LORD." ¹⁴"By whom?" asked Ahab. He replied, "The LORD says: By the young men of the provincial chiefs."^w He said, "Who shall attack?" He replied, "You." ¹⁵So he assembled young men of the provincial chiefs who numbered 232; behind them he assembled all the people—all the Israelites—to the number of 7,000.^x ¹⁶They went out at noon while Benhadad and the kings—32 kings were allied with him—were drinking themselves drunk in their tents. ¹⁷The young men of the provincial chiefs went out first and when they informed Benhadad, saying, "Men are coming out of Samaria," ¹⁸he replied, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive and if they have come out for war, take them alive." ¹⁹These came out from the city, the young men of the provincial chiefs and the army behind them. ²⁰Each one killed his man until the Syrians fled with Israel pursuing them. Benhadad king of Syria escaped on his horse; so did the cavalry; ²¹but the king of Israel went out and destroyed the horses and chariots and inflicted great slaughter upon the Syrians.

²²The prophet came up to the king of Israel, saying, "Go, prepare yourself; consider what you are going to do; for this time next year the king of Syria will come up against you." ²³And the servants of the king of Syria said to him, "Their gods are mountain gods, and hence they have had the upper hand against us; so let us fight them on the plain, where we shall certainly have the upper hand against them." ²⁴Do this too: Remove each king from his command and in their place put captains, ²⁵and assemble an army the same size as the one lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot. Then we shall fight them on the plains where

we will certainly have the upper hand against them." He listened to their plan and followed it.

²⁶At the same time the following year, Benhadad mustered the Syrians and went up to Aphek to fight Israel. ²⁷The Israelites also mustered, gathered provisions, and went to meet them. The Israelites encamped in front of them like two little flocks of goats, while the Syrians filled the country. ²⁸Again the man of God came to the king of Israel, saying, "Thus speaks the LORD: Because the Syrians say that the LORD is a mountain god and that he is not a valley god, I am giving this vast army into your hand, that you may know that I am God." ²⁹They remained encamped opposite each other for seven days; but on the seventh day battle was joined, and the Israelites killed 100,000 Syrian foot soldiers in a single day. ³⁰The rest fled to the city of Aphek where the wall fell on 27,000 of those who remained. Benhadad also fled to the city where he concealed himself in an inner room. ³¹His servants said to him, "We have heard that the kings of Israel are merciful kings; let us put sackcloth on our loins and ropes about our heads and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life." ³²So they put sackcloth on their loins and ropes on their heads and came to the king of Israel, saying, "Your servant Benhadad pleads, 'Spare my life.'" He said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." ³³The men considered this an omen and, quickly catching his word, said, "Benhadad is your brother." He said, "Go, bring him." When Benhadad came out to him, he took him up into his chariot, ³⁴and he^y said, "The cities my father captured from your father I will return, and you may establish trading posts for yourself in Damascus as my father did in Samaria." "With this agreement I will let you go," said he.^z So he made an agreement with him and let him go.

³⁵Then one of the members of the prophetic guild said to another, at the LORD's request, "Strike me now." But

w) For aggressive action, youth can have greatest success. x) The 7,000 whom God had mentioned? y) Benhadad. z) Ahab.

when the man refused to strike him, ³⁶he said to him, "Because you did not listen to the command of the LORD, when you leave me a lion will kill you."^a When he left him, the lion met him and killed him. ³⁷Meeting another man, he said, "Strike me now." So the man struck him so hard that he wounded him. ³⁸The prophet then disguised himself with a headband over his eyes and went to await the king at the roadside. ³⁹When the king passed by, he called to the king, "When your servant went out into the heaviest part of the battle, suddenly a man turned and brought another man to me, saying, 'Guard this fellow; if he should happen to get away, your life shall be for his or you will be fined 2,000 dollars in silver.'"⁴⁰But while your servant was attending to things here and there, he disappeared." The king of Israel answered him, "That is your sentence; you have given it yourself."^b ⁴¹Then he quickly removed the bandage from over his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. ⁴²The prophet said to him, "The LORD says: Because you permitted the man I destined for destruction to get away, your life shall be for his life and your people for his people." ⁴³The king of Israel went home to Samaria embittered and angry.^c

21 AFTER THESE THINGS THIS HAPPENED: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard at Jezreel adjoining the palace of Ahab, king at Samaria.^d ²Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard so I may make for myself a vegetable garden, for it adjoins my house. I will give you a better vineyard for it, or, if you like, I will reimburse you for it with cash."^e ³Naboth responded, "The LORD forbid that I should ever give you my patrimonial inheritance."^f

⁴Ahab came home embittered and angry because of the answer Naboth the Jezreelite gave him, saying, "I will not give you my patrimonial inheritance."^g

He went to bed, turned away his face and refused to eat. ⁵When Jezebel his wife entered and said to him, "How is it that you are so embittered and refuse to eat bread?" ⁶he answered her, "When I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard, or, if you like, I will give you another vineyard for it,' he replied, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

⁷Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you not exercise the kingship over Israel? Rise, eat, and be of good cheer; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."⁸Then she wrote a letter in Ahab's name, stamped it with his seal, and sent the letter to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city. ⁹In the letter she wrote, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the people; ¹⁰seat two men, unprincipled men, near him, and have them testify, 'You cursed God and the king,' and then take him out and stone him to death."

¹¹The men of his city, the elders and nobles who lived there, did as Jezebel requested them, as written in the letter she sent them.¹²They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people. ¹³The two scoundrels came and sat near him. The rascals testified against Naboth before the people, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him out of the city and stoned him till he died. ¹⁴Then they sent word to Jezebel, "Naboth has been stoned to death."

¹⁵When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Rise, take over the vineyard, for Naboth the Jezreelite, who refused to sell it to you for cash, is no longer alive; he is dead."¹⁶As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he arose, went down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, and claimed it.

¹⁷Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: ¹⁸Rise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel in Samaria; he is in Naboth's vineyard

a) It must have been reasonably clear to him that such was God's instruction.

b) Are we ever so busy with this and that that His interests become secondary?

c) But not repentant and submissive to God. d) At times living in his Jezreel palace.

e) Inherited property was the Israelite's last token of free citizenship.

f) Self-centeredness and happiness do not go hand in hand.

g) The people's leaders as cowardly and morally corrupt as their king and queen.

whither he has gone to claim it. ¹⁹Tell him, the LORD says: Have you murdered and claimed? Tell him, The LORD says: In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall the dogs lick up your own blood.^h ²⁰"Have you found me, O my enemy?" retorted Ahab to Elijah. He said, "I have found you; because you have committed yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, ²¹I will bring calamity upon you; I will sweep you away altogether, and I will cut off from Ahab all male children without exception in Israel.ⁱ ²²I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha, son of Ahijah, because you irritated Me and made Israel sin. ²³Also concerning Jezebel the LORD said: The dogs shall devour Jezebel in the valley of Jezreel. ²⁴The dogs shall devour Ahab's dead in the city, and the birds of heaven shall consume those in the field."

²⁵Truly there never was a man like Ahab who committed himself to evil in the sight of the LORD, seduced by Jezebel his wife. ²⁶He acted most wickedly when he went after idols, doing everything the Amorites, whom the LORD dispossessed before the Israelites, did.

²⁷When Ahab heard those words he tore his garments, put on sackcloth, fasted, slept in sackcloth, and went about sadly.^j ²⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: ²⁹Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring on the calamity in his lifetime; in the lifetime of his son, I will bring the calamity upon his house.

22 FOR THREE YEARS THERE WAS no war between Syria and Israel. ²However, in the third year,^k Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to the king of Israel. ³At that time the king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to

us? Yet we are putting forth no effort to take it from the grasp of the Syrian king." ⁴So he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you join me in attacking Ramoth-gilead?" "I am with you; my men are as your men, my horses as your horses," replied Jehoshaphat to the king of Israel.

⁵Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first what is the LORD's will." ⁶The king of Israel then assembled the prophets, about 400 in number, and inquired of them, "Shall I go and attack Ramoth-gilead, or shall I let it alone?" They replied, "Go, for the LORD will hand it over to the king."

⁷But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not some other prophet of the LORD around here, that we may inquire of him?"^l

⁸The king of Israel replied to Jehoshaphat, "There is one other fellow through whom we may seek advice from the LORD, but I hate him, because he never prophesies good to me, but trouble;^m he is Micaiah son of Imlah." "Speak not so, O king!" replied Jehoshaphat. ⁹Then the king of Israel summoned a eunuch and requested him to bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once. ¹⁰While the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, officially robed, were sitting each on his throne at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria with all the prophets prophesying before them, ¹¹Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made iron horns for himself and said, "The LORD says: With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are annihilated." ¹²So all the prophets prophesied this way: "Go against Ramoth-gilead and prosper; for the LORD will hand it over to the king."

¹³The messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look now, the words of the prophets are unanimously favorable to the king; let your word agree with theirs; speak favorably." ¹⁴Micaiah replied, "As surely as the LORD lives, I will say whatever the LORD tells me to say." ¹⁵When he came to the king, the king said to him,

^h) God is the Judge and Ruler yet. ⁱ) Elijah speaks as God's mouthpiece.

^j) With a merciful God there is forgiveness for the worst of sinners, glory be to Him.

^k) The third year of peace. ^l) This seems an afterthought when his promise had been made.

^m) Because repeatedly Ahab deserved divine chastisement.

"Micaiah, shall we attack Ramoth-gilead or shall we let it alone?" He replied, "Go and prosper, for the LORD will hand it over to the king." ¹⁶Then the king said to him, "How many times must I adjure you to speak nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?" ¹⁷He answered, "I saw all Israel scattered over the mountains, as sheep without a shepherd;" and the LORD said: These have no masters; let each one return in peace. ¹⁸Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you he never prophesies good for me, but trouble?"

¹⁹"Therefore," heⁿ said, "Listen to the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD seated upon His throne with all the host of heaven standing beside Him on His right and on His left. ²⁰The LORD said: Who will trick Ahab to go up and suffer defeat at Ramoth-gilead? One said this while another said that. ²¹Finally one spirit came out and, standing before the LORD, said, 'I will trick him.' ²²The LORD said to him: How? He said, 'I will be a spirit of deception speaking through all his prophets,' and He replied: You will successfully trick him; go out and do so." ²³Now truly the LORD has permitted a spirit of deception to speak through all these prophets of yours; the LORD has planned calamity for you."

²⁴Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up and struck Micaiah on the cheek, saying, "How did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak with you?" ²⁵Micaiah replied, "You will see on the day you seek refuge in an inner room." ²⁶The king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah back to Amon, the mayor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, ²⁷and tell them, 'The king gives command, "Put this fellow into prison and feed him short prison rations until I return in peace."'" ²⁸"If you do return in peace," said Micaiah, "the LORD has not spoken through me." He went on, "Listen, all you peoples."

²⁹Nevertheless the king of Israel and

Jehoshaphat king of Judah attacked Ramoth-gilead. ³⁰The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will go to battle disguised; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel went to battle disguised. ³¹Now the king of Syria had given orders to his 32 chariot captains, "Do not bother to attack anyone, old or young, except the king of Israel." ³²When the chariot captains caught sight of Jehoshaphat, they said, "Surely he is the king of Israel." Just as they turned to attack him, Jehoshaphat shouted. ³³When the chariot captains saw he was not the king of Israel, they ceased pursuing him.

853 B.C.

³⁴A soldier drew his bow without specific aim^o and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate. He called to his charioteer, "Turn around and take me out of the battle for I am critically wounded." ³⁵But as the battle raged on that day the king, propped up in his chariot, continued to confront the Syrians. At evening when he died, the blood from his wound ran out onto the floor of the chariot. ³⁶At sunset a cry was passed along through the camp, "Every man to his city; every man to his country! ³⁷The king is dead."

Then they came to Samaria and buried the king in Samaria.^r ³⁸They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria where the prostitutes washed themselves, while the dogs licked his blood, in accordance with the word of the LORD. ³⁹The rest of the acts of Ahab, his works, the ivory house he constructed, all the cities he built, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁴⁰So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

852 B.C.

⁴¹Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab's reign in Israel. ⁴²Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he was king in Jerusalem

n) Something in Micaiah's voice or motions, also the unexpected nature of the message, made Ahab suspect that it was not from the LORD. o) Micaiah.

p) A rare Biblical lifting of the heaven's veil and rather different from our usual thinking. See also Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7.

q) But not without divine purpose.

r) Although it is not mentioned here, the battle was lost, according to vs. 17.

for twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³He walked in all the ways of Asa his father, not swerving from it, in doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. Only he failed to remove the high places; the people still offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places.^s ⁴⁴Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.^t

⁴⁵The rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, his heroic achievements and his wars, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

⁴⁶The rest of the male prostitutes, remaining from the days of his father, he cleaned out of the land. ⁴⁷There was no king in Edom, so a deputy of King ⁴⁸Jehoshaphat constructed a Tarshish^u fleet to carry gold from Ophir. However, it never set sail because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber.

⁴⁹At that time Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants sail with your servants." But Jehoshaphat would not consent. ⁵⁰Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and his son Jehoram became king in his place.

853 B.C.

⁵¹Ahaziah son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign in Judah and was king over Israel two years. ⁵²He did evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father, in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin. ⁵³He served and worshiped Baal and thus angered the LORD God of Israel, just as his father had done.

s) This always meant less interest in temple worship and often yielding to pagan Canaanitish customs. t) And married his son and successor to Athaliah, the wicked daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. u) Seaworthy ships.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS

852 B.C.

1 AND MOAB REBELLED AGAINST ISRAEL after the death of Ahab.

²Now Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice of his upper room at Samaria and became ill. So he sent messengers, requesting them to go and inquire of Baal-zebub^a of Ekron, whether he would recover from his injury.

³Meanwhile an angel of the LORD spoke to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise and go to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria. Say to them, Is there no God in Israel that you must go and consult Baal-zebub of Ekron? ⁴Therefore, thus says the LORD: You will never leave the bed upon which you lie. You will certainly die!" Then Elijah went.

⁵When the messengers returned to him, he said to them, "Why have you come back?" ⁶They replied, "A man came up to meet us, saying, 'Go back to the king who sent you and tell him, Thus says the LORD: Is there no God in Israel that you must send and consult Baal-zebub, god of Ekron? Therefore you will never leave the bed upon which you lie. You will certainly die!'"

⁷Then he inquired of them, "What was the man like who came up to meet you and told you these things?"

⁸They replied, "He was a hairy man with a leather girdle bound around his loins." "That was Elijah the Tishbite," he said.

⁹Thereupon he sent a captain with

his company of fifty to him.^b When he came up to him—for he was sitting on the top of a hill—he shouted, "Man of God, the king has commanded, 'Come down.'" ¹⁰In response Elijah said to the captain of the fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire descend from heaven and burn up you and your fifty" And fire descended from heaven and burned up him and his fifty.

¹¹Then the king sent another captain with his company of fifty to him. He too shouted, "Man of God, thus has the king commanded, 'Come down at once.'" ¹²In response Elijah said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire descend from heaven and burn up you and your fifty." And the fire of God descended from heaven and burned up him and his fifty.

¹³So he sent a third captain with a company of fifty. When the third captain and the fifty arrived, he fell on his knees before Elijah and begged for mercy. "Man of God," he said, "respect my life and that of these fifty servants of yours." ¹⁴See, fire came down from heaven and burned up the two former captains of fifty together with their fifty. Respect now my life."

¹⁵The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him. Be not afraid of him." Then he arose and went down with him to the king. ¹⁶He said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Be-

a) The name meaning, "lord of flies," and such a god should be able to bring health. The name is identical with Beelzebub in the N.T. and equivalent to "Satan," prince of demons [Matt. 10:25; 12:24].

b) Not to plead for mercy, for there was no repentance; but to arrest and punish God's prophet.

cause you sent messengers to consult Baal-zebub, god of Ekron—was it because there is no God in Israel to consult as to His word?—you shall never arise from the bed upon which you are lying. You shall certainly die.”

¹⁷So he died in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah, and Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because he had no son.^c ¹⁸The rest of the acts of Ahaziah and what he did, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

2 WHEN THE LORD WAS ABOUT TO take up Elijah into heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha left Gilgal. ²Elijah appealed to Elisha, “Stay on here, for the LORD has sent me to Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As sure as the LORD lives and you live, I will not leave you.” So they went on to Bethel.^d ³The band of prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha, saying, “Are you aware that today the LORD is going to take away your master who goes before you?” “I know it,” he said, “be still.”

⁴Again Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay on here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” “As sure as the LORD lives and you live, I will not leave you,” he replied as they continued to Jericho. ⁵The group of prophets at Jericho approached Elisha, saying, “Are you aware that today the LORD is going to take your master who goes before you?” “I know it,” he said, “be still.”^e

⁶Once more Elijah said to him, “Stay on here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” “As sure as the LORD lives and you live, I will not leave you,” he said, as they both went on. ⁷Fifty men of the group of prophets came and stood some distance from them while both of them stood by the Jordan.

⁸Then Elijah took his coat, folded it and struck the water, which parted, so that both of them crossed on dry ground.

⁹When they crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I am to do for you before I am taken away from you.” Elisha replied, “Let a double share of your spirit be upon me.”^f ¹⁰He said, “You have made a difficult request, but if you see me taken from you, it shall be granted to you; if not, it will not be so.”

¹¹As they were walking along and talking, look! A chariot and horses of fire separated the two of them and Elijah ascended to heaven in a whirlwind. ¹²When Elisha saw it, he cried, “My father, my father, the chariots and horsemen of Israel!”^g When he could no longer see him, he took hold of his clothes and tore them in two. ¹³Then he took up Elijah’s coat which had fallen off and, returning, stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴He took Elijah’s coat which had fallen off and struck the water, saying, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” As he struck the water again, it parted and Elisha crossed over.

¹⁵When the group of prophets saw him from the other side, they said, “The spirit of Elijah remains with Elisha.” So they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him. ¹⁶They said to him, “With your servants are fifty strong men; let them go and look for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or in some valley.” But he replied, “You must not send them.” ¹⁷However they pressed him until he relented and permitted them to send them. So they sent fifty men, who looked three days for him but could not find him.^h ¹⁸They returned while he waited at Jericho. He said to them, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not go?’”

¹⁹The men of the city said to Elisha, “The location of the city is excellent, as my master can see, but the water is bad and it makes the land sterile.” ²⁰He said, “Get me a new pan and put salt in it.” So they brought it

c) Ahaziah dying without a male heir, his brother Jehoram, another son of Ahab, succeeded him.

d) Elisha knew his time had come to stand on his own feet, yet not to leave his master alone.

e) The Holy Spirit was working in those young men and showed them truth hidden from others.

f) A humble and effective prayer. Elisha felt the need of power for his prophetic task.

g) Men of Elijah’s type are the defensive and offensive forces of their people.

h) Many lessons they must learn for themselves. And Elisha could yield when no moral question was involved.

to him. ²¹Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt in it, saying, "Thus has the LORD said: I have purified this water so that death and miscarriage shall no longer come from it." ²²And the water has remained pure to this day, in accordance with the word spoken by Elisha.

²³When he left there for Bethel, and was on the way, some youths came out of the city and poked fun at him, saying, "Go up, baldy; go up, baldy!" ²⁴As he turned around and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two female bears came out of the forest and tore up forty-two of the boys. ²⁵From there he went to Mount Carmel and later returned to Samaria.

852 B.C.

3 JEHOAM BECAME KING OVER ISRAEL at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he was king for twelve years. ²He too did evil in the sight of the LORD, though not like his father and mother; for he removed the pillar of Baal which his father had erected. ³Only he clung to the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin, and he did not turn away from it.^k

⁴Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep raiser who was required to deliver regularly to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. ⁵After the death of Ahab, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. ⁶At that time King Jehoram left Samaria to mobilize all Israel. ⁷Moreover, he directed this message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you join me in war against Moab?" He replied, "I will go; I am as you, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." ⁸"Which way shall we go?" he inquired. "The way of the Edom desert," he answered.

⁹So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After a roundabout march of seven days, there was no water for the army or for the pack animals following them. ¹⁰"Alas!" exclaimed the king of Israel, "the LORD has called together these three kings to give them into the hand of the king of Moab."¹¹ Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet here through whom we may inquire from the LORD?" One of the king of Israel's servants answered, "Elisha the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah, is here." ¹²Jehoshaphat said, "He has the word of the LORD." So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.^m

¹³Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Why do you come to me? Go to the prophets of your father and mother." The king of Israel replied, "No! The LORD has called together these three kings to give them into the hand of the king of Moab." ¹⁴Elisha said, "By the life of the LORD of hosts, whom I serve, if it were not for my regard for Jehoshaphat king of Judah,ⁿ I would neither look at you nor take notice of you. ¹⁵Bring me a minstrel." While the minstrel played, the hand of the LORD came upon him,^o ¹⁶so that he called out, "Thus says the LORD: Dig ditches in this dry valley; ¹⁷for thus says the LORD: Though you will see neither wind nor rain, that valley shall be full of water so that you, your cattle, and your animals may drink. ¹⁸And this is not enough in the sight of the LORD, for He will also give Moab into your hand." ¹⁹You shall capture every fortified city and every choice city, every fruit tree you shall cut down, all springs of water you shall stop up, and every good piece of land you shall ruin with stones." ²⁰And at the time of sacrifice the next morning, water came flowing from the di-

i) He who created the elements is able to eliminate those hurtful and to bring in those wholesome

j) This is not the N.T. spirit. Christ did not come to destroy. However these youngsters were mocking God when they mocked Elijah's ascension; their lives would not have been constructive.

k) No king of northern Israel dared let his people worship at the Jerusalem temple; yet they thought of no substitute except idols.

l) He had no idea of the relationship between God and His worshippers.

m) The three kings had to eat humble pie to learn God's will with them.

n) Through the ages the true worshippers of God have been what Jesus called, "the salt of the earth."

o) Sweet, spiritual music to begin a church service may prepare the heart to meet with God.

p) God's mercies are not sparse; they are bountiful.

rection of Edom until the land was filled with water.

²¹When all Moab heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were old enough to gird themselves, or older, were called to arms and stationed at the frontier.

²²Rising early in the morning, when the sun shone upon the water, the Moabites saw the water before them red as blood. ²³So they said, "This is blood. The kings have attacked and slain one another. Now, to the spoil, O Moab!"

²⁴When they came to the camp of Israel, Israel arose and struck down the Moabites until they fled before them; they pursued the Moabites and struck them down. ²⁵They destroyed their cities; each one threw a stone on every piece of good land until it was filled; all the springs of water they stopped up, every fruit tree they cut down, until only the stones of Kirharseth were left, and the slingers even surrounded and attacked it. ²⁶When the king of Moab saw that he was losing the battle, he, with seven hundred swordsmen, tried to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. ²⁷Then he took his first-born son, who would have been king in his place, and offered him up as a sacrifice on the wall. Great indignation came upon Israel, so that they withdrew from him and returned to their land.^q

4 THE WIFE OF ONE OF THE SONS OF the prophets appealed to Elisha, "Your servant, my husband, is dead; and you know that your servant revered the LORD; but now the creditor has come to take my two sons to be his slaves." ²"What can I do for you? Tell me," said Elisha, "what do you have in the house?" She replied, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house, except a small jar of oil." ³He said, "Go, borrow vessels at large from all your neighbors, empty vessels, and get not a few. ⁴Then enter, shut the door behind yourself and your sons, and

pour into all these vessels, putting aside each one that has been filled." ⁵She left him and shut the door behind herself and her two sons; they brought the vessels to her as she poured. ⁶When the vessels were filled, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." He replied, "There is none left." Then the oil ceased flowing.^r ⁷So she went and informed the man of God, who said, "Go, sell the oil, and pay your debts; you and your sons can live on the remainder."

⁸One day Elisha went over to Shunem where lived a prominent woman, who persuaded him to stay for lunch. After that, as often as he passed that way, he would turn in there to eat a bite. ⁹She said to her husband, "Truly the man who so frequently passes this way is a holy man of God. ¹⁰Let us make an upstairs guest chamber, put in a bed for him, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that whenever he comes to us, he may rest there."

¹¹One day as he came by, he stopped to rest in the roof room. While lying there, ¹²he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her and she stood before him, ¹³he said to him, "Tell her now, 'Look, since you have exercised all this painstaking care for us, what can be done for you? Shall some request for you be made to the king or to the captain of the army?'" She replied, "I live among my own people."^s ¹⁴But he said, "What then can be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Indeed, she has no son, and her husband is an old man."^t ¹⁵He said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood at the door. ¹⁶He said, "Next season about this time you shall embrace a son." "No, my master, O man of God, do not delude your maidservant," she exclaimed. ¹⁷But the woman conceived and gave birth to a son the next season about the time Elisha had told her.

¹⁸One day when the child had grown, he went out with his father to the harvesters. ¹⁹He complained to

q) A horrible deed; but are we perfectly willing to see our children decide for full time Christian service, even abroad? r) God is more ready to supply than we are to receive from Him.

s) I.e. My people will take care of me, should I need anything.

t) She was not present when Elisha and Gehazi further conversed.

his father, "My head! My head!"^u He said to the servant, "Carry him to his mother." ²⁰So he took him up and brought him to his mother. He sat on her lap until noon and then died.

²¹She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door behind her, and went out. ²²Then she called her husband and said, "Send me now one of the servants and one of the donkeys; for I want to hasten to the man of God and return." ²³He said, "Why do you want to go to him today? It is neither the new moon nor the Sabbath!" She replied, "It shall be well."

²⁴So she saddled the donkey and gave orders to her servant, "Go on quickly, and do not slow down until I tell you." ²⁵She went on until she came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. As soon as the man of God saw her approaching, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, there is the Shunammite!" ²⁶Run now to meet her and ask her, 'Are you well? Is your husband well? Is the child well?'" She answered, "It is well."^v

²⁷When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she embraced his feet. Gehazi came up to push her away; but the man of God said, "Let her alone, for she is in deep anxiety which the LORD has concealed from me; He has not told me." ²⁸"Did I ask my master for a son?" she sobbed. "Did I not say, 'Do not give me false hope?'" ²⁹Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird your loins; take my staff in your hand, and go—if you meet anyone, do not greet him and if anyone greets you, do not respond—and place my staff on the face of the child."^w ³⁰The child's mother said, "As sure as the LORD lives and you live, I will not return without you." So he arose and went with her.

³¹Gehazi had preceded them and had placed the staff upon the face of the child. When there was neither

sound nor movement, he returned to meet him and told him, "The child has not awakened." ³²When Elisha came to the house, see, the child was dead, lying on his couch. ³³So he entered and, when he had shut the door against both of them, he prayed to the LORD. ³⁴Then he went up and lay upon the child with his mouth upon the child's mouth, his eyes upon the child's eyes, and his hands upon the child's hands. When he had so stretched himself out upon him, the child's body grew warm. ³⁵Getting up, he walked back and forth in the house. When he stretched himself upon him again, the child sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes. ³⁶Summoning Gehazi, he said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. When she arrived, he said, "Take up your son." ³⁷So she came in, fell down at his feet, and prostrated herself on the ground. Then she took up her son and went out.^x

³⁸When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the big kettle, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets." ³⁹So one of them went out to the field to gather herbs. He found a wild vine from which he gathered his lap full of wild gourds. He cut up the herbs into the kettle, not knowing what they were. ⁴⁰Then he^y poured it out for the men to eat. But when they ate of the herbs, they cried out, "There is death in the kettle, O man of God!"; for they could not eat it. ⁴¹He said, "Bring here some flour," and when he had thrown it into the kettle, he said, "Pour it out for the people, that they may eat." And there was nothing harmful in the kettle.^z

⁴²There came a man from Baal-shalisha, bringing food of the first fruits to the man of God, twenty barley loaves and fresh fruit in his bread

u) He must have suffered a sunstroke.

v) This is all she cared to say to Gehazi; for Elisha she reserved much more.

w) She knew and Elisha knew that no staff could suffice; it required the warmth of the personal touch, as new life in Christ still requires.

x) A guest room to which Christian workers are welcomed can still be a source of blessing to the family and especially to the growing children.

y) Elisha. z) Christian elements must counteract unholy things and may turn the hurtful into helpful things.

bag. He said, "Give it to the people that they may eat." ⁴³His servant replied, "How can I set this before 100 men?" But he insisted, "Give it to the people that they may eat; for the LORD has said: They shall eat and have leftovers." ⁴⁴So he set it before them. When they had eaten, some was left over as the LORD had said.^a

5 NAAMAN THE CAPTAIN OF THE army of the king of Syria was an important official in the sight of his master and was highly esteemed because the LORD had brought victory to Syria through him. He was an outstanding man, but he was a leper. ²Now the Syrians on one of their raiding expeditions had taken captive from the land of Israel a little girl who served Naaman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would drive out^b his leprosy." ⁴So he^c went to his master and told him, "Thus and so has the girl from the land of Israel spoken."^d

⁵The king of Syria replied, "Then go; and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he went, taking along with him 20,000 dollars in silver, 60,000 dollars in gold, and ten suits of clothes. ⁶He handed this letter to the king of Israel, "With this letter I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may drive out his leprosy." ⁷After the king of Israel had read the letter, he tore his clothes, saying, "Am I God who can kill or restore to life, that this fellow has sent a man to me to drive out his leprosy? Just consider, and see how he is trying to stir up trouble with me!"^e

⁸When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me, and know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹Naaman came with his horses

and with his chariot and stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰And Elisha sent a messenger to him with these instructions, "Go, wash seven times in the Jordan, and your body shall be well and clean again." ¹¹But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought he would come out, stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God and, waving his hand over the place, drive out the leprosy." ¹²Are not the Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not have washed in them and been made clean?" So he turned away in anger. ¹³Then his servants approached him and said, "My father, if the prophet had instructed you to do something spectacular, would you not have done it? But he simply said, 'Wash and be clean.'" ¹⁴So he went down and dipped himself into the Jordan seven times, in accordance with the word of the man of God. His body was made well like that of a little child, and he was clean.^f

¹⁵Then he and all his company returned to the man of God. When he arrived and stood before him, he said, "Now I know there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. Accept now a gift from your servant." ¹⁶"As sure as the LORD lives before whom I stand, I will not accept it," he replied. Even though he pressed him to accept it, he refused.^g ¹⁷Then Naaman said, "If not, may your servant be given a mule-team load of earth; for your servant will never again offer burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods except the LORD.^h ¹⁸May the LORD forgive your servant in this matter: when my master enters the house of Rimmon to worship there, supported by my hand, and I have to bow myself down in the house of Rimmon; when I have to bow myself down thus in the house of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant in this matter." ¹⁹He said to him, "Go in peace."

a) Prophetic of Christ's feeding the 5000; symbolic of the overflowing riches of divine grace.

b) Probably from an Akkadian root meaning 'to exorcise.' c) Naaman went to the Syrian king.

d) If a captive little girl can thus effectively testify, what cannot we witness?

e) It never occurred to the king to send Naaman to God's servant.

f) His heart became childlike before his body was thus renewed.

g) Christian workers need apply sound judgment regarding proffered gifts from other than Christian givers. h) Soil to build on it an altar to Jehovah God.

When he had travelled some distance, ²⁰Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, "Look! My master has not taken anything which this Syrian, Naaman, brought with him. As sure as the LORD lives, I will run after him and accept something from him." ²¹So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he came down out of his chariot to meet him, saying, "Is all well?" ²²"All is well," he replied. "My master sent me with this message, 'Two young men from Mount Ephraim, sons of the prophets, have just come to me. Let me have 2,000 dollars in silver and two suits of clothes for them.'"ⁱ ²³Naaman said, "Please accept 4,000." He pressed him and tied up 4,000 dollars in silver in two bags, and two suits of clothes, which he gave to two of his servants who carried them before him.^j ²⁴When he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in his house. Then he sent the men away and they left.

²⁵When he entered to wait on his master, Elisha said to him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" "Your servant has been nowhere," he replied. ²⁶He said to him, "Did I not in thought go with you when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Was it a time to accept money and to take suits, olive groves, vineyards, flocks, herds, male and female servants?" ²⁷Therefore the leprosy of Naaman will fasten upon you and your descendants forever." Then he left his presence, a leper, white as snow.

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6 AT THAT TIME THE SONS OF THE prophets said to Elisha,^k "The place we are living in here with you is too small for us. ²Let us go to the Jordan and each of us take from there a log and construct for ourselves there

a place to live." He said, "Go ahead." ³Then one of them said, "Please go with your servants." "I will go along," he replied. ⁴So he went with them, and when they came to the Jordan they cut down trees. ⁵While one of them was felling a tree, his axhead fell into the water. "Alas, my master, it was borrowed!" he exclaimed. ⁶"Where did it fall?" inquired the man of God. When he pointed out the place to him, he cut off a twig, cast it in there, and made the axhead float. ⁷He said, "Take it up." So he reached out his hand and took it.

⁸When the king of Syria was at war with Israel, he counseled with his servants, "At such and such a place shall be my camp." ⁹The man of God, however, informed the king of Israel, "See that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there." ¹⁰Then the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had informed him. So heⁿ warned him, and he kept clear more than once or twice.

¹¹The mind of the king of Syria was quite disturbed about it. He called his servants and inquired of them, "Can you tell me who among us informs the king of Israel?" ¹²One of his servants replied, "There is none, my master, O king. It is Elisha the prophet; for he tells the king of Israel what you say in your bedroom." ¹³He commanded, "Go, find out where he is, so I may send and arrest him." He was told, "See, he is in Dothan."ⁿ ¹⁴Then he sent there horses, chariots, and a powerful army. They arrived by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵When the servant of the man of God got up early in the morning and went out, look, the army, together with horses and chariots, were all around the city. His servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we

i) Both Elisha and his servant seem to have depended on gifts for a living. This chance for a liberal contribution proved too alluring for Gehazi; but to get it he must go contrary to his master's principles, and he must lie. j) Before Gehazi.

k) Elisha worked with young worshippers, as Elijah does not seem to have worked. Samuel's School of the Prophets is the first mention of such a group.

m) Elisha warned the king of Israel.

n) About ten miles north of Samaria city. There Joseph had found his ten brothers, was cast in a pit, and sold down to Egypt.

do?"^o ¹⁶"Be not afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them," he replied. ¹⁷Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes that he may see!"^p The LORD opened the eyes of his servant and when he looked, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha.

¹⁸As the Syrians came against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Inflict this people with sudden blindness." So He inflicted them with sudden blindness in accordance with the word of Elisha.

¹⁹Then Elisha said to them, "This is neither the way nor the city. Come with me, and I will take you to the man you seek." So he brought them to Samaria.^q ²⁰When they arrived at Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." The LORD opened their eyes and when they looked, see, they were in the center of Samaria!

²¹When he saw them, the king of Israel said to Elisha, "Shall I cut them down, shall I cut them down, my father?" ²²"You must not cut them down," he replied. "Would you cut down those whom you have not taken captive with your sword or your bow? Set before them food and water, so they may eat and drink and then return to their master." ²³He then made a great feast for them. They ate and drank and afterward he sent them away and they went to their master.^r The raiding bands of Syrians never again returned to the land of Israel.

²⁴Later, however, Ben-hadad the king of Syria mustered all his army, went up, and besieged Samaria. ²⁵Such a severe famine resulted from their siege that a donkey's head brought fifty dollars in silver and a pint of dove's leavings brought three dollars in silver. ²⁶As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman called out to him, "Help, my master, O king."

²⁷He replied, "If the LORD will not help you, how can I help you? Can I help you from the threshing floor or from the wine press?" ²⁸The king said to her,^s "What is the matter with you?" "This woman," she replied, "said to me, 'Give your son that we may eat him today and we shall eat my son tomorrow.'"^t ²⁹So we boiled my son and ate him; and when I said to her the next day, 'Give your son that we may eat him,' she hid her son."^u ³⁰When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes—for he was passing by on the wall—and the people saw the sackcloth next to his body. ³¹He said, "May God do so to me and even more, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains standing on his shoulders today."^v

³²While Elisha and the elders were sitting together in his home, he^w sent a man from his presence. But before the messenger arrived, he^x said to the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent to take off my head?"^y See here, when the messenger arrives, shut the door and keep him back with the door; for is not the sound of his master's footsteps behind him?" ³³While he was still talking with them, the messenger came down to him and he^x said, "This evil is from the LORD. Why should I wait any longer for the LORD?"

7 "LISTEN TO THE WORD OF THE LORD," replied Elisha. "Thus says the LORD: About this time tomorrow a peck of fine meal may be purchased at the gate of Samaria for a dollar and two pecks of barley for a dollar."^z ²The royal official^y who supported the king, replied to the man of God, "If the LORD should open windows in heaven, could this happen?" "You shall indeed see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat of it," said he.^z

³Now there were four lepers at the

o) Not seldom we have similar fears, because the visible naturally impresses us to the exclusion of the invisible.

p) He did not pray for heavenly hosts to come; they were there, but the servant had not been aware of them. Jesus [Matt. 18:10] and Paul [I Cor. 11:10] suggest their abiding presence.

q) Where he lived and where they were well treated. r) This was the Jesus way and it worked. s) He had gone on, but turned when she continued crying.

t) No repentance, but vengeance in his heart. u) The king. v) Elisha.

w) There was constant communication between Elisha and God.

x) The messenger was not admitted; the king arrived and expressed his disgust.

y) Not the messenger but the high official on whom the king leaned. z) Elisha.

entrance of the gate of Samaria. They said one to another. "Why are we sitting here until we die? ⁴If we say, 'Let us go into the city,' famine is there, and if we remain here we shall die. Now come, let us desert to the Syrian camp; if they spare us, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall just die." ⁵So at twilight they got up to advance to the Syrian camp. When they arrived at the Syrian camp, look, not a man was there! ⁶For the LORD had caused the Syrian camp to hear the sound of chariots and of horses and of a great army,^a so that they said one to another, "The king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come against us." ⁷So they arose and fled at twilight, leaving behind their tents, their horses, their donkeys, and the camp, just as it was; they fled for their lives.

⁸When the lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent and ate and drank and took from there some silver, gold, and garments, and went and hid them. Afterward they returned and went into another tent and took some things from there and went and hid them. ⁹Finally they said one to another, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news;^b if we keep quiet and wait until morning light, punishment will befall us. Come, let us go and inform the household of the king." ¹⁰They came and called to the gatekeepers of the city, informing them, "We went to the Syrian camp, but not a man was there nor the sound of anyone; only horses and donkeys were tied there and their tents just as they were." ¹¹Then the gatekeepers shouted and told it to the king's household inside. ¹²The king arose in the night and said to his servants, "Let me tell you what the Syrians have done for us; they know that we are hungry, so they have left the camp and hidden themselves in the field thinking, 'When they go out of the city, we will seize them alive

and enter the city.'"^c ¹³One of his servants suggested, "Let some men take five of the horses that are left here; if they survive, they will be like the whole multitude of Israel left here; but if they fall into a trap, they will be like the whole multitude of Israel which has perished. So let us send and see."^d ¹⁴They then took two chariots with horses and the king sent them after the Syrian army with instructions to go and see. ¹⁵They followed them as far as the Jordan and look, all along the way were scattered clothes and supplies which the Syrians had thrown away in their hurried flight! When the messengers returned, they told the king.

¹⁶Then the people went out and plundered the Syrian camp. So in accordance with the word of the LORD, a peck of fine meal was offered for a dollar and two pecks of barley for a dollar. ¹⁷Now the king had put the officer, who had supported the king, in charge of the gate; but the people trampled him at the gate so that he died as the man of God had said to the king when he came down to him. ¹⁸Thus the statement of the man of God to the king, about two pecks of barley for a dollar and a peck of fine meal for a dollar this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria, was fulfilled. ¹⁹Also to the royal official who had replied to the man of God, "If the LORD should open windows in heaven, could it be so?" and to whom he said, "Look! You shall see it with your eyes but shall not eat of it," ²⁰it happened so; for the people trampled him at the gate, so that he died.

8 AT THAT TIME ELISHA SAID TO THE woman whose son he had restored to life, "You and your household leave and stay where you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will last for seven years."^e ²So the woman arose and did as the man of God advised; she and her household went and stayed in the land of the Philistines for seven years. ³At the end

a) Sounds at the Creator's bidding, causing a panic.

b) Repeatedly our situation; we must be material and spiritual sharers.

c) The king had heard Elisha's promise but did not believe it.

d) A smart suggestion, worthy of a courtier; but not born from faith.

e) Elisha was a polite guest; he kept in touch with his hosts

of seven years, when the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she went to lay claim before the king to her house and her field. ⁴The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, at the time. ⁵"Tell me," said he, "all the great things Elisha has done." ⁶While he was telling the king how he restored the dead to life, the woman whose son he had restored to life was coming to appeal to the king for her house and her field. Then Gehazi said, "My master, O king! this is the woman and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life."

⁶When the king inquired of the woman, she told him about it. Then the king provided an official for her, saying, "Return all her property together with all its produce from the time she left the land until now."

⁷Afterward Elisha went to Damascus. Ben-hadad king of Syria was ill and when he was informed, "The man of God has come here," ⁸the king said to Hazeal, "Take in your hand a gift, go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD through him whether I shall recover from this illness." ⁹So Hazeal went to meet him with a gift in hand—all sorts of valuable things from Damascus, forty camel loads—and when he entered and stood before him, he said, "Your son Ben-hadad king of Syria has sent me to you with this message, 'Shall I recover from this illness?'" ¹⁰Elisha said to him, "Go, tell him, 'You will surely recover.'" However the LORD has shown me that he shall surely die." ¹¹And he looked at him fixedly until he was ashamed. ¹²Then the man of God wept. ¹²Hazeal said to him, "Why do you weep, my master?" He answered, "Because I know the calamity you will bring upon Israel; their fortresses you will burn with fire, their young men you will kill with the sword; their little children you will dash in pieces, and their pregnant women you will

rip open." ¹³"What! Is your servant a dog that he should do this terrible thing?" remarked Hazeal. "The LORD has shown me that you are to be king of Syria," said Elisha. ¹⁴Then he left Elisha and returned to his master, who asked him, "What did Elisha tell you?" "He told me you will assuredly recover," he said. ¹⁵The next day he took a coverlet, dipped it in water and spread it over his face so that he died. Then Hazeal became king in his place.

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¹⁶In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah became king. ¹⁷He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he was king in Jerusalem for eight years. ¹⁸He walked in the way of the kings of Israel as the house of Ahab had done, for he had married a daughter of Ahab; he did evil in the sight of the LORD. ¹⁹However, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David His servant, because He had promised to make him and his sons a perpetual light.

²⁰In his time Edom rebelled against the authority of Judah and provided a king for themselves. ²¹Joram^k with all his chariots then crossed over to Zair where he arose at night and destroyed the Edomites around him together with their chariot officers. But the people fled to their tents. ²²Edom has, however, continued in rebellion against the authority of Judah to this day. Libnah also rebelled at that time.

²³The rest of the acts of Joram and all that he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁴So Joram slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and his son Ahaziah became king in his place.

²⁵In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram became king of Judah. ²⁶Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he

f) Gehazi is called the prophet's servant; so, this almost certainly happened before his leprosy.

g) Some non-Hebrews were more anxious to hear God's messages than were the Hebrews.

h) Spoken ironically, as did Micaiah [I Kings 22:15].

i) Hazeal grew ashamed. Elisha knew what crime Hazeal would commit to gain the throne and how he would then behave.

j) Jehoshaphat's affiliation with Ahab had many evil consequences and his daughter-in-law Athaliah was among the worst.

k) Jehoram—"Jehovah is high"—which the name Joram also means. The two names are interchanged, vss. 21-24 relating to the king of Judah.

became king, and he remained king for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, daughter of Omri king of Israel.¹ ²⁷He walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the LORD, just as the house of Ahab had done; for he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab. ²⁸He accompanied Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead, where the Syrians wounded Joram. ²⁹So Joram the king returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted upon him at Ramah where he warred with Hazael king of Syria. At that time Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab at Jezreel where he lay sick. ^{841 B.C.}

9 ELISHA SUMMONED ONE OF THE sons of the prophets and said to him, "Gird your loins, take this vial of oil in your hand and proceed to Ramoth-gilead. ²When you arrive there, look for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi;^m as you enter, tell him to get up from among his brothers, and bring him to an inner room. ³Then take the vial of oil and pour it upon his head and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: I have anointed you king over Israel.' Then open the door and leave at once; do not dally."

⁴The young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. ⁵When he arrived, the officers of the army were in conference. He said, "Captain, I have a message for you!" "For which of us all?" said Jehu. "For you, captain," he replied. ⁶So he arose and went into the house, where he poured the oil upon his head and said to him, "Thus has the LORD God of Israel spoken: I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD^o over Israel. ⁷You are to overthrow the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets and the blood of all the

servants of the LORD shed by Jezebel. ⁸The whole house of Ahab shall be destroyed; I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond and free, in Israel, ⁹and I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah.^p ¹⁰The dogs shall devour Jezebel in the district of Jezreel, and none shall bury her." Then he opened the door and fled.

¹¹When Jehu came out to the servants of his master, one of them said to him, "Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?" "You know the man and his talk," he answered. ¹²"Lies, but tell us," they retorted. He said, "Thus and so he told me, saying, 'Thus has the LORD said: I have anointed you king over Israel.'" ¹³They then took each one quickly his garment and spread it under him on the bare steps, sounded the trumpet, and shouted, "Jehu is king."^q

¹⁴Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Joram and all Israel had garrisoned Ramoth-gilead against Hazael king of Syria. ¹⁵But Jehoram the king^r had returned to recuperate at Jezreel from the wound which the Syrians inflicted upon him when he warred against Hazael king of Syria. "If that is your mind," said Jehu, "let no one slip away from the city to bring news of it to Jezreel." ¹⁶Then Jehu mounted a chariot and drove toward Jezreel, where Joram was lying and whither Ahaziah king of Judah had come to see Joram.

¹⁷When the watchman, standing on the tower at Jezreel, caught sight of Jehu's company approaching, he said, "I see a company." Jehoram said, "Get a horseman, and send him out to meet them with the greeting, 'Is all well?'" ¹⁸So the horseman went out to meet him and said, "Thus has the king said. 'Is all well?'" "What have you to do with well-being?" replied Jehu. "Swing around behind me." The watchman re-

1) We would call Omri her grandfather and Ahab her father. She was too exactly like her mother Jezebel. m) To distinguish him from Jehoshaphat the son of king Asa.

n) The young prophet.

o) God still owned them as His people and offered them a good chance to change their ways.

p) The Omri dynasty had been adequately warned.

q) An odd combination of neglect of and deference toward God's message.

r) That is, Joram the king of Israel.

ported, "The messenger has reached them, but he has not turned back."

¹⁹He sent a second horseman who came up to them and said, "Thus has the king said, 'Is all well?'" "What have you to do with well-being?" replied Jehu. "Swing around behind me." ²⁰The watchman again reported, "He reached them, but he has not turned back. And the driving is like the driving of Jehu, for he always drives like a madman."^s

²¹Jehoram said, "Get ready," and they hitched up his chariot. Then Jehoram the king of Israel drove off with Ahaziah king of Judah, each in his own chariot and went out to meet Jehu. They met him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. ²²When Jehoram caught sight of Jehu, he said, "Is all well, Jehu?" "How can there be well-being when the harlotries and seductions of Jezebel your mother are so numerous," he replied. ²³Jehoram turned around and fled, calling to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!" ²⁴Then Jehu drew his bow and shot Jehoram between the shoulders. The arrow went through his heart, and he slumped in his chariot. ²⁵Jehu said to Bidkar his lieutenant, "Take him up, and cast him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite; for recall how, when I and you were riding together behind his father Ahab, the LORD uttered this oracle against him: ²⁶As certainly as I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and his sons, I will repay you on this property, says the LORD. Take him up now, and throw him on the property, according to the word of the LORD."

²⁷When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw that, he fled by the way of Bethhaggan. Jehu followed him and said, "Shoot him, too."^u So they shot him in his chariot at the upward slope of Gur near Ibleam. He fled to Megiddo where he died. ²⁸His servants took him in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried

him in his grave with his fathers in the city of David.

²⁹Ahaziah became king of Judah in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab.

³⁰When Jezebel heard Jehu entering Jezreel, she painted her eyes,^v adorned her head, and looked out of the window. ³¹When Jehu arrived at the gate, she said, "Is all well, O Zimri, murderer of your master?"^x ³²Lifting up his face toward the window, he said, "Who is with me? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. ³³He said, "Push her out," and they pushed her out. Some of her blood bespattered the wall and the horses as they trampled her down.

³⁴After they had entered, they ate and drank. Then he said, "Attend now to this accursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." ³⁵When they went to bury her, they found nothing of her except her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands. ³⁶So they returned and told him. He said, "This is the word of the LORD spoken by his servant Elijah the Tishbite: In the district of Jezreel shall the dogs devour Jezebel's flesh, ³⁷and Jezebel's corpse shall be as dung upon the field in the district of Jezreel, so that they cannot say, This is Jezebel."

10 **AHAB HAD SEVENTY SONS IN** Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters which he sent to Samaria to the officials of Jezreel, the elders and the custodians of Ahab's children, as follows: ²"Now when you receive this letter, since you have charge of your master's sons, his chariots, his horses, his fortified cities and equipment, ³select the best and most capable of your master's sons and place him on the throne of his father, that they may contend for the house of your master." ⁴But trembling in great fear, they^y said, "Two kings could not stand before him, and

^s) Which shows him up as impulsive, aggressive, and merciless.

^t) Jehu proved himself an excellent marksman, to hit when his chariot was moving.

^u) This was going beyond divine orders.

^v) A common practice. ^w) Determined to die as she had lived, proudly and in high style—a plan Jehu did not allow her to carry through.

^x) Zimri had assassinated Elah king of Israel [I Kings 16: 8-20], had reigned for one week, and had then been murdered.

^y) Those were the cowardly elders—with some change of personnel—who had, at Jezebel's bidding, falsely accused and stoned Naboth to death.

how then could we stand?"⁵ So the manager of the palace and the city manager, together with the elders and custodians, sent to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants, and we will obey all your orders to us; we will not make anyone king. Do whatever seems right to you!"⁶ Then he wrote them a second letter, saying, "If you are for me and ready to listen to me, take the heads of your master's sons and appear before me at Jezreel tomorrow at this time."^a The sons of the king to the number of seventy persons were with the magnates of the city who were responsible for their upbringing.⁷ When the letter reached them, they took the sons of the king and killed the seventy of them. They put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel.⁸ When the messenger came and told him, "They have brought the heads of the sons of the king," he said, "Put them in two piles at the entrance of the gate until morning."⁹ In the morning, he went out, stood up, and said to all the people, "You are blameless. I conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these?"¹⁰ Know then, that not a syllable of the word of the LORD which He spoke against the house of Ahab shall remain unfulfilled; the LORD has done what He announced through Elijah His servant."^b ¹¹ So Jehu killed all those who remained of the house of Ahab at Jezreel—all his prominent men, his acquaintances, and his priests until there was not a single survivor.

¹² Next he started out for Samaria. On the way, at Beth-eked of the Shepherds, ¹³ he met the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah. "Who are you?" he asked. "We are the relatives of Ahaziah," they replied. "We have come down to visit the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother."¹⁴ "Take them alive," said he. So they took them alive and killed them at the pit of Beth-eked; he spared not one of them.^c

¹⁵ Leaving there, he fell in with Jehonadab son of Rechab, who was coming to meet him. He saluted him and said to him, "Is your heart as loyal to mine as my heart is to yours?" "It is," said Jehonadab. "If it is, give me your hand," [said Jehu]. He gave him his hand and [Jehu] took him up to him in his chariot. ¹⁶ He said further, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD."^d Then he made him ride in his chariot. ¹⁷ When he arrived at Samaria, he killed all the survivors of Ahab in Samaria—he exterminated them^e completely, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken through Elijah.

¹⁸ Then Jehu summoned all the people and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little; Jehu will serve him much."^f ¹⁹ Now call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let not one be missing, for I am preparing a great sacrifice for Baal. Every one who is missing shall forfeit his life." Jehu did this deceptively in order to destroy the servants of Baal. ²⁰ Jehu said, "Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal." So they called it. ²¹ Jehu notified all Israel, and all the servants of Baal came—not a single one failed to come. They assembled at the house of Baal until the house of Baal was filled from one end to the other. ²² He said to the man in charge of the wardrobe, "Bring out the vestments for the servants of Baal." So he brought out the vestments for them.

²³ When Jehu and Jehonadab son of Rechab entered the house of Baal, he said, "Investigate and see that there are no servants of the LORD here with you but only the servants of Baal."^g ²⁴ So they^h came to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. In the meantime Jehu had stationed eighty of his men on the outside, to whom he said, "The one who permits any of the men whom I give into your hands to escape shall pay for it with his life."

²⁵ When he had finished offering the burnt offering, Jehu said to the bodyguard and officers, "Enter and kill them,

z) Jehu knew the grade of character he was dealing with—putty in his hands.

a) So that all Israel might know the Omri dynasty was ended.

b) Killing was his familiar occupation; this time he could do it "to the glory of God."

c) Again he went beyond divine orders, which had confined him to northern Israel and Ahab's house. d) Jehonadab was a steadier and truer servant of God—a temperate man.

e) The house of Ahab. f) A trick too frequently applied in Europe during Inquisition days.

g) Jehonadab knew the true worshipers better than did Jehu. h) The Baal priests.

let not one of them get away." They killed them with the sword. The bodyguard and the officers threw them out and went into the inner part of the house of Baal. ²⁶They also brought out the pillarⁱ of the house of Baal and burned it. ²⁷They broke down the pillar of Baal and wrecked the house of Baal and made it a latrine until this day.

²⁸Though Jehu thus eradicated Baal from Israel, ²⁹he did not remove the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, the golden calves at Bethel and at Dan. ³⁰The LORD said to Jehu: Inasmuch as you did well to put into practice what is right in My sight and carried out everything I planned against the house of Ahab, four generations of your sons shall sit upon the throne of Israel.^j ³¹But Jehu was not careful to observe the Law of the LORD God of Israel with his whole heart, because he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam who led Israel to sin.^k

³²At that time the LORD began to trim off Israel. Hazael defeated them throughout all the territory of Israel ³³from the Jordan eastward, throughout all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer which is in the valley of the Arnon, throughout all Gilead and Bashan.^l

814 B.C.

³⁴The rest of the acts of Jehu and everything he did and his mighty power, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ³⁵So Jehu slept with his fathers, and they buried him at Samaria. Jehoahaz his son became king in his place. ³⁶Jehu was king over Israel at Samaria for twenty-eight years.

841 B.C.

11 WHEN ATHALIAH MOTHER OF Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal offspring; ²but Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram and sister of Ahaziah,^m took Joash son of Ahaziah and abducted him from among the sons

of the king about to be killed, placing him and his nurse in a storeroom where they concealed him from Athaliah so that he was not killed. ³He remained with her in hiding for six years, while Athaliah was ruler over the land.

⁴In the seventh year Jehoiada had the centurions of the bodyguard and escort brought to him in the house of the LORD, made an agreement with them, to which he bound them by oath in the house of the LORD, and then showed them the son of the king.ⁿ ⁵He gave them these orders, "This is what you are to do: A third of you who come on duty on the Sabbath shall guard the king's house; ⁶another third at the gate Sur and the final third at the gate behind the bodyguard; ⁷you shall guard the temple alternately. ⁸Two detachments of all of you, who go off duty on the Sabbath shall guard the house of the LORD for the king; ⁹you shall surround the king solidly, each with his weapons in his hand — any one intruding into the ranks shall be killed — and be with the king at all times."

⁹The centurions carried out the orders of Jehoiada the priest; each one took his men who came on duty on the Sabbath with those who went off duty on the Sabbath and came to Jehoiada the priest, ¹⁰who presented to the centurions the spears and shields that had belonged to King David, which were in the LORD's house. ¹¹The bodyguard stood, each with his weapons in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, about the altar and the house, around the king.^o ¹²Then he brought in the king's son, placed upon him the crown, and handed him the testimony.^p So they made him king and anointed him. They clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!"

¹³When Athaliah heard the noise of the bodyguard and the people, she came to the people in the house of the LORD. ¹⁴She glanced around, and look, there was the king standing by the pillar ac-

i) For Baal worship the Canaanites had pillars, which the Israelites were to overthrow, and were forbidden to erect for their own worship [Deut. 16:22].

j) God goes as far with His grace to us as we allow Him.

k) The worship of the golden calves and absence from the temple.

l) One reason for Hazael's anointment.

m) But not a daughter of Athaliah. n) No loyalty to dictatorial, pagan Athaliah.

o) A well-studied plan perfectly executed.

p) The Mt. Sinai Law, to be again the law of the land.

cordova to custom—the officers and trumpeters being with the king—and the people of the land were rejoicing and sounding the trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, “Conspiracy! Conspiracy!” ¹⁵Then Jehoiada the priest ordered the centurions, the officers of the army, “Bring her out^a between the ranks and whoever comes out with her, you kill with the sword.” For the priest said, “Do not kill her in the house of the LORD.” ¹⁶So they took hold of her, and she came out by the horses’ entrance to the house of the king, where they killed her.

¹⁷Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, the king, and the people that they should be the LORD’s people, and also between the king and the people. ¹⁸All the people of the land went to the house of Baal and broke it down; its altars and its images they wrecked completely, and they killed Mattan the priest^r of Baal before its altars. The priest^r set overseers over the house of the LORD. ¹⁹He also took the centurions of the bodyguard and of all the people, and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, passing through the gate of the Royal Guards to the house of the king, where he ascended the throne of the kings. ²⁰All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was peaceful after they had killed Athaliah with the sword in the house of the king. ²¹Joash was seven years old when he became king.

835 B.C.

12 JEHOASH^b BECAME KING IN Jehu’s seventh year, and he was king for forty years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Zibiah from Beersheba. ²Throughout his life Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the LORD, because Jehoiada the priest continued to instruct him. ³Only he did not remove the high places; the people continued to offer sacrifices and to burn incense at the high places.

⁴Jehoash said to the priests, “All the money of the sacred offerings which is brought into the house of the LORD, both the money levied according to each man’s valuation and the money from the voluntary offerings which may be brought to the LORD’s house,^c ⁵let the priests receive for themselves, each from his constituency; and let them repair the damage of the house wherever there is damage.”^d ⁶But up to the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, the priests had not made any repair of the damage of the house.^e ⁷So King Jehoash summoned Jehoiada the priest and the other priests and said to them, “Why have you not repaired the damage of the house? Now do not take any more money from your supporters, for you must give it to repair the damage of the house.”^w ⁸The priests agreed not to take any more money from the people nor to repair the damage of the house.

⁹Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole through its lid, and placed it beside the altar, on the right side as one enters the house of the LORD. The priests who served as doorkeepers put in it all the money brought to the house of the LORD. ¹⁰When they found sufficient money in the chest, the royal secretary and the high priest would come up, make it into ingots and evaluate the money found in the house of the LORD. ¹¹Then they placed the money that had been weighed out into the hands of the workmen who had charge of the house of the LORD, who paid it to the carpenters and builders working on the house of the LORD ¹²and to the masons and stonecutters; in addition, they paid for timber and dressed stone to repair the damage of the house of the LORD and everything else spent to restore the house. ¹³But silver goblets, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, any articles of silver, were not made with the money brought to the house of the LORD,^x ¹⁴because they gave it to the

q) Heb., “from within.”

r) The high priest Jehoiada, who initiated this renewed covenant between the king, the people and Jehovah. s) Joash and Jehoash are the same person.

t) There were two types of monetary offering, assessed and voluntary.

u) God’s house must be kept in repair and beautiful.

v) Giving orders is not enough. King and priest should have seen to the executions of those orders. w) It looks as if donations for repairs had been used for their own living expenses—sorely needed when so many worshipped idols.

x) What had been donated for repairs must be used for nothing else.

workmen who restored the house of the LORD with it. ¹⁶They required no accounting from the men into whose hands they had placed money for the workmen because they dealt honestly. ¹⁶The money from the guilt offerings and the sin offerings was not brought to the house of the LORD; it belonged to the priests.

¹⁷At that time Hazael king of Syria went up and made war against Gath and captured it. And when Hazael turned his face to go up against Jerusalem, ¹⁸Jehoash king of Judah took all the sacred treasures which Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah his fathers, kings of Judah had dedicated, together with his own sacred treasures and all the gold deposited in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and in the house of the king and sent them to Hazael king of Syria, so that he might leave Jerusalem.^y

¹⁹The rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁰His servants arose, contrived a plot, and killed Joash in Beth Millo on the road leading down to Silla.^z ²¹Joazar son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, killed him. So he died, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, while Amaziah his son became king in his place.

814 B.C.

13 IN THE TWENTY-THIRD YEAR OF Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu became king over Israel at Samaria; he was king for seventeen years. ²He did evil in the sight of the LORD and continued in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin; he did not turn away from them. ³The anger of the LORD was stirred against Israel so that He incessantly delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria and into the hand of Ben-hadad son of Hazael. ⁴But Jehoahaz prayed for the LORD's favor, and the LORD listened to him because he saw how the king of Syria kept oppressing Israel.^a ⁵So the LORD delivered Israel

and freed them from the hand of Syria. Then the Israelites lived in their homes as before. ⁶Only they did not turn away from the sin of the house of Jeroboam, who led Israel to sin; they continued in it, while the shame-images, too, remained standing in Samaria. ⁷There remained to Jehoahaz a force of only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and 10,000 foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had reduced them and made them like dust at threshing. ⁸The rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did, together with his might, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ⁹So Jehoahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him at Samaria; and his son Joash^b became king in his place.

798 B.C.

¹⁰In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel at Samaria, and he was king for sixteen years. ¹¹He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and he did not turn away from the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin; he continued in it. ¹²The rest of the acts of Joash^c and all that he did, together with his might and how he warred against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not recorded in the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ¹³So Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam^d occupied his throne. Joash was buried at Samaria with the kings of Israel.

¹⁴Elisha was confined at the time with the illness of which he was to die. Joash king of Israel went down to see him and wept in his presence, sobbing, "My father, my father! the chariots and the horsemen of Israel!"^e ¹⁵Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows"; so he took a bow and arrows. ¹⁶Then he said to the king of Israel, "Take hold of the bow." He took hold of the bow, and Elisha put his hands on the hands of the king, ¹⁷saying, "Open the window toward the east." When he had opened it, Elisha said, "Shoot!" and he shot. He exclaimed, "The arrow of victory! The arrow of victory over Syria! You shall utterly defeat Syria at Aphek."

y) No mention of counselors to the king; Jehoiaada seems to have retained much control.

z) Because he had paid the blackmail money? Or because no part in the government was accorded them? a) For once God's aim in chastising, to turn hearts toward Him, met some response.

b) Also called Jehoash. c) The same person as Jehoash. d) Jeroboam II.

e) What Elisha had cried out to Elijah and true of both; true of God's servants. They are THE strength of the nation.

¹⁸Then he said, "Take the arrows"; and he took them. "Strike the ground with them," he said to the king of Israel. So he struck it three times and then stopped.^f ¹⁹The man of God, displeased with him, said, "You should have struck it five or six times, for then you would have kept on striking down Syria to its utter destruction. But you shall strike down Syria only three times."

²⁰When Elisha died, they buried him. Bands of Moabites used to come into the land every spring. ²¹Once when they were burying a man, they saw such a band and hastily threw the man into Elisha's grave. As soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and rose to his feet.

²²Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. ²³But the LORD was gracious to them, had mercy upon them, and turned to them for the sake of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; He did not want to destroy them, nor had He cast them from His presence until now.

²⁴When Hazael king of Syria died, Ben-hadad his son became king in his place. ²⁵Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz retook the cities from Ben-hadad son of Hazael, which the latter had taken in the war with Jehoahaz his father; three times Joash defeated him and recovered the cities of Israel.

796 B.C.

14 IN THE SECOND YEAR OF JOASH son of Joahaz king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash became king of Judah. He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. ³He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, but not so well as David his father; he did as Joash his father had done. ⁴The high places were not removed, and the people continued to

offer sacrifices and burn incense at the high places.^h

⁵As soon as he had a firm hold on the kingdom, he put to death those of his servants who had killed the king, his father.ⁱ ⁶However, he did not put to death the children of the murderers, because it stands written in the book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD commanded: "Fathers shall not be put to death for children nor shall children be put to death for fathers; each person shall be put to death for his own sins."^j

⁷In the Valley of Salt he killed 10,000 Edomites and took Sela in battle. He renamed it Joktheel,^k its name to this day. ⁸At that time Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, with this message, "Come on, let us encounter one another."^l ⁹Jehoash king of Israel sent this reply to Amaziah king of Judah: "A thistle in Lebanon sent to the cedar in Lebanon this request: 'Give your daughter as a wife for my son'; but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the bramble."¹⁰Because you have utterly defeated Edom, your heart has made you proud. Enjoy your glory! Go home! Why should you stir up trouble, so that you and Judah fall together?" ¹¹But Amaziah refused to listen. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and they encountered one another in battle, he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Bethshemesh, which belonged to Judah. ¹²Judah was defeated by Israel, and they fled each one to his home.^m

¹³After Jehoash king of Israel had captured Amaziah king of Judah, son of Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, at Bethshemesh, he went to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim gate to the corner, a distance of 600 feet.ⁿ ¹⁴When he had taken all the gold, all the silver, and all the vessels found in the house of the LORD

f) Elisha had given him orders which he had accepted, so he should not have stopped until so told by Elisha.

h) One wonders to whom they sacrificed; however, even if to God, His revealed will demanded priestly sacrifice at His one sanctuary.

i) His father's slaying seems to have been undeserved; the perpetrators were punished fairly.

j) Cf. Deut. 24:16; Jer. 31:30; Ezek. 18:4,20.

k) Best known as Petra; its Bible name seems to mean, "Subjection to God."

l) No reason is given for Amaziah's challenge to battle; it was a costly mistake.

m) With his army dispersed, Amaziah and his people were at the mercy of Jehoash.

n) A rather useless procedure, except to teach Judah to behave itself.

and in the treasuries of the king's house, together with the hostages,^o he returned to Samaria.

¹⁵The rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, his might and how he warred with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ¹⁶So Jehoash slept with his fathers and was buried at Samaria with the kings of Israel; then his son Jeroboam became king in his place.

¹⁷Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, lived for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. ¹⁸The rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ¹⁹When they conspired against him at Jerusalem, he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish where they killed him.^p ²⁰They brought him on horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. ²¹Then all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah. ²²He built Elath and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers.

791 B.C.

²³In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, became king at Samaria; he reigned for forty-one years. ²⁴He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin. ²⁵He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance at Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah,^q in accordance with the word of the LORD God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah^r son of Amittai, the prophet, from Gath-hepher. ²⁶The LORD saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; none remained, either bond or free; there was no helper for Israel. ²⁷But the

LORD did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under the heaven; indeed He delivered them through the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash.

²⁸The rest of the acts of Jeroboam, all that he did, his might, how he made war, and how he restored Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, to Israel, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? ²⁹So Jeroboam slept with his fathers, with the kings of Israel, and his son Zechariah became king in his place.

790 B.C.

15 IN THE TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah^s son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. ²He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. ³He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with everything that Amaziah his father did. ⁴Only the high places were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and to burn incense at the high places.

⁵The LORD struck the king so that he was a leper until the day of his death.^t He lived in a separate house while Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging^u the people of the land. ⁶The rest of the acts of Azariah and all that he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ⁷So Azariah slept with his fathers and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; then his son Jotham became king in his place.

753 B.C.

⁸In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam was king over Israel at Samaria for six months. ⁹He did evil in the sight of the LORD as his fathers had done; he did not turn away from the

^o) This is the only mention in the Bible of the term "hostages," repeated in II Chron. 25:24.

^p) The repeated example of the Northern kingdom seems to have influenced Judah.

^q) While Assyria was beginning invasions into Syria, northern Israel enjoyed peace and prosperity; but this also meant that it would be next to feel Assyria's heavy hand.

^r) The prophet of the book named for him.

^s) Usually called Uzziah. For 12 years Jeroboam II must have hindered his free reign over Judah, for his father Amaziah survived Joash of Israel 15 years (ch. 14:17).

^t) The reason is given in II Chron. 26:16-20. ^u) Term probably indicates regency.

sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin.^v ¹⁰Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against him, cut him down at Ibleam, killed him, and became king in his place. ¹¹The rest of the acts of Zechariah, see, they are told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. ¹²That was in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken to Jehu: Four generations of your sons shall occupy the throne of Israel.^w And it was so.

¹³Shallum son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; he was king at Samaria for a month. ¹⁴At that time Menahem son of Gadi^x came up from Tirzah to Samaria, where he cut down Shallum son of Jabesh, killed him, and became king in his place. ¹⁵The rest of the acts of Shallum and the conspiracy which he raised, see, they are told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.^y

752 B.C.

¹⁶Then Menahem destroyed Tiphshah,^z all who were in it, and all the surrounding territory from Tirzah on; if a city refused to open, he razed it and ripped open all its pregnant women.

¹⁷In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king over Israel; and he reigned for ten years. ¹⁸He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not throughout his reign turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin. ¹⁹When Pul king of Assyria came into the land, Menahem gave Pul 2,000,000 dollars in silver to gain his support for himself in holding the kingdom. ²⁰Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from all the powerful men of wealth to pay the king of Assyria, assessing each man fifty shekels of silver. So the king of Assyria returned and did not remain there in the land.

²¹The rest of the acts of Menahem and all that he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the

kings of Israel? ²²So Menahem slept with his fathers and Pekahiah his son became king in his place.

742 B.C.

²³Pekahiah son of Menahem became king over Israel in the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah; and he reigned for two years. ²⁴He too did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin. ²⁵Pekah son of Remaliah, his official, with fifty men of the Gileadites, conspired against him, cut him down at Samaria in the citadel of the king's house with Argob and Arieah—killed him, and became king in his place. ²⁶The rest of the acts of Pekahiah and all that he did, see, they are recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

752 B.C.

²⁷In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king over Israel at Samaria, and he reigned for twenty years.^a ²⁸He did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin. ²⁹In the time of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria^b came and took Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried off their inhabitants to Assyria.

732 B.C.

³⁰Then Hoshea son of Elah raised a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah, cut him down, killed him, and became king in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. ³¹The rest of the acts of Pekah and all that he did, see, they are recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

751 B.C.

³²In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, became king. ³³He was twenty-five years old when he became king and continued as king

v) Without exception those kings considered political control more important than obedience to and worship of God, a mistake the Communists are making in our time.

w) Ch. 10:30. x) Of the tribe of Gad.

y) No anointing is mentioned in the case of these ephemeral kings.

z) In the extreme north of Ephraim.

a) Beginning his reign in Gilead, it seems, in 752 B.C.

b) The books of Chronicles have much more to tell about the kings of Judah than do the books of Kings.

in Jerusalem for sixteen years. His mother's name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok.^c ³⁴He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with all that Uzziah his father had done. ³⁵However, they did not remove the high places; the people still offered sacrifices and burnt incense at the high places. He constructed the upper gate of the LORD's house. ³⁶The rest of the acts of Jotham, what he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?^d ³⁷In those days the LORD began to send Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah.^e ³⁸So Jotham slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Ahaz his son reigned in his place. 743 B.C.

16 IN THE SEVENTEENTH YEAR OF Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham, king of Judah, became king. ²Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God as David his father had done. ³He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, even making his son pass through fire, in accordance with the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed from before the children of Israel. ⁴He sacrificed and burned incense at the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

⁵Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to war against Jerusalem. They besieged Ahaz but could not subdue him. ⁶At that time Rezin king of Syria regained Elath for Edom, clearing the Jews completely out of Elath. So the Edomites came back to Elath and live there to this day.

⁷Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up, and save me from the hand of the king

of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel who are marching against me." ⁸Ahaz took the silver and gold deposited in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house and sent it as a gift to the king of Assyria.^f ⁹The king of Assyria listened to him. The king of Assyria went up to Damascus, seized it, exiled its inhabitants to Kir, and killed Rezin.

¹⁰Then King Ahaz went to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria at Damascus where he saw the altar that was at Damascus. King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest a model of the altar together with detailed plans for its construction. ¹¹So Urijah the priest built the altar. In accordance with the plans which King Ahaz sent from Damascus, Urijah the priest made the altar before King Ahaz's return from Damascus. ¹²When the king returned from Damascus, he inspected the altar. The king then approached and went up to the altar,^g ¹³where he offered his burnt offering and his meal offering. He also poured out his drink offering and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings against the altar.^h ¹⁴The bronze altar before the LORD he removed from the front of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of the altar.ⁱ ¹⁵King Ahaz gave these instructions to Urijah the priest: "Upon the great altar^j you must offer the morning burnt offering, the evening meal offering, the king's burnt offering and meal offering, and the burnt offering of all the people of the land, together with their meal offering and their drink offering, and sprinkle against it the blood of the burnt offering and all the blood of the sacrifice. The bronze altar, however, must be reserved for me to inquire by." ¹⁶And Urijah the priest did as King Ahaz had ordered.

¹⁷King Ahaz cut off the rims of the

c) The three Zadoks whose ministries are described were priests; this Zadok very likely was one of them. His daughter Jerusha gave the grandson a good start.

d) In numerous instances kings of Judah served first as assistants to their predecessors, as acting kings, to be crowned after the aging king's death.

e) Neither king was consciously carrying out the will of God.

f) Ahaz failed to see that the weakening of Assyria would bring Assyria that much sooner upon Judah; for with Israel it served as a buttress against Assyria.

g) His new altar. For an exceptional occasion [I Kings 8:62], Solomon offered on the temple altar, but when Uzziah did so, he was punished. Ahaz made the priests use the newly made altar, but expected supernatural information by means of the divinely dedicated altar.

bases and removed the laver from off them; he also took down the sea from the bronze oxen which supported it and put it on a base made of stones. ¹⁸The Sabbath covering,^h which they had constructed in the temple house, and the king's entrance from the outside, he turned around in the house of the LORD because of the king of Assyria. ¹⁹The rest of the acts of Ahaz, what he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁰So Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and his son Hezekiah became king in his place.

17 IN THE TWELFTH YEAR OF AHAZ king of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king in Samaria and reigned over Israel for nine years. ²He did evil in the sight of the LORD, only not like the kings of Israel before him.

³When Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him, Hoshea became his servant and paid tribute to him; ⁴but when the king of Assyria found that Hoshea was plotting rebellion against him — for he sent messengers to So king of Egypt and no longer paid tribute regularly to the king of Assyria — the king of Assyria arrested and imprisoned him. ⁵The king of Assyria then marched through the whole land, came against Samaria, and laid it under siege for three years. ⁶The king of Assyria captured Samaria in the ninth year of Hoshea and exiled Israel to Assyria, where he settled them in Halah, in Habor, on the river Gozan, and in the Median cities.ⁱ

722 B.C.

⁷This came about because the children of Israel sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods ⁸and observed the customs of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the children of Israel, and the customs of the kings of Israel whom they had

appointed. ⁹The children of Israel also did things secretly, which were not right, against the LORD their God. They erected high places for themselves in all their cities from watchman's tower to fortified city. ¹⁰They set up for themselves pillars and shame images on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹They burnt incense there at the high places as the nations did whom the LORD had removed before them; they did evil things to provoke the LORD, ¹²and they worshiped idols concerning which the LORD had warned: You must not do this thing.

¹³Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah through every prophet and every seer: Turn from your evil ways and observe My commands and My statutes in accordance with the whole law which I commanded your fathers and which I delivered to you through My servants the prophets. ¹⁴But they refused to listen; they were as stubborn as their fathers had been, who did not remain faithful to the LORD their God. ¹⁵They rejected His statutes, His covenant which He made with their fathers, and the testimonies He gave them. They went after emptiness and became empty, and followed the nations surrounding them about whom the LORD commanded them not to do as they did. ¹⁶They forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God, made for themselves molten images — two calves — and a shame image, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. ¹⁷They made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire;^k they practiced fortune-telling and enchantment, and they sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke Him. ¹⁸So the LORD became deeply angered and put them out of His sight; the tribe of Judah alone remained.

¹⁹Neither did Judah observe the commandments of the LORD their God; they followed the practices which Israel had adopted. ²⁰The LORD, therefore, rejected all the children of Israel,

^h) A passage providing protection for those attending services, it seems.

ⁱ) In spite of prophetic warning, the Hebrews would turn to Egypt for help against the empires to the east.

^j) This marks the end of northern Israel as a nation.

^k) A fanatical and God-dishonoring dedication of their children to the heathen idol Molech.

afflicted them, and handed them over to plunderers until He could put them out of His sight.

²¹For Israel split off from the house of David and made Jeroboam son of Nebat king; Jeroboam lured Israel away from following the LORD and made them to commit a great sin. ²²The children of Israel walked in all the sins which Jeroboam committed; they did not turn away from them ²³until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He said He would do through all His servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their land to Assyria where they remain to this day.

²⁴The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, from Cuthah, from Avva, from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of Israel; they took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities. ²⁵When they first came to live there, they did not revere the LORD, but the LORD sent lions among them which killed some of them. ²⁶They informed the king of Assyria, "The nations which you have exiled and made to dwell in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the land who sent lions among them and killed some of them, because they do not know the law of the god of the land." ²⁷Then the king of Assyria gave this order: "Take back there one of the priests whom you exiled from there, that he may go and live there and teach them the law of the god of the land." ²⁸So one of the priests, exiled from Samaria, came to live at Bethel, and he taught them how to worship the LORD. ²⁹But each nation continued to make its own gods and set them up in the sanctuary of the high places which the people of Samaria had built, each nation in the cities where they lived. ³⁰The men of Babylon made¹ Succoth-benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, ³¹the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak their god; the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adramme-

lech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. ³²They also worshiped the LORD and appointed for themselves from their own people high-place priests to sacrifice for them in the sanctuaries of the high places.^m ³³So they worshiped the LORD and at the same time served their gods, according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been exiled.

³⁴To this very day they follow their former practices. They do not worship the LORD, nor do they follow the statutes and judgments in accordance with the law and commandment which the LORD gave to the children of Jacob, whose name He changed to Israel, ³⁵with whom the LORD had made a covenant and whom He gave command: You must not revere other gods nor worship them nor serve them nor offer sacrifices to them; ³⁶but you must revere the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with mighty power and with an outstretched arm; you must worship Him and offer sacrifices to Him, ³⁷and throughout life observe carefully the statutes, the judgments, the instruction, and the commandment, which He wrote down for you. You must never revere other gods. ³⁸You must never forget the covenant I made with you; you must never revere other gods, ³⁹but you must revere the LORD your God, for He it was who delivered you from the hand of all your enemies.ⁿ ⁴⁰Nevertheless they would not listen but followed their former practices. ⁴¹These nations revered the LORD but also served their graven images. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did.^o

725 B.C.

18 IN THE THIRD YEAR OF HOSHEA son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. ²He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah.

³He did what was right in the sight

1) They made images, each of the gods he worshiped.

m) Instead of choosing between God and idols, they thought it safer to pay some attention to both, thereby dishonoring God. n) Throughout the Bible, repetitions serve to emphasize great truths.

o) To these religious hybrids the name Samaritans was given by the Jews, for their capital Samaria.

of the LORD as David his father had done. ⁴He removed the high places, broke down the pillars, cut off the shame images, and crushed the bronze serpent which Moses had made; for up to this time the children of Israel continued to burn incense to it; it was called Nehushtan.^p ⁵He trusted in the LORD God of Israel — there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, after or before his time. ⁶He clung to the LORD and did not turn away from Him; he observed the commandments which the LORD gave Moses. ⁷The LORD was with him and made him succeed in every venture. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. ⁸He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its suburbs, from watchman's tower to fortified city.

⁹In the fourth year of King Hezekiah — that was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel — Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and laid it under siege, ¹⁰capturing it at the end of three years. In the sixth year of Hezekiah — that was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel — Samaria was captured. ¹¹The king of Assyria exiled Israel to Assyria; he placed them in Halah, in Habor, the river Gozan, and in the Median cities.^q ¹²It was because they refused to listen to the voice of the LORD their God and transgressed His covenant — everything that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded. They neither listened to it nor practiced it.

¹³In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ¹⁴Hezekiah king of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria at Lachish, "I have done wrong.^r Withdraw from me; I will bear whatever you prescribe for me." Then the king of Assyria demanded of Hezekiah king of Judah 600,000 dollars in silver and 900,000 dollars in gold. ¹⁵Hezekiah gave him all the money deposited in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house. ¹⁶At that

time Hezekiah cut up the doors of the sanctuary of the LORD and the doorposts which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave them to the king of Assyria. ¹⁷The king of Assyria sent the field marshal, the chief treasurer, and the chief of staff, with a large force from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. So they went up and arrived at Jerusalem; they stood at the aqueduct of the upper pool, which is on the road to the fuller's field. ¹⁸When they called to the king, Eliakim son of Hilkiah, overseer of the house, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to him.

¹⁹The chief of staff said to them, "Tell Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria:^s What confidence is this in which you trust? ²⁰You think mere lip service is advice and strength enough for war! Now in whom do you have confidence, that you have rebelled against me? ²¹Now indeed, you are placing your trust in the support of this broken reed, in Egypt; if anyone were to brace himself against it, it would run into his palm and pierce it. So is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to all who trust in him. ²²If you should say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' was it not Hezekiah who removed His high places and His altars and gave orders to Judah and Jerusalem, 'Before this altar at Jerusalem you must worship'? ²³Now take a wager with my master, the king of Assyria: I will indeed give you 2,000 horses if you are able to furnish riders for them. ²⁴How then can you drive away one of the least of my master's servants, when you depend on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ²⁵Have I now come up against this place to destroy it without the LORD's consent? The LORD said to me: Go up against this land and destroy it.'"

²⁶Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah requested of the chief of staff, "Speak now to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; do not speak to us in the Judean tongue with-

p) "Only a piece of brass," they said when they destroyed it.

q) This was the second, more complete exile of northern Israel.

r) To have expected help from Egypt.

s) No title included for Judah's king, but hyperbolic titles for the emperor.

t) The orator was wrong there. To God's honor, Hezekiah had destroyed the Canaanite high places and altars, used by idolatrous Jews. Such defamation was the Assyrians' undoing.

in hearing distance of the people on the wall."

²⁷The chief of staff replied to them, "Has my master sent me to say these things to your master and to you and not to the men sitting on the wall, destined along with you to eat their own excrement and to drink their own urine?" ²⁸Then the chief of staff stood up and called with a loud voice in the Judean language. He said, "Listen to the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. ²⁹Thus says the king: 'Do not allow Hezekiah to deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hand. ³⁰Do not permit Hezekiah to make you have confidence in the LORD with the promise, "Surely the LORD will deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." ³¹Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus has the king of Assyria said, 'Make peace with me, come out to me, for then each one may eat of his own vine and his own fig-tree and drink water from his own well, ³²until I come and take you to a land like yours, a land of grain and wine, a land of food and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey where you may live and not die. Do not listen to Hezekiah when he wants to seduce you with his, "The LORD will deliver us." ³³Has indeed anyone of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?' ³⁴Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Did they deliver Samaria from my hand? ³⁵Who of all the gods of the lands have delivered their land from my hand that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'"

³⁶The people remained silent and spoke not a word in reply to him; for the king had given orders, "Do not reply to him." ³⁷Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the overseer of the house, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came in to Hezekiah, tearing their garments; they told him the words of the chief of staff.

19 WHEN KING HEZEKIAH HEARD it, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went to the LORD's house. ²Moreover, he sent Eliakim the manager of the house, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, who had also put on sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. ³They said to him, "Thus has Hezekiah said:

A day of distress and reproach,

And of dishonor is today,

For children have come to birth

But there is not strength to give birth.

⁴Perhaps the LORD your God* will listen to all the words of the chief of staff, whom the king of Assyria, his master, sent to ridicule the living God, and have a reply for the words which the LORD your God has heard. Pray then, for the remnant that is left."

⁵So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, and ⁶Isaiah said to them, "Tell your master, 'Thus has the LORD said: Be not troubled because of the words you have heard, whereby the servants of the king of Assyria have taunted Me. ⁷Behold, I will put a spirit in him, so that when he hears a rumor, he will return to his land; I will overthrow him with the sword in his own land.'"

⁸When the chief of staff returned, he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that he had left Lachish. ⁹After hearing the news about Tirhakah king of Ethiopia — "He has come out to fight with you" — he sent the messengers back to Hezekiah with this message: ¹⁰"Tell Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you have confidence deceive you with the promise: Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. ¹¹You have indeed heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, completely destroying them; and are you going to be spared? ¹²Have the gods of the nations, which my fathers destroyed, delivered them — Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, the citizens of Eden in Tel-assar?

u) This blasphemy God avenged in His own time.

v) The answer is, "None," but the questioner did not know God.

w) They should have contacted God's prophet much earlier.

x) Why "your God"? Why not "our God"? Were they not on intimate terms with God?

¹³Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?"

¹⁴Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers, and when he had read it, he brought it up to the house of the LORD. There Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: "O LORD God of Israel, seated over the cherubim,^y Thou alone art God of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made the heavens and the earth. ¹⁶Incline Thine ear, O LORD, and listen; open Thine eyes and look; and listen to the words of Sennacherib who has sent to insult the living God. ¹⁷Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands¹⁸ and have cast their gods into the fire; yet they were not gods but merely the product of human hands, wood and stone — and they destroyed them. ¹⁹Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou, LORD, alone art God."

²⁰Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah, "Thus has the LORD God of Israel said: I have heard your prayer to Me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria. ²¹This is what the LORD has spoken concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion has despised you and scorned you. The daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head over you. ²²Whom have you reproached and taunted, against whom raised your voice and scornfully lifted up your eyes? against the Holy One of Israel? ²³By your messengers you reproached the LORD and said, 'With the multitudes of my chariots I scaled the highest mountains, the remotest parts of Lebanon; I cut down its tallest cedars, its choicest fir trees, I came to its remotest lodge, its cultivated forest. ²⁴I dug a well and drank strange waters, I wiped dry with the soles of My feet all the canals of the Nile.' ²⁵Have you not heard long ago

that I did it? From days of yore formed it; now I bring it to pass, — that you turn to rubbish heaps fortified cities, ²⁶with their citizens impatient, terrified and confounded. They were as field plants, as shoots of green grass, like root growth scorched before it comes up. ²⁷Your abode, your goings and comings I know... and you raging against Me. ²⁸Because you raged against Me and your insolence has come to My ears, I will put My hook in your nose, My bridle on your lips, and I will send you back the way by which you came.

²⁹"This shall be the sign for you: the first year you shall eat aftergrowth the second year re-growth, but the third year sow and reap, plant vine yards, and eat their fruit.^z ³⁰The survivors of the house of Judah who are left shall again take root downward and bear fruit upwards;^a ³¹for from Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant and from Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.^b

³²"Therefore, thus has the LORD spoken concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come up to this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor appear before it with a shield, nor throw up a mound against it. ³³He shall return the same way he came; he shall not come up against this city, says the LORD. ³⁴For I will defend this city to spare it for My sake and that of David my servant."

³⁵That night the messenger of the LORD went forth and killed 185,000 in the Assyrian camp. When men arose early in the morning, look, those were all dead bodies!^c ³⁶So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. ³⁷And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons cut him down with the sword; they escaped to the land of Ararat. And his son Esar-haddon became king in his place.

y) Referring to God's special presence above the mercy seat, between the two cherubim above the ark of the covenant.

z) No harvest that year, for the Assyrians took it; nor a chance to put in next year's crop. But next year's autumn, they will be able to put in the crop for the third year.

a) They shall enjoy natural growth and productivity as God's children.

b) God zealous for His lukewarm people.

c) By what calamity we are not told, for we need not know. We know that God does not forget or neglect His own.

713 B.C.

20 AT THAT TIME HEZEKIAH BECAME mortally ill. Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet, came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you will die; you will not recover." ²Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD: ³"Remember now, I pray Thee, O LORD, how I walked before Thee faithfully and wholeheartedly and did what was pleasing in Thy sight." Hezekiah wept very bitterly.

⁴Before Isaiah had left the courtyard, the word of the LORD came to him: ⁵Return and tell Hezekiah, the leader of My people, Thus has the LORD God of David your father said: I have heard your prayer and have seen your tears; look, I am going to heal you. On the third day you will go up to the house of the LORD. ⁶I will have fifteen years added to your life, and I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for My sake and for that of David My servant. ⁷Isaiah said, "Take a fig cake." So they took it and applied it to the boil, and he recovered.

⁸Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?" ⁹And Isaiah replied, "This shall be the LORD's sign for you, that the LORD will do what He said: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps or recede ten steps?" ¹⁰Hezekiah said, "It is easy for the shadow to extend ten steps; no, let the shadow recede ten steps." ¹¹Then Isaiah the prophet called upon the LORD who made the shadow recede ten steps by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz.

¹²At that time Merodach-baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah was ill. ¹³Hezekiah received them^c and showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the aromatic oil, his

armory, and everything deposited in his treasuries; there was not a thing in the house or in all his kingdom which Hezekiah did not show them.^e ¹⁴When Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah, he inquired of him, "What did these men say and from where have they come to you?" "They came from a distant land, from Babylon," replied Hezekiah. ¹⁵"What did they see in your house?" he continued. Hezekiah answered, "They saw everything in my house. There is not a thing in my treasuries that I did not show them."

¹⁶"Listen to the word of the LORD," said Isaiah to Hezekiah: ¹⁷The time is coming when everything in your house, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, shall be carried away to Babylon; not a thing shall be left, says the LORD. ¹⁸Some of your own sons, your very offspring, shall be taken away to become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

¹⁹Hezekiah replied to Isaiah, "Good is the word of the LORD which you have declared."^h For he thought, "Is it not so, if there is peace and security in my time?"

²⁰The rest of the acts of Hezekiah, all his might and how he made the pool and aqueduct to bring water into the city, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²¹So Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and his son Manasseh became king in his place.

696 B.C.

21 MANASSEH WAS TWELVE YEARS old when he became king,ⁱ and he continued to reign at Jerusalem for fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ²He did evil in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with the abominations of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the children of Israel. ³He restored again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; he built altars for Baal; he made a shame image, as Ahab king of

d) A very different way from Ahab, when refused the vineyard he wanted [I Kings 21:4].

e) What infinite patience, dealing with a doubting believer! Facing such an attitude, what would we say or do? f) Those who brought the letter and present.

g) Apparently not humbly; not with a word of gratitude toward God.

h) He took the rebuke as a trusting and loyal child.

i) Too young for his task without a reliable leader. The high priest or another godly officer should have been assigned for his tutor. Had Hezekiah been too busy with the affairs of state to prepare his son?

Israel had done, and he worshiped and served all the host of heaven. ⁴He built altars in the house of the LORD when the LORD had said, In Jerusalem I will put My name. ⁵He also built altars for all the host of heaven in both courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶He made his son to pass through the fire; he practiced soothsaying and fortune-telling, and he provided necromancers and wizards. He did even worse in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger.

⁷He put the graven image of the shame goddess he had made into the very house about which the LORD had said to David and Solomon his son: In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have selected out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever. ⁸Never again will I make the feet of Israel wander from the land I gave to their fathers, if only they will observe to do in accordance with all I commanded them and in accordance with the law that Moses My servant commanded them. ⁹But they would not listen; Manasseh misled them to do more evil than the nations which the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.^j

¹⁰So the LORD spoke through His servants the prophets: ¹¹Because Manasseh has done these detestable things, has done more wickedly than all the Amorites did before him, and has made Judah to sin with his disgusting idols, ¹²therefore thus has the LORD God of Israel said: Behold, I will bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah that both ears of those who hear it will ring. ¹³I will stretch out over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of Ahab's house; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish — he wipes it as he turns it upside down. ¹⁴I will abandon the remnant of My inheritance, handing them over to their enemies; they shall be plunder and prey for their enemies, ¹⁵because they did evil in My sight and angered Me from the time their fathers came out of Egypt until now.

¹⁶Manasseh also spilled very much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from end to end, in addition to the sin whereby he led Judah to sin, to do evil in the sight of the LORD.

¹⁷The rest of the acts of Manasseh, all that he did and the sin he committed, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?^k ¹⁸So Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza; and his son Amon became king in his place.

641 B.C.

¹⁹Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned for two years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰He did evil in the sight of the LORD as Manasseh his father had done. ²¹He walked in every way his father walked, served the disgusting idols his father served, and worshiped them.^l ²²He deserted the LORD, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD. ²³Amon's servants conspired against him and killed the king in his house. ²⁴Then the people of the land cut down all those who conspired against King Amon; the people of the land also made his son Josiah king in his place.

²⁵The rest of the acts of Amon and what he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ²⁶So they buried him in his grave in the garden of Uzza; and his son Josiah became king in his place.

639 B.C.

22 JOSIAH WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years; his mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah from Bozkath. ²He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, walking in all the way of David his father, turning neither to the right nor to the left.^m

³In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the scribe, to

j) Manasseh burdened himself and his people with sins unmeasured and unmentionable. Neither he nor his people had to commit those sins; they remained free to choose between good and evil. k) II Chron. 33:10-13 tells of his imprisonment and conversion.

l) Manasseh's repentance must have been known to Amon at 22; but he preferred the wicked way and got what he deserved sooner than he expected.

m) Why these splendid sons of wicked fathers and these wicked sons of splendid fathers, unless there was a vast difference between their mothers!

the house of the LORD, saying, ⁴"Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, and let him melt down the silver that has come to the house of the LORD and that the doorkeepers have collected from the people; ⁵put it in the hands of the workmen who are in charge of the house of the LORD, and let them pay it over to the workmen in the house of the LORD to repair the damage of the house, ⁶to the carpenters, builders and masons, and for the purchase of timber and cut stone to restore the house."ⁿ ⁷Only they must not be required to give an account of the money placed in their hands, because they deal honestly."

⁸Then Hilkiah the high priest informed Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan who read it. ⁹So Shaphan the scribe went to the king and reported on the matter to the king as follows, "Your servants have paid out the money deposited in the house and put it into the hands of the workmen who are in charge of the house of the LORD." ¹⁰Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest gave me a book," and Shaphan read the book before the king.

¹¹When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes.^o ¹²The king gave Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, these orders: ¹³"Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people, for all Judah about the words of this book that has been discovered; for great is the LORD's indignation stirred up against us because our fathers did not listen to the words of this book, to carry out everything written therein concerning us."

¹⁴So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess,^p the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (she lived in the second quarter of Jerusalem) and conferred with her. ¹⁵She said to them, "Thus has

the LORD God of Israel said: Tell the man who sent you to Me, ¹⁶Thus has the LORD said, Behold, I will bring evil against this place and its inhabitants in accordance with all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷Because they have deserted Me and have burned incense to other gods to provoke Me with all the works of their hands, My indignation has been stirred up against this place and shall not subside.

¹⁸"And to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, say, Thus has the LORD God of Israel said: About the words which you have heard, ¹⁹because your heart was penitent and you have humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I said concerning this place and its inhabitants, that they shall become a curse, and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I too have heard you, says the LORD. ²⁰Therefore observe! I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace;^q your eyes shall not look upon all the evil I will bring upon this place." Then they reported back to the king.

23 THE KING SUMMONED TO HIMSELF all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ²Then the king went up to the LORD's house; with him went all the men of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, young and old; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant discovered in the house of the LORD. ³The king standing beside the pillar made the covenant before the LORD to follow the LORD, to keep His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes with his whole heart and soul, and to uphold the words of this covenant written in this book; and all the people agreed to the covenant.^r

⁴The king gave orders to Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of second rank,^a and the doorkeepers, to remove from the

n) Reverence and love for God will normally extend to His house of worship.

o) Failure to keep priest and people versed in God's revelation of Himself and of His will had resulted in the fearful degradation of Israel, north and south.

p) Only here this great woman is mentioned, like Deborah, a mother in Israel. Be assured, she stood not alone in her sublime faith.

q) An assurance which God is ever ready to give to the repentant sinner.

r) What had reached him, must be broadcast for everyone. s) Next to the high priest.

temple of the LORD all the vessels made for Baal, for the shame images, and for all the host of heaven; he burned them outside Jerusalem in the Kidron terraces, and their ashes he transported to Bethel.^t ⁶He deposed the priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn incense at the high places in the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the signs of Zodiac, and to all the host of heaven. ⁶He removed the shame image from the house of the LORD outside Jerusalem to the valley of the Kidron, where he burned it, ground it to dust, and cast its dust upon the graves of the common people. ⁷He tore down the houses of the male prostitutes in the area of the house of the LORD where the women wove robes for the shame image. ⁸He brought out all the priests from the cities of Judah, defiled^u the high places where the priests burned incense, from Geba^v to Beersheba; and he tore down the high places of the gates at the entrance to the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on the left side as one enters the city gate. ⁹Now the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of the LORD at Jerusalem, but they ate the unleavened bread among their brothers.^w ¹⁰He also defiled the Topheth in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, so that no one could again make his son or daughter pass through the fire for Molech. ¹¹He removed the horses which the kings of Judah had presented to the sun at the entrance of the LORD's house by the cell of Nathan-melech the eunuch, which was in the precincts; the sun chariots he burned with fire. ¹²The king also tore down the altars on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, made by the kings of Judah, and the altars constructed by Manasseh in the two courtyards of the LORD's house. He broke

them up there and scattered their dust about the valley of the Kidron. ¹³Besides, the king defiled the high places in front of Jerusalem to the right of the mount of destruction, which Solomon king of Israel built for Ashtarte the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ¹⁴He broke down the pillars, cut off the shame images, and filled their place with men's bones.

¹⁵He also tore down the altar at Bethel, the high place, which Jeroboam son of Nebat, who led Israel to sin, had erected — that altar and the high place — crushing its stones, stamping it to dust, and burning the shame images. ¹⁶When Josiah turned, he caught sight of the graves there on the mountain; he sent and took the bones from the graves and burned them upon the altar which he then defiled, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed who had announced these things.^x ¹⁷He said, "What is that monument I see?" The men of the city replied, "It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and announced these things you have done to the altar at Bethel."^y ¹⁸He said, "Let him be; let no one disturb his bones." So they left his bones alone with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

¹⁹He also removed the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to anger the LORD; he did to them what he had done to everything at Bethel. ²⁰He sacrificed all the priests of the high places there upon the altars, burned human bones upon them, and then returned to Jerusalem.

²¹The king issued these orders to all the people, "Celebrate a Passover to the LORD your God as prescribed in the book of this covenant."^z ²²There was no Passover like this one since the

t) Reformation starts usually with destruction of the wrong.

u) The method of defiling is not stated here, but we know there was desecration so as to eliminate further use. v) The northernmost point in Benjamin.

w) Aaronic priests, it seems, allowed to associate with those employed at the temple, but not to serve there.

x) Given in I Kings 13:1,2, and much of the whole chapter. Burning bones was considered improper by accepted standards.

y) Bethel lay in Benjamin, with Ephraim just beyond its boundaries. Josiah went farther north with reformatory methods.

z) Wisely and mercifully God ordained memorial festivals to make it easier for His people to practice worship and service all through life.

time of the judges who judged Israel or in all the time of the kings of Judah. ²³This Passover to the LORD was celebrated at Jerusalem in the eighteenth year of King Josiah.

²⁴Josiah also exterminated the necromancers, the wizards, the teraphim,^a the disgusting idols, and all the abominations that appeared in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, to carry out the words of the Law, written in the book which Hilkiah the priest had found in the house of the LORD. ²⁵There was no king before him who so turned to the LORD with all his heart, all his soul, and all his strength^b in accordance with the whole law of Moses; and none like him arose afterward.

²⁶However, the LORD did not turn from his great anger which had been aroused against Judah for all the provocations whereby Manasseh had angered Him. ²⁷The LORD said: I will remove Judah from My sight as I removed Israel, and I will reject this My chosen city, even Jerusalem and the house concerning which I said, My name shall be there.

²⁸The rest of the acts of Josiah and all that he did, are they not recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

²⁹In his time Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went up against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates river and when King Josiah came out to meet him, Necho killed him^c at Meggido when he saw him. ³⁰Dead in a chariot his servants carried him from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his grave. The people of the land then took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in place of his father.

608 B.C.

³¹Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned for three months. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ³²He did evil in the

sight of the LORD, according to all his fathers had done. ³³Pharaoh Necho imprisoned him at Riblah^d in the land of Hamath, that he might no longer be king at Jerusalem and laid a fine on the land of 200,000 dollars in silver and 30,000 dollars in gold. ³⁴Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father,^e but changed his name to Jehoiakim. Jehoahaz he took with him to Egypt, where he died. ³⁵Jehoiakim paid the silver and gold to Pharaoh. He assessed the land to pay the money in accordance with the demand of Pharaoh; from each one according to his assessment, he exacted the silver and gold of the people of the land to pay Pharaoh Necho.

³⁶Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old, when he became king, and he was king for eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. ³⁷He did evil in the sight of the LORD as all his fathers had done.

24 IN HIS TIME NEBUCHADREZZAR king of Babylon^f came up, and he became his servant for three years, after which he turned and rebelled against him. ²The LORD also sent against him bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of Ammonites; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by His servants the prophets. ³That was indeed the command of the LORD against Judah to remove it from His sight because of the sin of Manasseh, according to everything he did. ⁴Also because of the innocent blood which he shed; he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was unwilling to pardon him.^g

597 B.C.

⁵The rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did, are they not told in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ⁶So Jehoiakim slept

a) Household gods, as shown in Rachel's behavior [Gen. 31:30-34].

b) The very words given in the family worship suggestions of Deut. 6:4-9, with following verses.

c) Josiah risked his life so uselessly after so splendid a reign.

d) Far north on the Orontes river. e) Egypt was in control.

f) Babylonia had conquered Assyria and had taken over its empire. Nebuchadrezzar is correct.

g) Manasseh had personally repented and had found mercy [II Chron. 33:12,13]; but that did not remove the evil he had done.

with his fathers, and his son Jehoiachin became king in his place.

⁷The king of Egypt did not again leave his country; for the king of Babylon had taken everything that belonged to the king of Egypt from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates river.^h

597 B.C.

⁸Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he continued as king in Jerusalem for three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. ⁹He did evil in the sight of the LORD as his father had done.ⁱ

¹⁰At that time the servants of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem,^j and the city underwent a siege. ¹¹Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and while his servants were besieging it, ¹²Jehoiachin king of Judah surrendered to the king of Babylon, himself, his mother, his officers, and eunuchs. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign. ¹³He took out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD and all the treasures of the king's house and stripped off the gold from all the vessels which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had foretold: ¹⁴He carried away all Jerusalem, with all its officials and its men of standing, to the number of 10,000 exiles, and all the craftsmen and smiths, so that none except the poorest of the people of the land were left.^k

¹⁵He took Jehoiachin to Babylon as an exile; he also took away into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, the king's wives, his eunuchs, and the leading men of the land. ¹⁶The king of Babylon also brought to Babylon into exile all the men of valor to the number of 7,000 and 1,000 craftsmen and smiths, all mighty men trained to fight.

¹⁷The king of Babylon made Mataniah, his uncle,^l king in his place, but changed his name to Zedekiah.

597 B.C.

¹⁸Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he was king in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ¹⁹He did evil in the sight of the LORD as Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰The LORD's anger against Jerusalem and Judah was aroused to the point where He cast them out of His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

586 B.C.

25 IN THE NINTH YEAR OF HIS reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem with his whole army; he encamped against it and constructed a siege-wall around it. ²The city continued under siege into the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.^m ³On the ninth day of the fourth monthⁿ when the famine had become so severe that no more food remained for the people of the land, ⁴a break-through was made in the city. The king and all the soldiers fled^o by night by way of the gate between the double wall near the king's garden, though the Chaldeans still surrounded the city; he took the road toward the Arabah.^p ⁵The Chaldean army pursued the king and overtook him in the steppes of Jericho while his own army was scattered from him. ⁶They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who pronounced sentence upon him. ⁷He killed Zedekiah's sons before his eyes; then blinded Zedekiah's eyes, bound him with chains, and brought him to Babylon.^q

⁸On the seventh day of the fifth month in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon,

h) Egypt's power went down as Babylonia grew mightier.

i) These kings were poor historians; the past taught them nothing constructively.

j) Although he was unaware of it, he came in God's service.

k) Daniel, still a lad, was among those first exiles.

l) Uncle to Jehoiachin and a son of Josiah.

m) With God's temple among them, the Jews could not conceive of the city's fall.

n) Cf. Jer. 39:2 and 52:6.

o) Parallels in Jer. 39:4 and 52:7. Read Jer. 39 and 40 relative to these critical events.

p) The depression of Jordan and Dead Sea, the Arabah.

q) A cruelty that went beyond the physical, leaving the victim with that final view to last through life.

Nebuzaradan, the chief officer and servant of the king, arrived at Jerusalem. ⁹He burned the house of the LORD and the house of the king together with all the houses of Jerusalem — every important building he burned with fire. ¹⁰The whole Chaldean army under the chief officer razed the wall around Jerusalem, ¹¹and Nebuzaradan the chief officer carried away into exile the rest of the people who remained in the city, the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the multitude. ¹²But the chief officer permitted the poorest of the land to remain as vine-dressers and farmers.^r

¹³The Chaldeans broke up the bronze pillars in the house of the LORD, the bases, and the bronze sea in the house of the LORD and transported their bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the bowls, and all the bronze vessels used in the service. ¹⁵The chief officer also took along the censers and basins, those of gold as gold and those of silver as silver.^s ¹⁶As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD — the weight of bronze of all these articles was incalculable. ¹⁷The height of one pillar was twenty-seven feet; its capital was bronze and four and a half feet high with a network of pomegranates around it, all of bronze; the second pillar was like it and had a similar network.

¹⁸The chief officer took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second in rank, and the three doorkeepers.^t ¹⁹From the city he took an official, the one who was in command of the soldiers, five men of the daily companions of the king who were in the city, the registrar of the captain of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were in the city. ²⁰Nebu-

zaradan the chief officer took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹The king of Babylon cut them down and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So he exiled Judah from its land.

582 B.C.

²²As for the people who remained in the land of Judah, those left by Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, he appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan,^u governor over them. ²³When the officers of the army and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah: Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, Jaazaniah son of the Maachathite, and their men. ²⁴Gedaliah swore to them and their men, "Do not fear the Chaldean officials; live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well with you."

²⁵In the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, of royal offspring, came with ten of his men and killed Gedaliah and the Jews and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.^v ²⁶Then all the people, old and young, and the officers of the army arose and went to Egypt because they feared the Chaldeans.

²⁷In the thirty-seventh year, on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, Evil-merodach king of Babylon liberated Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. ²⁸He spoke kindly to him and placed his seat above those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹He^w exchanged his prison clothes and ate with him regularly as long as he lived,^x ³⁰and a continual allowance was granted him by the king, a portion for each day, so long as he lived.

r) No pagans were brought into southern Palestine to colonize it. Jews retained the farms and villages. s) Smelted down.

t) These five men were taken from the temple, all priests.

u) Shaphan had been King Josiah's secretary. To him the Law Book had been handed when found in the temple and after reading it, he had taken it to King Josiah [Ch. 22:8-13].

v) As a member of the royal family he considered his rights stronger than those of Gedaliah, forgetting that no rights were left him. w) I.e., Jehoiachin.

x) Evil-merodach reigned only two years; he was assassinated by his brother-in-law in 560 B.C.

FIRST BOOK OF CHRONICLES^a

1 ADAM, SETH, ENOSH, ²KENAN, MAHALALEL, JARED, ³ENOCH, METHUSELAH, LAMECH, ⁴NOAH, SHEM, HAM, and JAPHETH.

⁵Japheth had these sons:^b Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ⁶Gomer was father of Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah; ⁷while Javan had Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

⁸Ham had these sons: ⁹Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. Cush had Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. ¹⁰Cush was the father of Nimrod, who began to be a powerful man on the earth. ¹¹Mizraim was the father of Ludim, Anamin, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, ¹²Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines), and the Caphtorites. ¹³Canaan was father of Sidon, his first-born, and Heth, ¹⁴and the Jebusite, Amorite, Girgashite, ¹⁵Hivite, Arkite, Sinite, ¹⁶Arvadite, Zemarite, and Hamathite.

¹⁷Shem had these sons: Elam, Asshur, Arphachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. ¹⁸Arphachshad had Shelah, who had Eber, ¹⁹who had two sons: one called Peleg,^c because it was during his days that the

earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁰Joktan had Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²¹Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²²Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

²⁴Shem, Arphachshad, Shelah, ²⁵Eber, Peleg, Reu, ²⁶Serug, Nahor, Terah, ²⁷and Abram, who is Abraham.^d

Abraham Born 2166 B.C.

²⁸Abraham had these sons: Isaac and Ishmael. ²⁹These are their genealogical registers: Ishmael's first-born was Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam. ³⁰Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, ³¹Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah, who are the sons of Ishmael. ³²Abraham's later wife, Keturah, gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah; the sons of Jokshan being Sheba and Dedan, ³³and those of Midian: Ephah, Ephraim, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. ³⁴As for Isaac, whose father was Abraham, his sons were Esau and Israel.

³⁵Esau had these sons:^e Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. ³⁶Eliphaz was father of Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, and Kenaz, Timna,^f and Amalek. ³⁷Reuel had Nahath, Zerah,

a) Hebrew, *The Words [Affairs] of the Days*. I Chronicles are not to be confused with the lost chronicles of Israel mentioned in I and II Kings. Chronicles was written after Kings, being compiled after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile, II Chron. 36:21-23 in the priestly and legal spirit of Ezra.

b) Vss. 5-23 reproduce the table of Gen. 10, with but minor differences of spelling.

c) "Division," probably referring to the confusion of languages at Babel [Gen. 11:1-9].

d) The change of his name is described in Gen. 17:5.

e) Vss. 35-54 summarize the table of Gen. 36, with minor differences of spelling.

f) Timna was not a son of Eliphaz, but his mistress and a daughter of Seir [vs. 39]. She bore Amalek [Gen. 36:12]; and her name was attached to a district in Edom [vs. 51].

Shammah, and Mizzah. ³⁸Seir had these sons:^g Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. ³⁹Lotan, whose sister was Timna, got Hori and Homam; ⁴⁰while from Shobal came Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam; from Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; ⁴¹from Anah: Dishon; from Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran; ⁴²from Ezer: Bilhan, Zaazan, and Jaakan; and from Dishon: Uz and Aran.

To 1406 B.C.

⁴³The kings who ruled in the land of Edom, before Israel had a reigning king, are: Bela the son of Beor, whose city was called Dinhabah. ⁴⁴After Bela's death, there succeeded to the throne Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah; ⁴⁵after Jobab's death, Husham from the land of the people of Teman reigned in his stead. After Husham's death, Hadad [I] ⁴⁶son of Bcdad, who defeated Midian in the open territory of Moab, reigned in his stead; his city was called Avith. ⁴⁷After Hadad's death, Salmah from Masrekah reigned in his stead. ⁴⁸When Salmah died, Shaul from Rehoboth by the River^h reigned in his stead. ⁴⁹When Shaul died, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor ⁵⁰reigned in his stead. After Baal-hanan's death, Hadad [II] succeeded him, whose city was called Pai, and the name of whose wife was Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, who was the daughter of Mezahab; ⁵¹Hadad also died.ⁱ The chiefs of Edom were: the chief of Timna, of Aliah, of Jetheth, ⁵²of Oholibamah, of Elah, of Pinon, ⁵³of Kenaz, of Teman, of Mibzar, ⁵⁴of Magdiel, and of Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom.

Israel (Jacob) Born 2006 B.C.

THESE ARE THE SONS OF ISRAEL:
2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Is-

sachar, Zebulun, ²Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

³Judah had these sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah, the three who were born by Shua's daughter, the Canaanite woman. Now Er, Judah's first-born, was an evil man before the Lord, who put him to death. ⁴But Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, bore to Judah Perez and Zerah; so all the sons of Judah totaled five.^j ⁵Perez had Hezron and Hamul; ⁶while from Zerah came Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, a total of five.^k ⁷Carmi was father of Achan, the man who incriminated Israel by violating the consecrated things;^l ⁸and from Ethan came Azariah.

⁹Hezron had these sons: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.^m ¹⁰Then the line of descendants went: Ram, Amminadab, Nashon (the leader of the tribe of Judah),ⁿ ¹¹Salma, ¹²Boaz, Obed, and Jesse. ¹³Jesse's sons were, in order: Eliab, Abinadab, Shimea, ¹⁴Nethanel, Raddai, ¹⁵Ozem,^o and David. ¹⁶Their sisters^p were Zeruiah and Abigail; the three sons of Zeruiah being Abishai, Joab, and Asahel; ¹⁷the son of Abigail, Amasa.^q His father was Jether of Ishmael.

¹⁸Caleb also, the son of Hezron, had children by Azubah his wife of Jerioth, and these were her sons — Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. ¹⁹But Azubah died, and Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. ²⁰Hur was the father of Uri, and Uri the father of Bezaleel.^r

²¹Hezron, later in life, in fact at sixty, went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he had married, and she gave birth to Segub. ²²Segub was the father of Jair, to whom belonged twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. ²³But Geshur and

g) Seir was of the Horites [Gen. 36:20], rock-dwellers, an important ancient people, some of whom had settled in Edom before the arrival of Esau [Deut. 2:12,22]. h) Euphrates.

i) His death is not mentioned in the corresponding section of the Pentateuch [Gen. 36:39], probably because he was a contemporary of Moses.

j) See Gen. 38 for details on Judah and Tamar.

k) These five later descendants are mentioned because of their importance: Zimri, who produced the Carmi of the next verse is called Zabdi in Josh. 7:1; the other four "Ezrabites" [Zerah] were famous for wisdom [I Kings 4:31] and composed Ps. 88-89, but are not to be confused with Ethan and Heman, musicians of David, who were from Levi [I Chron. 15:17].

l) At Jericho [Josh. 7], where the name is Achan.

m) Caleb in vss. 18 and 42, not to be confused with Caleb the faithful spy [4:15], who came 300 years later. n) At the time of the Exodus [Num. 1:7; 2:3; 7:12].

o) A seventh son [I Sam. 16:10; 17:12], is not named. David was the 8th son.

p) Half-sisters, apparently, by a different father [II Sam. 17:25].

q) These sons were all famous soldiers under David. See II Sam. 3,10,20. Abigail was Amasa's mother. r) The chief craftsman in building the tabernacle [Ex. 31:1-2].

Aram captured the towns of Jair from them, with Kenath and its surrounding districts, a total of sixty cities.^a All these were the descendants of Machir the father of Gilead.²⁴ After the death of Hezron in Caleb-Ephrathah, Hezron's widow Abijah bore Caleb Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

²⁵Jerahmeel, the oldest son of Hezron, had these sons: Ram his first-born, Bunah, Oren, and Ozem, by Ahijah.²⁶ Jerahmeel had another wife, named Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.²⁷ Ram, the oldest son of Jerahmeel, had Maaz, Jamin, and Eker;²⁸ while from Onan came Shammai and Jada. Shammai produced Nadab and Abishur.²⁹ The wife of Abishur was named Abihail, who bore him Ahban and Molid;³⁰ and the sons of Nadab were Seled and Appaim. Seled left no offspring;³¹ but Appaim's sons were Ishi the father of Sheshan, the father of Ahlai.³² Shammai's brother, Jada, had Jether and Jonathan; and, while Jether died without children,³³ Jonathan's sons were Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel.³⁴ Sheshan had no sons, only daughters; but he did have an Egyptian slave Jarha,³⁵ to whom he gave his daughter as a wife;^t she bore him Attai.³⁶ So the line of descendants went: Attai, Nathan, Zabab, ³⁷Ephlal, Obed, ³⁸Jehu, ³⁹Azariah, Helez, ⁴⁰Eleasah, Sismai, Shallum, ⁴¹Jekamiah, and Elishama.

⁴²Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, had these sons: Mesha, his first-born, was the father of Ziph; and Mareshah^u also was father of Hebron.⁴³ Hebron had Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.⁴⁴ Shema had Raham, the father of Jorkeam; while from Rekem came Shammai, ⁴⁵the father of Maon, who was the father of Beth-zur.⁴⁶ Furthermore, Caleb's concubine^v Ephah, gave birth to Haran, Moza, and Gazez — Haran

fathered Gazez. ⁴⁷Jahdai^w was the father of Regem, Jothan, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. ⁴⁸Caleb's concubine Maacah gave birth to Sheber and Tirhanah, ⁴⁹Shaaph the father of Madmannah, and Sheva the father of Machbenah and Gibeaz. The daughter of Caleb was Achsah^x. ⁵⁰More descendants of Caleb are these sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrathah:^y Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim, ⁵¹Salma the father of Beth-lehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-gader. ⁵²Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim also had descendants:^z Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth, ⁵³and the families of Kiriath-jearim, which consisted of the people of Jether, Puah, Shuman, and Mishra, from which went out the people of Zorah and Eshtaul. ⁵⁴Salma was the father of Beth-lehem, the people of Netophah, Ataroth-beth-joaab, the other half of Manahath, and Zor; ⁵⁵and the families of the scribes that lived at Jabez, who consisted of the people of Tira, Shimea, and Sucah, and who were Kenites descended from Hammath the father of the house of Rechab.^a

David's Reign, 1010-970 B.C.

3 DAVID HAD THESE SONS BORN IN Hebron: the first-born was Amnon, by Ahinoam of Jezreel; second, Daniel,^b by Abigail of Carmel; ²third, Absalom, the son of Maacah daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith; ³fifth, Shephatiah, by Abital; and sixth, Ithream, by his wife Eglah. ⁴Six were born to him in Hebron, where David reigned seven years and six months. He also reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem, ⁵where these were born: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four sons by Bath-shua,^c the daughter of Ammiel; ⁶and Ibhaz, Elishama, Eliphelet, ⁷Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphe-

s) See Num. 32:41-42; Deut. 3:14. t) Probably Ahlai of vs. 31. u) A variant from Mesha^a

v) See note on II Sam. 3:7. w) Jahdai's exact relationship to the preceding has been lost.

x) Actually a distant descendant of this Caleb, son of Hezron, and immediate daughter of Caleb, the faithful spy, son of Jephunneh. She is famous as the bride of Othniel, given him because of his conquest of Debir [Josh. 15:15-19; Judg. 1:11-15]. y) Vs. 19.

z) Apparently Reaiah in 4:2. The title "father" seems here to be given to founders of towns and cities.

a) Kenites of the family of Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses, became incorporated by marriage or adoption into the tribe of Judah [Judg. 1:16]. [Jeh]onadab, a later descendant of Rechab, was noted as a reformer, who kept his family from alcohol and in a primitive life to prevent corruption [II Kings 10:15-28; Jer. 35]. b) In II Sam. 3:3 called Chileab.

c) Elsewhere called Bath-sheba. This list of names appears with minor variants in ch. 14:4-7 and II Sam. 5:14-16.

let, nine others. ⁹This is the list of David's sons, not counting sons of concubines. And Tamar was their sister.^d

Solomon to Ezra, 970-558 B.C.

¹⁰The line of succession then went from father to son as follows: Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, ¹¹Joram, Ahaziah, Joash, ¹²Amaziah, Azariah, Jotham, ¹³Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, ¹⁴Amon, and Josiah. ¹⁵Josiah's sons were Johanan, the first-born; second, Jehoiaikim; third, Zedekiah; and fourth, Shallum.^e ¹⁶Jehoiaikim's son was Jeconiah,^f whose son was Zedekiah. ¹⁷The sons of Jeconiah as a prisoner were: Shealtiel,^g ¹⁸Malchiram, Pedaiiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah; ¹⁹Pedaiiah became father of Zerubbabel^h and Shimei. Zerubbabel had Meshullam, Hananiah, their sister Shelomith, and five others. ²⁰Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushabhesd. ²¹The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, whose son was Rephaiah; his son Arnan; his son, Obadiah, and his son Shecaniah.ⁱ ²²Shecaniah's son being Shemaiah. Shemaiah had six sons, including Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat. ²³Neariah had three sons: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam. ²⁴Elioenai had seven sons: Hodaviah, Elias-hib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani.

4 JUDAH HAD THESE SONS: PEREZ, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.

²Shobal's son Reaiah was the father of Jahath, from whom came Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of Zorah.^j ³These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, Idbash, their sister whose name was Hazzeleponi, ⁴Penuel, who was an ancestor of Gedor,^k

and Ezer, ancestor of Hushah. These were descendants of Hur, the first-born son of Ephrathah and father of Bethlehem. ⁵Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah. ⁶Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hephher, Temeni, and Haahashtari, the sons of Naarah; ⁷while the sons of Helah were Zereth, Izhar, and Ethnan.

⁸Koz^l was the ancestor of Anub, Zobeab, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum. ⁹Now Jabez was more distinguished than his brothers; his mother had called his name Jabez with the statement, "I gave birth to him in pain."^m ¹⁰Jabez appealed to the God of Israel, saying, "Wilt Thou grant me a true blessing and extend my boundaries; let Thy hand be with me, and keep calamity from me so that no pain assails me," and God brought about what he had requested.

¹¹Chelub, the brother of Shuhah, was father of Mehir, who had Eshton. ¹²Eshton was the father of Bethrapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, the ancestor of the city of Nahash. These are the men of Recah. ¹³Kenaz had as descendants Othnielⁿ and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel were Hathath and Meonothai ¹⁴and Meonothai had Ophrah; while Seraiah had Joab, the ancestor of those in the Valley of Engravers, for they did engraving. ¹⁵Caleb, too,^o the son of Jephunneh, had sons: Iru, Elah, and Naam; the sons of Elah including Kenaz. ¹⁶Jehallelel's sons were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel; ¹⁷and Ezra's sons were Jether, Mered, Ephraim, and Jalon. Then Bithiah, a Pharaoh's daughter whom Mered had married, gave birth to Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah, an ancestor of Eshtemoa, ¹⁸and his Jewish wife bore Jered, Heber, and

d) Raped by Amnon and avenged by Absalom [II Sam. 13].

e) Also called Jehoahaz [II Kings 23; II Chron. 36; compare Jer. 22:11]. He was in fact older than Zedekiah [II Kings 24:18], but had an inferior length of reign.

f) Also called Coniah [Jer. 22:24, 28; 37:1], and Jehoiachin [II Kings 24:8, 12; II Chron. 36:9].

g) Perhaps simply a legal son, for Luke 3:27 notes him to have been the son of Neri.

h) Zerubbabel is reckoned as a son of Pedaiiah's brother Shealtiel [Ezra 3:2; Hag. 1:1,12; Matt. 1:12; Luke 3:27], perhaps by the marriage ruling of Deut. 25:5-10. He was a leader in the return of the Jews to Palestine after the exile, 538 B.C. [Ezra 2:2; 3:2], and heir to David's throne.

i) The exact connection of these four with Jeconiah does not appear; if brothers, the fifth generation would again bring the line to the time of Ezra and the compilation of Chronicles.

j) Vs. 2 is thus a supplement to 2:52-53; as are vss. 3-4 to 2:51 and vss. 5-7 to 2:24.

k) As was also Jered in vs. 18.

l) The exact connections of Koz, Jabez [vs. 9], Chelub [vs. 11], Kenaz [vs. 13], Meonothai [vs. 14], Jehallelel [vs. 16], Ezra [vs. 17], Hodiah, [vs. 19], and Shimon and Ishi [vs. 20], with the family of Hezron, are not given. m) Hebrew, "zebe."

n) The first of the judges, 1381 B.C. [Judg. 3:9, 10]. o) The faithful spy [Num. 13, 14].

Jekuthiel, ancestors respectively of Gedor, Soco, and Zanoah, all from Mered.¹⁹ Hodia's wife was the sister of Naham; and her sons, one from Gerem and the other from Maacah, were ancestors respectively of Keilah the Garmite and of Eshtemoa the Maacathite.²⁰ Shimon's sons were Amnon, Rinah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon; and Ishi's sons were Zoheth and Ben-zoheth.

²¹Judah's son Shelah had the following: Er, the ancestor of Lecah; Laadah, the ancestor of Mareshah and the families of the house of Ashbea, who worked in fine linen; ²²Jokim, with the men of Cozeba, Joash, and Saraph, who were leaders in Moab; and Jashubi-lehem. These are old records.²³ The men were makers of pottery and inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah, where they lived in the king's presence for his work.^p

²⁴Simeon had these sons:^q Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul. ²⁵His line of descendants ran: Shallum, Mibsam, Mishma, ²⁶Hammuel, Zaccur, and Shimei. ²⁷Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters, but his brothers did not have many children. In all their multiplying the families, they did not come up to the people of Judah.^r ²⁸They lived at Beer-sheba, Moladah, Hazarshual, ²⁹Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, ³⁰Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, ³¹Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their cities and villages till the reign of David.^s ³²There were also Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, five others, ³³besides all the villages which surrounded these cities as far as Baal. These constituted their settlements, and they kept their genealogy registration.

³⁴Now Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah the son of Amaziah, ³⁵Joel, Jehu, whose line of ancestry went back to Joshiah, Seraiah, Asiel, ³⁶Elieonai, Jaako-

bah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, ³⁷Ziza, whose line of ancestry went back to Shiphi, Allon, Jedaiiah, Shimri, and Shemaiah — ³⁸these princes, as mentioned by name with their families, headed houses that had greatly outgrown their limits. ³⁹So they migrated to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east side of the valley, looking for pasture lands for their flocks. ⁴⁰There they found rich, good pasture; the land was spread out, undisturbed, and quiet, because the people formerly living in it were Hamitic. ⁴¹These registered by name, came during the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah and struck down the tents of the inhabitants and the Meunim that were found there. They annihilated them to this very day and settled in their places, because there was pasture for their flocks. ⁴²Also from the people of Simeon there were 500 men under the leadership of Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, who went against Mount Seir. ⁴³They struck down what was left of the escaped remnant of Amalek^t and have remained there up to the present.

5 AS FOR THE SONS OF REUBEN, THE first-born of Israel; for he was the oldest son, but when he violated his father's couch,^u his inheritance rights as first-born were transferred to the sons of Joseph^v the son of Israel, though they were not registered for that position. ²Although Judah got the power among his brothers, so that the ruler should come from him, yet the inheritance rights as first-born did go to Joseph. ³Reuben, the first-born son of Israel, had these sons:^w Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ⁴Then the line of descent went: Joel,^x Shemaiah, Gog, Shimei, ⁵Micah, Reaiah, Baal, ⁶and Beerah, a tribal chief of Reuben

p) They are thus brought down to the time of the kingdom[s], 1050-586 B.C.

q) This section enlarges on the family of Simeon [as noted in Gen. 46:10; Ex. 6:15; and Num. 26:12-14].

r) Simeon, who with Levi was scattered among the tribes because of the massacre of Shechem [Gen. 34:25-30; 49:5-7], was made to inherit the southwestern corner of Palestine [Josh. 19:1-9]. Simeon virtually merged with Judah, though after the division of the kingdom, elements of the tribe having moved north, it was counted with the ten northern tribes [II Chron. 15:9; 34:6]. s) 1010-970 B.C.

t) Both Saul and David had won victories over these old enemies [I Sam. 14:48; 15:7; and II Sam. 8:12]. u) With Bilhah [Gen. 35:22; 49:4].

v) As the first son of Rachel, the wife whom alone Jacob loved.

w) This section enlarges on the family of Reuben [as noted in Gen. 46:9; Ex. 6:14; and Num. 26:5-7]. x) Of which of the four Joel was the son is not stated.

whom Tiglath-pileser^y king of Assyria took away into captivity. ⁷Beerah's fellow rulers, according to their families in the registering by genealogical descent, were: Jeiel, the leader; Zechariah, ⁸Bela, who descended from Joel through Shema; and then Azaz, who lived in Aroer, even as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. ⁹He also settled eastward to the edge of the desert that stretches from the Euphrates River, because they had great herds of cattle in the land of Gilead. ¹⁰In the days of Saul^z they had made war with the people of Hagar, who had fallen before them; so they settled down in what had been their tents throughout the area east of Gilead.

Gad Born about 1918 B.C.

¹¹Across from them lived the people of Gad in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah. ¹²In Bashan itself they consisted of Joel the chief; Shapham the second; and Janai and Shaphat. ¹³Their fellow rulers according to their clans were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber, a total of seven, ¹⁴who traced their ancestry from their father Abihail back through Huri, Jaroah, Gilead, Michael, Jeshishai, and Jahdo, to Buz. ¹⁵Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, was chief according to their clans. ¹⁶These latter lived in Gilead in a part assigned to Bashan with its dependencies, and in all the pastures of Sharon as far as they extended. ¹⁷All of Gad were registered by genealogy in the days of Jotham king of Judah and of Jeroboam II king of Israel.^a

Before 733 B.C.

¹⁸Concerning the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, they had valiant men who could carry shield and sword and bend a bow and were trained for warfare, totaling 44,760 on active duty. ¹⁹These made

war against the men of Hagar, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.^b ²⁰They were given help against them. The men of Hagar together with all those that were allied with them were turned over into Israel's power, because in the battle they^c appealed to God and He answered their prayer, for they trusted in Him. ²¹So they took away their herds: camels 50,000; sheep 250,000; donkeys 2,000, and 100,000 human captives. ²²The number that fell mortally wounded was great, because the battle was God's. Thus they settled in their enemies' former territory until the exile.^d

²³The members of the half tribe of Manasseh settled in the land, a dense population from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. ²⁴The leaders of their clans were Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, brave warriors, famous and chiefs according to their family groups. ²⁵But they broke faith with the God of their fathers and turned adulterously to the gods of the native peoples whom God had destroyed before them. ²⁶So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, the spirit, that is, of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, who carried them into captivity, these people of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the River Gozan, where they are up to the present.^e

6 LEVI HAD THESE SONS:^f GERSHON, Kohath, and Merari; ²the sons of Kohath being Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ³Descendants of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam, Aaron's sons being Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ⁴The line of descendants from Eleazar^g ran:^h Phine-

y) Elsewhere spelled Tiglath-pileser. This was probably in the preliminary captivity of the 3½ Trans-Jordan tribes, 733 B.C. [vs. 26; see II Kings 15:29], and not the final fall of Samaria, 722. z) 1050-1010 B.C. a) 751-736 B.C. and 793-753 B.C. respectively.

b) Arab and Ishmaelite desert tribes [see Gen. 25:15]. c) The Hebrews.

d) Of 733 B.C., see vs. 26 and note on vs. 6.

e) About half the tribe, named for Machir, conquered the Gilead country before the death of Moses.

f) This section enlarges on the family of Levi [as noted in Gen. 46:11; Ex. 6:16-19; Num. 3:17-20; and 26:57-62].

g) The older sons, Nadab and Abihu, killed in the wilderness for irreverent behavior, left no children [Lev. 10:1, 2; Num. 3:4].

h) The list of high priests that follows for the 860 years between the exodus and the fall of Jerusalem does not include the descendants of Ithamar who held the office under the last judges and the early kingdom: Eli, Phinehas [II], Ahitub [I], Ahimelech [I] [Ahizah], Abiathar, and Ahimelech [II], [I Sam. 14:3; 22:20; II Sam. 8:17]; nor certain other high priests who are mentioned elsewhere—Amariah [II] [II Chron. 19:11], Jehoiada [II Kings 11:9], Zechariah [I Chron. 16:5], [II Chron. 24:20], Urijah [II Kings 16:10], Azariah [III] [II Chron. 31:10], and Meraioth [I Chron. 9:11].

has, ⁵Abishua, Bukki, ⁶Uzzi, Zerachiah, ⁷Meraioth, Amariah, ⁸Ahitub [II], Zadok, ¹⁹Ahimaaz, Azariah, ¹⁰Johanan, Azariah [II] (who held the priesthood in the temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem), ¹¹Amariah [III], ¹²Ahitub [III], Zadok [II], ¹³Shallum, Hilkiah, ¹⁴Azariah [IV], Seraiah, ¹⁵and Jehozadak, who was deported when the LORD, through Nebuchadrezzar, took Judah and Jerusalem into exile.¹

¹⁶As for the sons of Levi, Gershom, ^mKohath, and Merari, ¹⁷the names of Gershom's sons were Libni and Shimei; ¹⁸Kohath's were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel; ¹⁹and Merari's, Mahli and Mushi. These make up the Levitical families according to their founding fathers. ²⁰The line of descent from Gershom went: Libni, Jahath, Zimmah, ²¹Joah, Iddo, Zerah, and Jeatherai. ²²That of Kohath ran: Amminadab, ⁿKorah, ^oand his sons Assir, ²³Elkanah, and Ebiasaph. Then from Ebiasaph the line continued: Assir, ²⁴Tahath, Uriel, Uziah, and Shaul. ²⁵Now the line of descendants of Elkanah ^p[II] went: Amasai, Ahimoth, ^q²⁶and Elkanah [III]; and after this last-mentioned Elkanah, his successor Zophai, Nahath, ²⁷Eliab, ^rJeroham, and Elkanah [IV]. ²⁸Then the sons of Samuel were Joel, ^tthe oldest, and Abijah, second. ²⁹Lastly the line of descent from Merari went: Mahli, Libni, Shimei, Uzzah, ³⁰Shimea, Haggiah, and Asaiah.

³¹These are the men whom David appointed to superintend the singing in the house of the LORD after the ark had been established there. ³²They were rendering service in song before the tent of meeting, ^uwhich was the place of divine presence until the construction by Solomon of the LORD's

Jerusalem temple, and they officiated over their assigned task as it was prescribed for them. ³³These appointees, together with their sons, were: Heman the singer, of the clan of Kohath, who traced his ancestry back through Joel, Samuel, ³⁴Elkanah [IV], Jeroham, Eliel, Toah, ³⁵Zuph, Elkanah [III], Mahath, Amasai, ³⁶Elkanah [II], Joel, Azariah, Zephaniah, ³⁷Tahath, Assir, Ebiasaph, Korah, ³⁸Izhar, Kohath, and Levi to Israel; ³⁹Asaph, his colleague, who stood at his right hand and who traced back his ancestry through Berechiah, Shimea, ⁴⁰Michael, Baaseiah, Malchijah, ⁴¹Ethni, Zerah, Adaiah, ⁴²Ethan, Zimmah, Shimei, ⁴³Jahath, Gershom, and Levi. ⁴⁴Their colleagues, the men of Merari, on the left, under Ethan, whose ancestry went back through Kishi, ^vAbdi, Malluch, ⁴⁵Hashabiah, Amaziah, Hilkiah, ⁴⁶Amzi, Bani, Shemer, ⁴⁷Mahli, Mushi, Merari, and Levi. ⁴⁸Moreover, their fellow tribesmen, the Levites, were dedicated to all the work of the tabernacle of the house of God, ⁴⁹while Aaron and his sons made the sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense; who conducted the entire work of the most holy place and who made atonement for Israel, exactly as God's servant Moses had given commandment.

1400 B.C.

⁵⁰The descendants of Aaron went in the following line of succession: Eleazar, Phinehas, Abishua, ⁵¹Bukki, Uzzi, Zerachiah, ⁵²Meraioth, Amariah, Ahitub [II], ⁵³Zadok, and Ahimaaz. ⁵⁴These, made up of Aaron's descendants, members of the clan of Kohath, held the following districts within their boundaries as the places where they lived,

i) High priest during David and Solomon, 979 B.C.

j) This may refer to his resisting Uziah's attempt to take over priestly functions, 751 B.C. [II Chron. 26:17].

k) The high priest who discovered the book of the law given by Moses, causing Josiah's reformation of 621 B.C. [II Chron. 34:14]. l) In 586 B.C.

m) Gershom in vs. 1 and in the other historical books.

n) Apparently another name for Izhar [vs. 38].

o) Swallowed by the earth for rebelling against Moses [Num. 16].

p) The names that follow indicate that this must be Elkanah the great-great-great-grandson of Ebiasaph [vss. 36, 37], not the brother of Ebiasaph, just mentioned in vs. 23.

q) In vs. 35, Mahath. r) In vss. 35 and 34, Zuph, Toah, and Eliel.

s) Husband of Hannah and father of Samuel [I Sam. 1:1].

t) The name is left blank in Hebrew but may be supplied from vs. 33 and I Sam. 8:2.

u) Where supremely God met the people, and secondarily the people met each other.

v) They are also called Jeduthun [25:1], and Kushaiah [15:17].

because the [first] lot had fallen to them:^w ⁵⁵in the territory of Judah they were assigned Hebron with its surrounding open lands, ⁵⁶though the city's fields and villages were reserved for Caleb the son of Jephunneh.^x

⁵⁷Thus Aaron's descendants received of the cities of refuge,^y Hebron; also Libnah with its surrounding open lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa, ⁵⁸Hilen, Debir, ⁵⁹Ashan, and Beth-shemesh, each with its surrounding open lands. ⁶⁰Then from the tribe of Benjamin they were assigned Geba, Alemeth, and Anathoth, each with its surrounding open lands. The total of the cities distributed among their families came to thirteen.^z

⁶¹The rest of the descendants of Kohath were granted ten cities by lot from the family of the tribe [of Ephraim and of Dan^a and], from a half tribe, the half of Manasseh; ⁶²the descendants of Gershom, according to their families, thirteen cities, from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh in Bashan; ⁶³and the descendants of Merari, according to their families, twelve cities by lot from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. ⁶⁴The people of Israel granted cities with their surrounding open lands to the Levites; ⁶⁵they assigned by lot, however, the cities from the tribes of the people of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, which are above listed by name.

⁶⁶For some of the families of the sons of Kohath, the allotted territory included cities from the tribe of Ephraim. ⁶⁷They received of the cities of refuge: Shechem with its surrounding open lands in the hill country of Ephraim; also Gezer, ⁶⁸Jokmeam, Beth-horon, ⁶⁹Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon, each with its surrounding open lands. ⁷⁰Then from the half tribe of Manasseh came Aner and Bileam, with their surrounding open lands. These were for the families of the rest of the descendants of Kohath.

⁷¹To the descendants of Gershom there were granted from the family of the half tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan and Ashteroth; ⁷²from the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh, Daberath, ⁷³Ramoth, and Anem; ⁷⁴from the tribe of Asher: Mashal, Abdon, ⁷⁵Hukok, and Rehob; ⁷⁶and from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee, Hammon, and Kiriathaim, each with its surrounding lands.

⁷⁷Last remaining, the descendants of Merari were allotted from the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono and Tabor, ⁷⁸and from Trans-Jordan at Jericho, to the east of the Jordan, from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the desert, Jahzah, ⁷⁹Kedemoth, and Mephaath; ⁸⁰and from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, ⁸¹Heshbon, and Jazer, each with its surrounding open lands.

7 AS FOR THE SONS OF ISSACHAR, they were these four:^b Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron. ²Tola had Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel, powerful heroes and leaders of their clans, descendants of Tola, who came in the time of David to number 22,600 by their genealogies. ³Then from Uzzi was born Izrahiah, whose sons were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Ishiah, a total of five, all of them leaders; ⁴and from whom, according to their clan genealogies, came military fighting units totaling 36,000, because they had many wives and sons. ⁵Their fellow tribesmen of all the families of Issachar were powerful heroes. The grand total by genealogical enrollment amounted to 87,000.

⁶The three sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael.^c ⁷The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five leaders of clans and mighty warriors. Their genealogical enrollment came to 22,034. ⁸The sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Om-

w) The Aaronic group had won the first lot in the distribution of the land [Josh. 21:10]; the following verses on Levitical cities compare with Josh. 21:3-40.

x) As promised by Moses and Joshua [Josh. 14:6-15].

y) See Num. 35; Deut. 19:1-10; and Josh. 20 on these six cities.

z) Only eleven have been named in this passage; the others are recorded in Joshua 21.

a) Here we are supplying from Joshua 21:5 "of Ephraim, and of Dan, and," as mentioned presently in vs. 66.

b) This section enlarges on the family of Issachar as shown in Gen. 46:13 and Num. 26:23-25.

c) There were others [see 8:1-10]. These sections in I Chron. compare with Gen. 46:21 and Num. 26:38-40, supplementing and providing slight variants.

ri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were sons of Becher. ⁹Their enrollment based on genealogical descent through these mighty warriors, who were clan heads, amounted to 20,200. ¹⁰The sons of Jediel: Bilhan, whose sons were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. ¹¹All these were descendants of Jediel, powerful heroes and heads of clans, totaling 17,200 on active duty for war. ¹²Shuppim and Huppim were sons of Ir, ⁴ and the Hushim, of Aher.^e

¹³Naphtali had these sons:^f Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, who were thus grandsons of Bilhan.

¹⁴The sons of Manasseh: Asriel,^g born through Manasseh's Aramaean concubine, who had given birth to Machir the father of Gilead. ¹⁵Machir had chosen a wife of the Huppim and Shuppim family, and his sister was called Maacah. A second descendant was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had [only]^h daughters. ¹⁶But Maacah the wife of Machir gave birth to a son and named him Peresh; his brother was named Sheresh, whose sons were Ulam and Rakem; ¹⁷Ulam's son was Bedan. These are counted with the descendants of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. ¹⁸Also Hammolecheth, Machir's sister, gave birth to Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah; ¹⁹while the sons of Shemidaⁱ were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

²⁰Ephraim had these sons:^j Shuthelah, whose line of descent went: Bered, Tahath, Eleadah, Tahath, ²¹Zabad, Shuthelah, Ezer, and Elead. But the latter two were killed by the men of Gath who had been born in the land^k when they came down^l to rustle their cattle. ²²So for many days their father Ephraim was in mourning until his brothers came to comfort him; ²³but then he went in to his wife, who con-

ceived and gave birth to a son. He named him Beriah because this happened when his family was "in trouble."^m ²⁴His daughter was Sheerah, who built both lower and upper Beth-horon, as well as Uzzen-sheerah. ²⁵Additional sons of his were Rephah and Resheph, from the latter of whom the line of descent went: Telah, Tahan, ²⁶Ladan, Ammihud, Elishama, ²⁷Non,ⁿ and Joshua. ²⁸Ephraim's territory in which they settled was bounded by Bethel and its dependencies, by Naaran on the east, by Gezer and its dependencies on the west, and by Shechem with its dependent towns as far as Ayyah and its dependencies. ²⁹The people of Manasseh held possession of Bethshean, Taanach, Megiddo, and Dor, each with its dependent towns. In these places the descendants of Joseph the son of Israel settled.

³⁰Asher had these sons:^o Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. ³¹The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith; ³²but Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. ³³The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath, his sons; ³⁴while from his brother Shemer^p came Ahi, Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram; ³⁵and from his brother Helem,^q Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. ³⁶Zophah's sons: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, ³⁷Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera; ³⁸while from Jether^r came Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. ³⁹The sons of Ulla: Arah,^s Hanniel, and Rizia. All ⁴⁰these were descendants of Asher, heads of clans, chosen men, mighty warriors, and chief officers. As registered by genealogy for wartime service, they totaled 26,000 men.

8 BENJAMIN'S SONS CAME AS FOLLOWS:^t first, Bela; second, Ashbel;

d) Iri [vs. 7]. e) Perhaps Ahiram of Num. 26:38.

f) These equal Gen. 46:24 and Num. 26:48-50 with minor differences of spelling.

g) A great-grandson of Manasseh through Machir and Gilead. For the more complete records of western Manasseh see Num. 26:28-34 and Josh. 17:2-6. h) Num. 26:33; 27:1; and 36:2.

i) Another great-grandson of Manasseh through Machir and Gilead.

j) This section enlarges on the family of Ephraim as noted in Num. 26:35-37. k) Canaan.

l) The Gittites came to Goshen, on the border of Egypt toward Palestine, where the Israelites had settled under Joseph, to rustle Israel's cattle. m) Hebrew, "Berah." n) Elsewhere, Nun (Ex. 33:11; Josh. 1:1). o) This section enlarges on the family of Asher as noted in Gen. 46:17, and Num. 26:44-47. p) Shomer, vs. 32. q) Hotham [?], vs. 32. r) Ithram in the preceding verse.

s) Ara [?], in the preceding verse. t) This chapter constitutes a major supplement to ch. 7:6-12, as well as to Gen. 46:21 and Num. 26:38-41.

third, Aharah; ²fourth, Nohah; and fifth, Rapha. ³Bela's sons were: Addar, Gera, Abihud, ⁴Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, ⁵Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. ⁶Ehud^u had these sons, who were clan leaders for the inhabitants of Geba, the group taken away to Manahath ⁷by Naaman, Ahijah, and particularly by Gera; Ehud's sons then were Uzza and Ahihud. ⁸Shaharaim, too, in the country of Moab, after he had divorced his wives Hushim and Baara,^v had children; ⁹through his wife Hodesh he had Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, ¹⁰Jeuz, Shachia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, leaders of clans. ¹¹By Hushim he had begotten Abitub and Elpaal; ¹²Elpaal's sons: Eber, Misham, Shemed (who built Ono and Lod with its dependencies), ¹³Beriah, and Shema, too, who were clan leaders for the inhabitants of Aijalon, and they drove out the dwellers of Gath. ¹⁴Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, ¹⁵Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, ¹⁶Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were the sons of Beriah. ¹⁷Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, ¹⁸Ishmerai,^w Izliah, and Jobab were sons of Elpaal. ¹⁹Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰Eli-enai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimirath were sons of Shimei.^x ²²Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, ²⁵Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. ²⁶Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, ²⁷Jareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham.^y ²⁸These were leaders of clans, leaders indeed, by their genealogical registers, who lived in Jerusalem.

Saul's Reign, 1050-1010 B.C.

²⁹Now there lived in Gibeon the patriarchal head^z of the city, the name of whose wife was Maacah. ³⁰His sons included Abdon, the oldest, Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹Gedor, Ahio, and Zecher. ³²Then Mikloth^a became father of

Shimeah, and they lived in near-by Jerusalem, separate from their brothers, but still with fellow tribesmen. ³³And Ner,^b was the father of Kish, the father of Saul, whose sons were Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab,^c and Esh-baal.^d ³⁴Jonathan's son was Merib-baal,^e who was the father of Micah, ³⁵whose sons were Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. ³⁶Ahaz had Jehoaddah, whose sons were Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. From Zimri the line of descent went: Moza, ³⁷Binea, Raphah, Eleasah, and Azel. ³⁸Azel had six sons, named Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; all these were sons of Azel. ³⁹The sons of his brother Eshek were Ulam his first-born, second Jeush, and third Eliphelet. ⁴⁰The sons of Ulam were powerful heroes, who could bend the bow and who also had many sons and grandsons, to the number of 150. All these were descendants of Benjamin.

Before the Fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

9 SO ALL OF ISRAEL WERE REGISTERED by genealogy, and they may be observed recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. Judah, however, because of the people's unfaithfulness, was taken captive to Babylon. ²Previous to this event, the men who lived on their holdings in their cities were the lay-Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants.^f ³In Jerusalem there lived members of the tribes of Judah, of Benjamin, of Ephraim, and of Manasseh: ⁴Uthai, who traced his ancestry back through Ammihud, Omri, Imri, and Bani, among the descendants of Perez to Judah. ⁵Of the descendants of Shiloh:^g Asaiah, who was the first-born, with his sons. ⁶Of the descendants of Zerah: Jeuel and 690 of their fellow clansmen. ⁷Then of the descendants of Benjamin: Sallu, whose ancestry went back through Meshullam and

u) Neither Ehud's ancestry in Benjamin, nor that of Shaharaim [vs. 8], is given.

v) Evidence of moral deterioration.

w) Meshullam and Ishmerai may be variants for Misham and Shemed in vs. 12.

x) Shema [vs. 13]. y) Perhaps Jeremoth [vs. 14]. z) Jeiel [9:35].

a) The youngest son [9:37, 38].

b) Another son [9:36], whose grandson, Saul, was first king of Israel, 1050-1010 B.C.

c) Ishui [in I Sam. 14:49]. d) Ish-bosheth [see note on II Sam. 2:8].

e) Mephobosheth [see note on II Sam. 4:4].

f) Literally, "given ones"; temple servants, as the men of Midian [Num. 31:47], and of Gibeon [Josh. 9:23], organized into a distinct group by David [Ezra 8:20].

g) Read, "Shelah"; with Perez and Zerah one of the leading families of Judah [Num. 26:20].

Hodaviah to Hassenuah; ⁸Ibneiah son of Jeroham; Elah, descendant through Uzzi of Michri; Meshullam, whose ancestry went back through Shephatiah and Reuel to Ibnijah; ⁹and 956 of their fellow tribesmen according to their genealogical registers. All the above were family leaders in their respective clans.

¹⁰Of the priests there were Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jachin; ¹¹with Azariah [IV], the ruler of the house of God, ¹who traced back his ancestry through Hilkiah, Meshullam, Zadok [II], Meraioth, and Ahitub [III]; ¹²Adaiah, whose line went back through Jeroham and Pashhur to Malchijah; ¹Massai, going back through Adiel, Jahzerah, Meshullam, and Meshillemith to Immer; ^k¹³and 1760 of their fellow tribesmen, leaders of clans and distinguished for their efficiency, carrying on the service of the house of God.

¹⁴Of the Levites there were: She-maiah, who traced his ancestry back through Hasshub, Azrikam, and Hashabiah to be a descendant of Merari; ¹¹⁵Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, Mattaniah, whose line, back through Mica and Zichri, made him a descendant of Asaph; ^m¹⁶Obadiah, going back through Shemaiah and Galal, a descendant of Jeduthun; ^mBerechiah the son of Asa, who was the son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

¹⁷There were the gatekeepers: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their colleagues (Shallum being the leader), ¹⁸to date at the king's gate to the east; and they were the gatekeepers for the stations of the men of Levi. ¹⁹Shallum, whose ancestry went back through Kore and Ebiasaph to Korah, ⁿand his fellows of the clan of Korah were responsible for the administration of the service, watching the doorways to the "tent," ^oeven as their fathers had supervised the encampment of the

LORD, guarding the entrance. ²⁰Their director in that earlier day had been Phinehas son of Eleazar^p — the LORD was with him! ²¹Then Zechariah son of Meshelemiah had been a gatekeeper of the entrance way for the tent of meeting. ^q²²The total of those chosen for gatekeepers at the doorways came to 212; they were registered by genealogy in their own villages, these men whom David and Samuel the seer had appointed to such positions of trust. ²³So they and their sons were in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, the house of the "tent," ²⁴posted as guards, and acting as gatekeepers toward the four winds, to the east, west, north, and south. ²⁵Their colleagues in their villages, moreover, were to come in periodically, every seven days, to be with them; ²⁶because these Levites, the four distinguished gatekeepers, were indeed in positions of responsibility, being charged with the rooms and the treasures of the house of God. ^r

²⁷They would spend the night around the house of God because the watch was committed to them, and in the morning they were in charge of the key. ²⁸Some of them were over the utensils of the service, because by number they both brought it in and took it out. ²⁹Others were designated for the objects in general, all the holy instruments, the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the incense, and the spiced perfume. ³⁰These who mixed the ointment for the spiced perfume were taken from the priestly families; ³¹though of the Levites, Mattithiah, who was the oldest son of Shallum of the descendants of Korah, was appointed in trust over the making of the flat cakes; ^s³²while some of their fellows of the descendants of Kohath, were responsible for the bread which was set in rows, ^tto make it ready Sabbath by Sabbath. ³³These

h) These appear to be names of the 2nd, 1st, and 21st of the 24 priestly courses which David had established [I Chron. 24:7-18], rather than of individuals.

i) About 600 B.C., shortly before the captivity [see 6:13]. j) David's 5th course [24:9].

k) David's 16th [24:14]. l) One of the three sons of Levi.

m) These were two of David's chief musicians, 1000 B.C.

n) Though Korah himself was destroyed, his clan continued as an important part of the Kohath division of Levi [see 6:22-28 and notes].

o) The form of God's house, the tabernacle, prior to the construction of the permanent temple.

p) Son of Aaron and his successor as high priest in the wilderness.

q) Under David [I Chron. 26:2]. r) Functions of gatekeepers correspond to those of our custodians.

s) For meal offerings [Lev. 2:4-7]. t) The "showbread" [Lev. 24:5, 6].

then were the singers, clan leaders of the Levites, having exemption in their rooms from other service, because day and night they were charged with the work; ³⁴and these were the Levitical clan leaders in general, leaders indeed by their genealogical registers, who lived in Jerusalem.

³⁵There lived in Gibeon, Jeiel,^u the patriarchal head of the city, whose wife's name was Maacah, ³⁶and whose sons were Abdon, the oldest, Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³⁷Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth. ³⁸Mikloth became father of Shimeam; and they lived in near-by Jerusalem, separate from their brothers, but still with fellow tribesmen. ³⁹Ner was the father of Kish, the father of Saul, whose sons were Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab, and Esh-baal. ⁴⁰Jonathan's son was Merib-baal, who was father of Micah, ⁴¹whose sons were Pithon, Melech, Tahrea (and Ahaz). ⁴²Ahaz had Jarah, whose sons were: Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. From Zimri the line of descent went: Moza, ⁴³Binea, Rephah, Eleasah, and Azel. ⁴⁴Azel had six sons, named Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these were the sons of Azel.

1010 B.C.

10 WHEN THE PHILISTINES MADE war against Israel,^v the men of Israel fled before them, and the mortally wounded fell on Mount Gilboa. ²But the Philistines pressed closely after Saul and his sons, and they struck down Jonathan, Abinadab,^w and Malchi-shua, sons of Saul. ³Saul himself was fiercely attacked in the battle; against him the bowmen found their mark, causing him to writhe in anguish. ⁴Thus Saul gave his armor-bearer the word, "Draw your sword, and run me through with it, so these uncircumcised may not come and practice their ruthless sport on me!"

But the armor-bearer did not have

the heart; he was terribly afraid. Saul, therefore, took the sword and fell on it; ⁶and when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on the sword and died. ⁸So Saul met his death; his three sons too; indeed his entire house died together. ⁷When all the men of Israel who were in the valley became aware of the rout and of the death of Saul and his sons, they gave up their cities and fled, so that the Philistines came and settled among them.

⁸So it was that when on the next day, the Philistines came to plunder the bodies, they found Saul and his sons as they had fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹They stripped him and took away his head and his armor, which they sent around through the Philistine territories, so as to spread the good news to their idols and to the people. ¹⁰Then they placed his armor in the house of their gods and fastened up his head in Dagon's temple. ¹¹But when all Jabesh-Gilead^x heard in full what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹²the whole company of fighting men took action. They removed the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons, brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the prominent tree in Jabesh, after which they kept a fast for seven days.

¹³So Saul died because of his unfaithfulness in which he acted disloyally against the LORD, because he had not kept the LORD's word and had even tried a medium's seance. ¹⁴He did not look to the LORD, who therefore caused his death and the transference of the kingdom to David the son of Jesse.

1003 B.C.

11 THUS ALL ISRAEL CAME TOGETHER to David at Hebron^y and said, "Here is the situation: We are your bone and your flesh. ²Moreover, in times past, even when Saul was king, you were the one who led Israel

u) Perhaps the Abiel of I Sam. 9:1 and 14:51. The rest of this chapter is practically identical with ch. 8:29-38 except for minor matters such as the spelling of names. It serves to introduce the record of the end of Saul's reign.

v) The climax of their third and last great oppression. This chapter is, in general, identical with I Sam. 31, though there is some difference in the choice of details. w) Ishui, in I Sam. 14:49.

x) Still loyal to Saul, after his great deliverance for them nearly forty years earlier [I Sam. 11:1-11].

y) The 7½ yrs. of David's rule at Hebron over Judah only, 1010 to 1003 B.C. [II Sam. 2-4], are here passed by; vss. 1-9 are parallel to II Sam. 5:1-10.

out and brought it in; the LORD your God also told you: You are the man who is to be the shepherd for My people, for Israel, and it is you who shall be sovereign over My people Israel."

³So when all the elders who led Israel had come to Hebron to the king and when David in the presence of the LORD had made a compact with them at Hebron, they anointed David king over Israel, as the LORD had given word through Samuel.²

⁴Then David with all Israel marched on Jerusalem, known as Jebus, in which were the Jebusites, the natives of the territory. ⁵They told David, "You shall not get in here!"^a But David did capture the fortress of Zion, which now is the city of David. ⁶David had also issued a proclamation, "Whoever is the first to strike down a man of Jebus shall be generalissimo"; and Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief commander. ⁷David occupied the fortress, for which reason it was called, "The City of David."

⁸Furthermore, he did construction work around it from Millo^b even to the surrounding area, while Joab restored the rest of the city. ⁹Thus David's power kept increasing for the LORD of hosts was with him.

¹⁰These are the leaders of David's heroes, men who were strong advocates of his rule and who, along with all the rest of Israel, were committed to making him king, in accordance with the LORD's statement for Israel. ¹¹The list then of the heroes David had consists of these:^c Jashobeam, son of a man of Hachmon, the leader of the Thirty,^d who so thrust with his spear that 300 were laid low at one time. ¹²After him, Eleazar the son of Dodo, a descendant of Ahoah, next

among the three outstanding heroes; ¹³he was with David at Pas-dammim where the Philistines had mustered for battle. At a section of the field that was full of barley, the people had broken and fled before the Philistines; ¹⁴but they^e took up a position in the middle of that section, recovered it, and struck down the Philistines; so the LORD saved them with a great victory.^f

¹⁵Three of the thirty leaders had gone down to the rocky cliff to join David in the cave of Adullam, during the camping of the Philistine army in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁶At that time David was in the stronghold, but an outpost of the Philistines occupied Bethlehem. ¹⁷Then David felt a longing and said, "If only somebody could get me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem there by the gate!" ¹⁸So the three heroes broke into the Philistine camp, drew water out of the well by the gate of Bethlehem, took it, and carried it to David. But David would not drink any; he poured it out as an offering to the LORD ¹⁹with the exclamation, "Be it far from me, because of my God, to do such a thing! Could I drink the blood of these men, their very souls? For they have brought it at the risk of their lives!" He would not, accordingly, drink any. This was what the three heroes did.

²⁰Then there was Abishai, Joab's brother and commander over the Three,^g who also thrust with his spear to lay low 300 men and he gained a reputation along with the Three; ²¹in fact, he was doubly honored over the Three by being made their superior, though he did not stand as high as the [first] three. ²²And Benaiah^h son of Jehoiada, who was the son of a valiant man of great accomplishments from

z) I Sam. 15:28; 16:1-13.

a) The mountain position of the fortress of Zion made it almost impregnable. This, plus its strategic location between northern Israel and southern Judah and its foreign [neutral] nature, made it an ideal site for David's proposed capital. b) One of the fortifications.

c) Twelve of the heroes are commanders of the twelve corps of David's armed forces [Ch. 27]. d) Perhaps the initial number in this "legion of honor." e) I Samuel 23:39 lists 37, including the outstanding Three and the two commanders, while this chapter [vss. 41b-47] notes 16 additions to the original group.

e) Either the Three, or Eleazar alone.

f) After him, "Shammah the son of Agee of Harar" [II Sam. 23:11]. So, the most distinguished "Three" are Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah.

g) He had commanded with Joab against Abner [II Sam. 2:24], and later led divisions in the wars against the Ammonites [II Sam. 10:10], against Absalom [18:2], and Sheba [20:6]. His heroism with David in Saul's camp is recorded in I Sam. 26:6f.

h) Commander of the professional Cretan and Philistine troops that made up David's guard [I Chron. 18:17], and Solomon's leading general [I Kings 4:4].

Kabzeel. He was the one who struck down the two ariels^l of Moab. He also went down into a pit and killed a lion on a snowy day ²³and he too destroyed the huge Egyptian, seven and a half feet tall, who had in his hand a spear the size of a weaver's bar;^j but he went at him with a club, snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. ²⁴These were things done by Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He, too, gained a reputation along with the three heroes; ²⁵but, though he was indeed more honored than the Thirty, he did not come up to the Three. David appointed him over his guard.

²⁶Then came these mighty warriors: Asahel,^k Joab's brother; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem; ²⁷Shammoth from Haror; a certain Helez; ²⁸Ira son of Ikkeish from Tekoa; Abiezer from Anathoth; ²⁹Sibbecai from Hushah; Ilai, a descendant of Ahoah; ³⁰Maharai and Heled son of Baanah, both from Netophah; ³¹Ithai son of Ribai, from Gibeah of the people of Benjamin; Benaiah from Pirathon; ³²Hurai from the valleys of Gaash; Abiel from the Jordan Valley; ³³Azmaveth from Baharum; Eliahba from Shaalbon; ³⁴Bene-hashem from Gizon; Jonathan son of Shagee ³⁵and Ahiam son of Sacar, both from Hara; Eliphal son of Ur; ³⁶Hepher from Mecherah; a certain Ahijah;^l ³⁷Hezro from Carmel; Naarai son of Ezbai; ³⁸Joel brother of Nathan; Mibhar son of Hagri; ³⁹Zelek from Ammon; Naharai from Beeroth, who was armor-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruah; ⁴⁰Ira and Gareb, both descendants of Jether; ⁴¹Uriah the Hittite;^m ⁴²Zabad son of Ahlai; ⁴³Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, who was a leader of Reuben and with whom were thirty men; ⁴⁴Hanan son of Maacah; Joshaphat the Mithnite; ⁴⁵Uzzia from

Ashteroth; Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham from Aroer; ⁴⁶Jediael son of Shimri and his brother Joha from Tiz; ⁴⁷Eliel from Mahavim; Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam; Ithmah from Moab; ⁴⁸and Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel from Zobah.

1011 B.C.

12 THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MEN who came to David at Ziklagⁿ while he was still restricted in his movements because of Saul the son of Kish; they were part of the heroes who maintained his military power, ²were equipped with the bow, and could sling stones and shoot arrows from their bows either right-handed or left-handed; they came from Benjamin, from among the fellow tribesmen of Saul: ³Ahiezzer, the leader, and Joash, both of them being sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu from Anathoth, ⁴Ishmaiah from Gibeon, a hero rated along with the Thirty and even over the Thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad from Gederah, ⁵Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah, a descendant of Haruph, ⁶Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, all descendants of Korah;^o ⁷and Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham from Gedor.

⁸From the people of Gad there came over to David at his desert stronghold^p these powerful heroes, fighting men of war who could handle the shield and spear, who had faces like lions and who were fast as deer in the hills: ⁹Ezer, the leader; Obadiah, the second; Eliab, the third; ¹⁰and Mishmannah, Jeremiah, ¹¹Attai, Eliel, ¹²Johanan, Elzabad, ¹³and Jeremiah, in that order, down to Machbannai, the eleventh. ¹⁴They were all descendants of Gad and leaders in the army, the least of whom was equal to a hundred, and the greatest,

i) "Lions of God," probably a general term for heroes rather than their personal name.

j) The heavy shaft that held the threads taut.

k) Killed when pursuing Abner in David's war against Ish-bosheth [II Sam. 2:18-23].

l) "Pelonite," in most translations, refers to no place; it equals "a certain."

m) The husband of Bath-sheba, murdered by order of David in the king's attempt to cover up adultery with his wife [II Sam. 11].

n) The town on the Judean border, over which David had been appointed vassal ruler by Achish, the Philistine king of Gath, [I Sam. 27:5-7].

o) The Kohathite who rebelled against Moses; see notes on 6:22 and 9:19. These five would therefore be from the tribe of Levi rather than of Benjamin, as the rest in this list, though probably residents of Benjamite territory.

p) Perhaps still the Cave of Adullam; compare 11:15 and I Sam. 22:1.

to a thousand! ¹⁵These were the men that crossed the Jordan in the first month^a when it was overflowing all its banks, and they put to rout the valley opposition both eastward and westward.

¹⁶Then too, there were men from Benjamin and Judah, who came to the stronghold to be with David. ¹⁷When David went out to meet them, he addressed them, "If you have come to me peaceably to help me, then you can count on my heart being united with yours; but if it is to betray me to my enemies when there is no stain of violence on my hands, let the God of our fathers observe it and be the judge!" ¹⁸Then the Spirit took hold of Amasai, leader of the Thirty, (to reply),^r

"We belong to you, O David;

We are with you, son of Jesse!

Peace, yes, perfect peace go with you;

Peace bless him who fights for you,

Because your God does lend you aid!"

So David received them and placed them among the officers of his force.

1010 B.C.

¹⁹From Manasseh there were certain men who shifted allegiance to David when he marched to battle, allied with the Philistines against Saul.^q David's men, however, did not actually fight on their side because the Philistine rulers, after consultation, dismissed him with the statement, "With our heads as his pledge, he might desert to his old master Saul." ²⁰So on David's return to Ziklag, there joined him from Manasseh: Adnah, Jozabad, Jedaiel, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai; each of these a commander of a thousand men in Manasseh. ²¹They proved of assistance to David against the band of raiders;^t for they were all powerful heroes and became high officers in the army. ²²In fact, men would come daily to enlist under David until he had a formidable force, like the army of God.^u

1003 B.C.

²³These are the totals of the divisions equipped for war, that joined David at Hebron, whose aim, as the LORD had directed, was to turn Saul's kingdom over to him: ²⁴Of Judah, those who could carry the shield and spear, 6,800 equipped for war; ²⁵of Simeon, powerful military heroes, 7,100; ²⁶of Levi, 4,600, ²⁷plus Jehoiada, the chief ruler of the Aaronic group, with whom were 3,700 ²⁸and Zadok,^v a powerful hero even in his youth, and his clan with its 22 chiefs; ²⁹of Benjamin, the relatives of Saul, 3,000; though up to this point the majority of them were maintaining loyalty to the house of Saul; ³⁰of Ephraim, 20,800 powerful heroes, men of reputation in their clans; ³¹of the half tribe of Manasseh,^w 18,000, who were designated by name to come to make David king; ³²of Issachar, 200 of their leaders who had understanding of the times and knew what Israel should do, and under whose command were all their fellow tribesmen; ³³of Zebulun, men subject to muster, who drew up rank with all types of weapons of war, 50,000, demonstrating single-hearted solidarity; ³⁴of Naphtali, 1,000 chiefs, and with them, 37,000 with shield and spear; ³⁵of Dan, 28,600 men drawing up rank; ³⁶of Asher, men subject to muster to maintain the line, 40,000; ³⁷and from Trans-Jordan, of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, with all the weapons of combat, 120,000.

³⁸All these fighting men who could draw up rank, came to Hebron with hearts determined to make David king over the whole of Israel; indeed, all the rest of Israel was of one mind to make David king. ³⁹For three days they were present with David, eating and drinking, because their fellow countrymen had made preparations for them. ⁴⁰Then, too, those who were near by, and as far as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, were bringing pro-

q) March-April, the time of the spring flood [see Josh. 3:15; 4:19].

r) Literally, "clothed Himself with Amasai," as in Judg. 6:34 and II Chron. 24:20.

s) See I Sam. 29 for the description.

t) Those from Amalek who had plundered David's city of Ziklag while he was away [I Sam. 30].

u) That is, very great; note the same phrase for the cedars in Ps. 80:10.

v) Perhaps the Zadok who was the colleague and successor of Abiathar as high priest.

w) The western half; see vs. 37.

visions on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen: flour, cakes, pressed fig cakes, bunches of raisins, wine, oil, herds, and flocks, all in great quantities, because gladness reigned in Israel.

1003-1002 B.C.

13 DAVID HAVING CONSULTED^x with the commanders of the units of 1000 and of 100, namely with every leader, ²addressed the whole assembly of Israel: "If this seems desirable to you and if the project is indeed from the LORD our God, let us act with determination and summon our fellow citizens who are remaining throughout the territories of Israel, together with the priests and the Levites in their cities with the surrounding open lands, that they may meet with us. ³Then we can bring back to us the ark of our God, for in the days of Saul we have had no concern for it."^y ⁴The entire assembly agreed that this should be done—the thing was right in all the people's judgment — ⁵and David accordingly assembled all Israel, from Shihor of Egypt^z to the approaches of Hamath, to bring in the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim.

⁶Then David with all Israel went up to Baalah, which is Kiriath-jearim^a and belongs to Judah, to bring up from there God's ark, with which is associated His name: The LORD who thrones between the cherubim. ⁷They transported it on a new cart from the house of Abinadab, with Uzza and Ahio^b driving the cart. ⁸David, meanwhile, and all Israel were dancing before God with all their strength, with songs and with lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets. ⁹But when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza reached out his hand to catch hold of the ark, because the

oxen had slipped. ¹⁰The LORD's anger rose against Uzza, and God struck him for having laid hands on the ark; so he died there in God's presence.^c

¹¹David was deeply moved at the LORD's outbreak against Uzza; he called that place Perez-uzza,^d a name kept to the present day. ¹²In his fear at that time toward God, he exclaimed, "How can I ever bring in the ark of God to be with me?" ¹³So David did not have the ark moved into the city of David to be with him but redirected it to the house of Obed-edom, who had come from Gath. ¹⁴The ark of God stayed with the family of Obed-edom in his house for three months; and the LORD prospered the household of Obed-edom^e along with all that he had.

1003 B.C. and following

14 NOW HIRAM KING OF TYRE sent David messengers^f and then logs of cedar, with men skilled in erecting walls and in carpentry, to build him a palace.^g ²Thus David recognized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel; for his kingdom had been highly exalted for the sake of Israel, God's own people. ³David, however, took more wives^h at Jerusalem and became father of more sons and daughters. ⁴The following are the names of sons that were born in Jerusalem:ⁱ Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ⁶Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, ⁶Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁷Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

⁸When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, they advanced in full force to get hold of him; but David was informed and went out to face them.^j

⁹The Philistines came and raided in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁰Then David

x) II Sam. 6:1-11 gives a briefer report with minor variants.

y) The one exception is noted in I Samuel 14:18, and even there the ark might not actually have been used, only requested.

z) The stream bed that marked the southeastern border of Palestine, [see Josh. 13:3].

a) Where the ark had stayed in the house of Abinadab for almost a century, following its capture by the Philistines at the first battle of Eben-ezer and its subsequent return [Sam. 7:1].

b) Sons of Abinadab, [II Sam. 6:3].

c) Emphasizing for all future generations the necessity for reverence and conforming obedience toward God's sacred objects. The ark should never have been mounted on a cart; it should never have been touched; there were poles to carry it [Ex. 25:14]. d) "The outbreak of Uzza."

e) A Levite of the family of Korah in the clan of Kohath [26:1,4], and so meeting the requirement for a caretaker of the ark. f) This chapter parallels II Sam. 5:11-25.

g) It is well that the world renders service to the church.

h) Prohibited by the law [Deut. 17:17]. i) This same list appears, with minor variants, in 3:5-8.

j) This attack must have come shortly after his national anointing, even before the capture of Jerusalem [see II Sam. 5:17].

inquired of God, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt Thou give them over into my hands?" The LORD replied to him: Go up, and I will deliver them into your hands. ¹¹So they went up against Baal-perazim; and, as David struck them down there, he exclaimed, "God has broken through my enemies by means of my hand, like a breakthrough of water!" Therefore they named that place Baal-perazim.^k ¹²There his opponents even abandoned their gods, and at David's command, they burned them with fire.^l

¹³When the Philistines again undertook a raid in the valley, ¹⁴David once more made inquiry of God. God said to him: Do not go up after them; circle them and come in on them by the front of the balsam trees. ¹⁵It shall be when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, at that instant you shall launch the attack, for God will have gone out before you to overwhelm the Philistine army. ¹⁶David did as God had ordered him, and they struck down the army of the Philistines from Gibeon as far as to Gezer. ¹⁷Thus the fame of David spread throughout all lands, and the LORD laid the dread of him on all the nations.

1002 B.C.

15 ^{THE KING^m ERECTED BUILDINGS} for himself in the city of David, but he also prepared a place for the ark of God and set up a tent for it. ²Then, after he had cautioned, "No one is to carry God's ark except the Levites, since they are the ones whom the LORD has chosen to bear His ark and serve Him forever," ³David assembled all Israel to Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD into the place he had made ready for it. ⁴He gathered the descendants of Aaron and of Levi; ⁵of Kohath, Uriel the leader with 120 of his clan; ⁶of Merari, Asaiah the leader with 220 of his; ⁷of Gershon,ⁿ Joel with 130; ⁸of Elizaphan,^o Shema-

iah with 200; ⁹of Hebron, Eliel with 80; ¹⁰and of Uzziel, Amminadab the leader, with 112 of his clan. ¹¹Then David called for the priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and for the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, ¹²and said to them, "You are the clan leaders of Levi; consecrate yourselves, you and your fellow tribesmen, so you can bring the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, up to the place I have prepared for it; ¹³for it is because you did not carry it the previous time, that the LORD our God made an outbreak against us, as we failed to seek Him in the proper way." ¹⁴So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

¹⁵When the descendants of Levi had lifted up God's ark in the way Moses had prescribed by the word of the LORD, that is, by poles on their shoulders,^p ¹⁶David ordered the leaders of Levi to have their tribesmen who were singers to take stations with musical instruments—harps, lyres, and pace-setting cymbals^q—lifting up the sound for joy. ¹⁷The Levites accordingly appointed Heman son of Joel; one of his colleagues named Asaph son of Berechiah; and out of their fellows from Merari, Ethan son of Kushaiah. ¹⁸Along with these were their associates of a second class: Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel.^r ¹⁹The singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were assigned to the bronze cymbals for setting the pace;^s ²⁰Zechariah, Aziel,^s Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, to the soprano lyres; ²¹and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azariah, to the harps for leading off. ²²Moreover, Chenaniah, the leader of the men of Levi, was charged with the striking up of

k) "Master of the breakthroughs." l) As required by the law [Deut. 7:5, 25].

m) II Sam. 6:12-19 gives an abbreviation of the material of this and of the following chapter, with minor variants. n) Elsewhere, "Gershon" [6:1]; though compare 6:16f.

o) This and the following two are family subdivisions within the first-named Levitical clan of Kohath [Ex. 6:18,22].

p) It requires persons, rather than animals and carts, to render Him acceptable service.

q) Literally, "hearing-causers," — cymbals that marked the time by sounding clearly and loudly.

r) To this list could probably be added the Azariah of vs. 21. s) Shortened from Jaaziel in vs. 18.

song—he carried on the instruction in singing because of his skill; ²³Berechiah and Elkanah, with being gatekeepers for the ark; ²⁴and the priests Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, with the blowing of the trumpets before God's ark. Obed-edom and Jehiah were also gatekeepers for the ark. ²⁵So David and the chiefs of Israel and the commanders of the units of 1000 took up the march with rejoicing to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD up from the house of Obed-edom.^t

²⁶Now when God was evidently helping the Levites who were carrying the ark of the LORD's covenant, they sacrificed seven each of steers and of rams. ²⁷David also dressed in a robe of fine linen, as were all those of Levi who were carrying the ark, together with the singers and the leader Chenaniah, who struck up the song for them. David was wearing a white linen cape,^u too. ²⁸All Israel was bringing up the ark of the LORD's covenant with shouting, the sound of rams' horns, trumpets, pace-setting cymbals, lyres, and harps. ²⁹But as the ark of the covenant of the LORD made its entrance into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, was looking down through a window and when she saw King David rejoicing there with dancing, she despised him in her heart.

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16 SO THEY BROUGHT IN THE ARK of God, and when they had placed it inside the tent which David had pitched for it, they presented in the presence of God burnt offerings and peace offerings. ²When David had finished the sacrifice of burnt offerings and of peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. ³Furthermore, he made an allotment to each Israelite, including men and women, a round loaf of bread, a package of

dates, and a cake of raisins to each. ⁴Next he appointed as directors of services before the LORD's ark certain Levites, who would maintain the commemoration, the thanksgiving and the praise for the LORD God of Israel: ⁵Asaph, the chief; and subordinate to him Zechariah, Jeiel,^v Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, ⁶Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, who were assigned to the harps and lyres as instruments; Asaph himself had the pace-setting cymbals; and, with the trumpets which were blown regularly before the ark of God's covenant, the priests Benaiah and Jahaziel.

⁷On that day David for the first time committed to the hands of Asaph^w and his associates the giving of thanks to the LORD:^x

⁸Oh, give thanks to the LORD, sound

His name,^y

and proclaim to the nations His acts.

⁹Sing to Him, yea, to Him sing psalms; all His miracles ponder and speak.

¹⁰Have your boast in His sanctified name,

and rejoice, hearts that look for the LORD.

¹¹Make resort to the LORD and His might,

and His presence perpetually seek.

¹²Oh, remember His miracles wrought, with His marvels and judgments of mouth,

¹³Ye descendants of Israel, His servant, elect, who from Jacob have sprung,

¹⁴It is He who is LORD and our God, with His judgments throughout the whole earth.

¹⁵To His covenant always attend, for a thousand generations imposed,

¹⁶Unto Abraham surely confirmed, and to Isaac laid down with an oath.

¹⁷He defined it for Jacob as statute, for a covenant, Israel's to stand:

¹⁸I am giving thee Canaan, the land, your inheritance bounded by line,

t) For this occasion Ps. 24 seems to have been written and set to music. It was prophetic of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and symbolic of His being welcomed in our hearts.

u) Hebrew, "ephod." He seems to have removed his outer garment; note Michal's reaction [vs. 29 and II Sam. 6:20]. v) In 15:18, Jaaziel.

w) Twelve psalms were written by Asaph and his descendants, Ps. 50, and from 73 through 83. x) This marked the beginning of regular Levitical choirs, that soon became so important a part of Hebrew public worship.

y) The model songs, with which David then provided them, consist with slight modifications, of Ps. 105:1-15, Ps. 96, and Ps. 106:1, 47, 48. These three psalms are listed anonymously in the Psalter but, on the basis of his use of them here, it would appear that David is their author.

¹⁹Though you are insignificant now
very few and mere pilgrims therein.
²⁰True, they wandered from nation to
nation,
from kingdom to people most
strange.
²¹But He granted not one to oppress
them,
rebuking for them even kings:
²²Those anointed by Me, do not touch!
'Gainst My prophets, attempt
nothing wrong!^z
²³So now sing to the LORD, all the
earth,
His salvation, yes, daily proclaim.
²⁴Oh, repeat to the nations His glory,
to all of the peoples His deeds.
²⁵For the LORD is great, much to be
praised,
and revered above all so-called gods.
²⁶For all gods of the pagans are vain,
but the LORD even the heavens hath
made.
²⁷There is splendor and honor before
Him,
and power and joy where He dwells.
²⁸Give the LORD, O ye families of men,
give the LORD highest glory and
might.
²⁹Give the LORD all the fame due His
name;
bring an offering and come before
Him.
Serve the LORD in your holy array,
³⁰be in awe before Him, all the
earth;
thus the world will immovably stand.
³¹Let the heavens be glad, and earth
sing;
let them tell among men, "The
LORD reigns!"
³²Let the sea in its fulness resound;
let the field with its products rejoice.
³³Then shall trees of the woods sing
aloud
at the face of the LORD, for He
comes
to accomplish His judgment on
earth.
³⁴Oh, give thanks to the LORD, who is
good

for His covenant love does hold true;
³⁵and cry, "Save us, O God, our
Salvation,
and gather us, snatched from the
world,
to give thanks to Thy most holy
name
and to glory ourselves in Thy praise.
³⁶Let the LORD God of Israel be blest
from eternity, world without end."
The response of all the people was,
"Amen!"^a praising the LORD.

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³⁷So he left Asaph and his associates
there in charge of the ark of the LORD's
covenant, to maintain a constant serv-
ice before the ark as each day required,
³⁸along with Obed-edom (who was the
son of Jeduthun),^b Hosah, and sixty-
eight of their colleagues, as gatekeepers.
³⁹But at the same time [he retained]
Zadok the priest and his priestly asso-
ciates before the dwelling of the LORD^c
at the high place that was in Gibeon,
⁴⁰to sacrifice burnt offerings continual-
ly, morning and evening, to the LORD
on the altar of burnt offering, in ac-
cordance with everything written in
the law of the LORD, which He had
prescribed for Israel. ⁴¹With them were
Heman, Jeduthun, and the rest of
those selected, who had been desig-
nated by name to give thanks to the
LORD, "for His loving-kindness holds
ever true." ⁴²Heman and Jeduthun had
the trumpets, the cymbals for those
who set the pace, and the sacred musi-
cal instruments. The sons of Jeduthun
were assigned to the gate. ⁴³Then all
the people returned to their respective
homes, and David went back to bless
his household.

17 AFTER DAVID HAD COME TO LIVE
in his palace,^d he said to Nathan
the prophet, "See here, I am living in
a cedar palace while the ark of the
LORD's covenant is under tent cur-
tains." ²Nathan replied to David, "Do
whatever you have in mind, because
God is with you."^e ³But that night the

^z) Abraham was designated a prophet in God's protecting him against Abimelech king of Gerar [Gen. 20:7]. ^a) Meaning, "True indeed!"

^b) Not to be confused with Jeduthun, the chief singer of the clan of Merari, for Obed-edom's family was of Kohath. ^c) The tent of meeting [II Chron. 1:13], first erected by Moses.

^d) Chapters 17 and 18 are close parallels to II Sam. 7-8.

^e) This statement was based on Nathan's personal judgment; not on divine revelation.

word of God came to Nathan: ⁴Go, tell My servant David, The LORD has spoken: It is not for you to build Me the temple for My residence.^f ⁵From the time I brought out Israel until now, I have lived in no house; I have been moving from tent to tabernacle for a dwelling. ⁶Yet at any point in My journeying with all Israel, did I ever say a word to any one of the judges of Israel to whom I committed the leadership of My people to the effect, Why have you not built Me a cedar temple?

⁷But now this is what you are to say to My servant David, The LORD of hosts has thus spoken: I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be leader over My people, over Israel. ⁸I have been with you in all that you have undertaken; I have eliminated all your enemies from before you and so have given you a name equal in reputation to that of the greatest men on earth. ⁹I have, moreover, established a place for My people Israel and planted them, so that they inhabit their own land with no more shifting about and no more continued wasting by the unrighteous as at the first.^g ¹⁰or from the time I appointed judges over my people Israel. I have subdued all your enemies.^h Now I inform you that the LORD is building a house for you.ⁱ

¹¹When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your posterity after you, one of your own sons; and I will confirm his sovereignty. ¹²He will build Me a house;^j and I will establish his throne forever; ¹³so I will be that one's Father, and He shall be My son.^k I will not have My loving-kindness leave your son, as I had it leave the one who was before you;^l ¹⁴I will uphold him in My house and in My kingdom forever: his throne shall be eternally established.^m ¹⁵In accordance with all these words and all

this vision, Nathan delivered the message to David.

¹⁶Then King David, after he had come in, remained in the LORD's presence and prayed, "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me to this point?" ¹⁷Then, as though this were a little thing in Thine eyes, O God, Thou hast spoken of the house of Thy servant into the far distant future. Hast Thou regarded me according to the standard for exalted men, O LORD God? ¹⁸What can David further say to Thee about the honor to Thy servant, since Thou knowest what Thy servant is like, ¹⁹O LORD! It is for the sake of Thy servant and in accordance with Thy decree that Thou hast done all these astounding things in making such greatness known. ²⁰O LORD, there is none like Thee, nor is there any God apart from Thyself, according to all that has come to our ears. ²¹Who, moreover, is like Thy people Israel, a nation unique upon the earth, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, and so didst enhance Thine own name by deeds great and terrible, driving out nations before Thy people, whom Thou didst redeem from Egypt. ²²Yes, Thou hast established Thy people Israel to be Thine own people forever; and Thou, LORD, Thou hast become their God.ⁿ

²³Now, O LORD, let what Thou hast spoken about Thy servant and his household stand for eternity. ²⁴Do according to Thy promise, that Thy name may forever be seen as reliable and great, so men shall say, 'The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, He is God over Israel'; when the family of Thy servant David shall be established before Thee. ²⁵For Thou, O my God, Thou hast revealed to Thy servant that Thou art building him a house;^o ac-

f) David was disqualified because of his warfare [22:8;28:3].

g) In Egypt; by Amalekites, Ammonites, Midianites, and Philistines.

h) So this chapter chronologically comes after ch. 18.

i) Before we can build for God, He has built for us, and indeed has built us.

j) Done by Solomon [I Kings 5:5].

k) Fully realized in Jesus Christ, the promised Descendant of David [Luke 1:32, 33], who as God's Son occupies the eternal throne [Heb. 1:5; see also Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:33; and Heb. 5:5]. As Christ Jesus, Son of Man and Son of God, is in His human nature the perfect Man, He fulfils [fills out] all human qualities. In this spirit, the kingship and throne of Solomon are prophetic of the kingship and throne of the promised Messiah.

l) King Saul. m) To the tent sanctuary he had erected [ch. 16:1].

n) These last words are the central promise of the covenant [Gen. 17:7; Ex. 6:7; and Rev. 21:3].

o) Not a building, like the "house" David wished to build for God, but a dynasty.

cordingly, Thy servant has found courage to make this prayer before Thee. ²⁶Surely, LORD, Thou art God and hast promised this good thing to Thy servant. ²⁷Now Thou hast been pleased to bless the house of Thy servant that it may continue forever before Thee; and, because Thou, LORD, hast uttered the blessing, it shall indeed be eternally blessed."

1002 to 995 B.C.

18 IN PROCESS OF TIME, DAVID overcame the Philistines and humbled them, taking Gath and its surrounding towns from Philistine control. ²He struck down Moab, so that Moabites became subject to David, paying tribute. ³David also defeated Hadadezer king of Zobah as far as to Hamath, when the latter attempted to confirm his power at the Euphrates river.^p ⁴David took captive 1000 of his chariots, 7000 cavalry, and 20,000 infantry, and he hamstrung all his chariot horses, reserving only enough for 100 chariots. ⁶Then, when the Syrians of Damascus came to the aid of Hadadezer king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 of the men of Syria ⁶and went on to station garrisons in Syria of Damascus. So the Syrians became subject to David, paying tribute. The LORD gave David the victory everywhere he went. ⁷David, moreover, took the golden shields which had been carried by Hadadezer's officers, and brought them to Jerusalem; ⁸and from Tibhath and Cun,^q cities of Hadadezer, David exacted a very large amount of bronze, with which Solomon made the brazen sea, the pillars, and the bronze furnishings.^r ⁹When Tou king of Hamath heard that David had overcome all the forces of Hadadezer king of Zobah, ¹⁰he sent his son Hadoram to King David to

greet him and to extend congratulations over the battle in which he had beaten Hadadezer; because Hadadezer had repeatedly been at war with Tou. He had with him all sorts of articles of silver, gold, and bronze, ¹¹which King David dedicated to the LORD, along with the silver and gold which he had removed from all the countries, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

¹²Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah struck down 18,000^s troops of Edom in the Valley of Salt. ¹³He then posted garrisons in Edom, so that the whole nation became subject to David. Surely the LORD gave David the victory wherever he went. ¹⁴So David reigned over all Israel, executing justice and maintaining the right for all his people. ¹⁵Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the armed forces; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilub was recorder; ¹⁶Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was secretary; ¹⁷Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cretan and Philistine guard;^t and the sons of David were chiefs at the side of the king.

About 955 B.C.

19 IN THE COURSE OF EVENTS NAHASH the king of the Ammonites died,^u and his son succeeded him on the throne. ²David announced, "I will show Hanun friendship, because his father showed kindness to me."^v David therefore sent envoys to console him about his father. But when David's embassy arrived in the land of the Ammonites and came to Hanun to comfort him, ³that nation's officials advised Hanun, "Do you think it is to honor your father that he has sent you comforters? Is it not rather to investigate and to overthrow the land by

p) See 19:16-18, the second defeat of the Syrians; the verses of this chapter summarize the full account in 19:6-19.

q) These, and some of the names that follow, have variant forms in the corresponding verses (II Sam. 8:8-18).

r) For the temple. Note David's accumulations for Solomon's temple in 22:2-5, 14-15.

s) The title to Ps. 60 mentions Joab as David's leading general slaying 12,000 Edomites; II Sam. 8:13 notes David slaying 18,000.

t) The Philistines were Europeans; they had come originally from Caphtor [Crete] [Amos 9:7] and were greatly reinforced by refugees from Crete when the island fell to Greek invaders about 1200 B.C. [Jer. 47:4]. At the time of the rise of Saul, 1048 B.C., the Philistines were dominating Israel and using Hebrews as mercenary troops [I Sam. 14:21]; but David's victories in 1003 reversed the situation, Philistines are now in his employ.

u) Chs. 19:20-3, except for their omission of David's crime with Bath-sheba, are parallel to II Sam. 10-12.

v) This would hardly be the same Nahash against whom Saul had fought fifty-five years before [I Sam. 11], but may have been a son, who helped David against Saul.

acting as spies, that his servants have come to you?" ⁴So Hanun seized David's envoys, shaved them, cut off their robes half way, just below the belt, and sent them away. ⁵When word came to David about the men, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly humiliated. And the king directed them, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow out; then come back."

⁶When the Ammonites realized how seriously they had antagonized David, they sent 2,000,000 dollars in silver^w to enlist mercenary troops in their cause from Aram of Mesopotamia and of Maacah and from Zobah, including chariots and cavalry. ⁷They hired for themselves 32,000 war chariots, together with the king of Maacah and his people, all of whom came and encamped before Medeba. The people of Ammon likewise gathered from their cities and came to battle. ⁸David heard about it and dispatched Joab with the entire army of brave men. ⁹The Ammonites came out and drew up ranks for the conflict at the gate of the city,^x while the kings who had come were posted separately in the field. ¹⁰But Joab, upon his discovery that the battle front was against him both front and rear, picked a force out of all the men selected in Israel and deployed them to engage the Syrians. ¹¹The rest of the troops he assigned to the command of his brother Abishai to form for battle against the Ammonites. ¹²"If Syria proves too strong for me," he said, "you are to be my support; but if the Ammonites prove too strong for you, then I will come to your defense. ¹³Keep up your courage, and let us show strength for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God! Then let the LORD do what is good in his sight!"^y ¹⁴So Joab and his forces took up the attack against the Syrians, and they fled before him. ¹⁵The people of Ammon, too, when they saw Aram^z in

flight, ran before his brother Abishai in the same way and took refuge in the city. Then Joab returned to Jerusalem.^a

¹⁶But when the Syrians sensed their defeat at the hands of Israel, they dispatched messengers and summoned the Arameans which were beyond the river,^b Shophach general of Hadadezer's army being made commander. ¹⁷David, on being informed, mustered all Israel, crossed the Jordan, advanced, and formed his ranks against them. So David drew up the array to engage Syria in conflict, and they joined battle with him. ¹⁸Again Syria fled before Israel, and David destroyed of Syria 7,000 chariot [men] and 40,000 infantry; he also killed Shophach the commander of the forces. ¹⁹As a result, when those who were under Hadadezer saw that they were overwhelmed before Israel, they made peace with David and became subject to him. There was no desire on Syria's part to send further aid to the Ammonites.

About 994 B.C.

20 WITH NEXT YEAR'S SEASON, AT the time when kings march forth,^c Joab led out the strength of the army to devastate the land of the Ammonites. He came and laid siege to Rabbah, while David was staying in Jerusalem. At last Joab overcame Rabbah and tore it down. ²From the head of Malcam David took the crown, the weight of which he found to be seventy-five pounds^d in gold, plus a precious stone that was in it, and it was placed on David's own head. He also carried off the plunder of the city in great quantity; ³and the people in it he brought out and forced to become laborers, cutting with saws, iron picks, and axes. This was what David did to all the cities of the Ammonites, after which David and his whole army returned to Jerusalem.

⁴War resumed against the Philistines

w) Hebrew, 1000 talents, each weighing about 75 lbs. avoirdupois, or 92 lbs. troy [the 12-ounce lb.] worth a total of about \$2,000,000. x) Their capital, Rabbah [cf. 20:1].

y) A combination of faith and works.

z) Syria was the western portion of Aramea and went much by that name.

a) It seems to have been too late in the year to undertake a siege [see 20:1].

b) East of the Euphrates. c) Spring, after the rainy season.

d) Hebrew, one talent, or about 92 lb. troy weight, equivalent to nearly \$30,000. The crown could not be worn by a man, Malcam being the leading Ammonite idol [Zeph 1:5]. The name was also spelled Milcom [I Kings 11:5,33].

after an interval, at Gezer;^e then it was that Sibbecai^f from Hushah struck down Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rephaim,^g so that they were subdued. ⁶Another time war took place against the Philistines and Elhanan the son of Jair overcame Lahmi the brother of Goliath of Gath, whose spear had a shaft like that of a weaver's bar.^h ⁶Once more there was war, at Gath, this time involving a huge man who had his fingers and toes in sixes, twenty-four in all; he too was born of Raphah. ⁷But when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of David's brother Shimea, struck him down. ⁸These were born to Raphah in Gath, but they fell at the hands of David and his men.

About 995 B.C.

21 SATAN, HOWEVER, STOOD UP against Israel and aroused David to take a census of Israel.ⁱ ²David ordered Joab and the leaders of the people, "Go, count Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan, and bring me a report, so that I may know their number." ³Joab tried to reason, "May the LORD multiply His people a hundred times over what they are now; but, my master and king, does not my master have them all as servants? Why should my master want to do this? Why should he become a cause for guilt against Israel?"^j ⁴The king's word, however, prevailed against Joab; so Joab went out, and when he had traveled all over Israel, he came back to Jerusalem. ⁵Joab then turned over to David the figures for the census of the people. All Israel consisted of 1,100,000 men who used the sword; and Judah, of 470,000 men, likewise using the sword.^k ⁶But Levi and Benjamin he did not register along with

the rest, because the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.

⁷There was displeasure, moreover, in God's eyes concerning this matter, so that he struck Israel down. ⁸David, it is true, confessed to God, "I have sinned greatly in doing this; and now, I pray Thee, take away the wrong of Thy servant, for I have indeed played the fool." ⁹But the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer: ¹⁰Go, tell David, this is what the LORD has decreed: I offer you three things; choose one of them for Me to do to you. ¹¹So Gad came to David and informed him, "This is what the LORD has decreed, Choose for yourself: ¹²three years of famine; or three months of being swept away before your adversaries, with the sword of your enemies overtaking you; or three days of the sword of the LORD, that is of epidemic in the land, the angel of the LORD working destruction all over the territory of Israel. Now therefore decide what answer I am to return to Him who sent me."

¹³David replied to Gad, "I am in deep distress; let me fall, I pray, into the hands of the LORD, because His mercies are so great; but into the hands of man may I not fall." ¹⁴So the LORD sent an epidemic upon Israel, and there fell 70,000 men out of Israel.^l ¹⁵God also sent an angel toward Jerusalem to destroy it; but when he was at the point of destroying it, the LORD observed, felt compassion regarding the calamity, and gave orders to the destroying angel, Enough! Relax your hand now! This was when the LORD's angel was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan^m the Jebusite.

¹⁶When David raised his eyes and

e) These events therefore follow the first Philistine wars, described in 14:8-16, but precede the God-given rest from foreign enemies granted David by about 995 a.c. [II Sam. 7:1]. They are also recorded, with minor variants, in II Sam. 21:15-22 and may be associated with the campaigns noted in I Chron. 18:1.

f) One of the "thirty" heroes [11:29] and commander of the 8th corps of David's army [27:11]. g) The Rephaim were an ancient people [Gen. 14:5], noted for their size, but, except for Og's kingdom in Bashan, had died out by the time of Moses [Deut. 3:11].

h) Heavy, to hold the threads taut. See I Sam. 17:7.

i) The parallel record in II Sam. 24 goes behind this and shows that Satan was the instrument of God, being used to execute punishment on Israel for their sins. Compare Job 1:6-12 and I Kings 22:20-22.

j) There was nothing inherently wrong in a census; but in this case David seems to have been looking to the armed strength of his people [note vs. 5], rather than maintaining his faith in the promises of God [cf. 27:23].

k) II Sam. 24:9 gives the round figure for Judah of 500,000 and notes that in Israel only 600,000 could be classified as physically fit.

l) Appropriate punishment, since the sin seems to have been the reliance upon numerical military strength. m) In II Sam. 24:18, "Araunah."

saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem, David and the chiefs, wrapped in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ¹⁷David appealed to God, "Was it not I who ordered the census of the people? I am the one who has sinned and acted so wrongly. But these sheep,ⁿ what have they done? O LORD my God, let Thy hand, I pray, be against me and my father's household, but not against Thy people to be stricken by a plague!" ¹⁸The LORD's angel, accordingly, ordered Gad to tell David that David should go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁹So David went up at Gad's word, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD.

²⁰Ornan, meanwhile, was threshing wheat when he turned and saw the angel, and his four sons that were with him went into hiding. ²¹Then David approached Ornan, and when Ornan looked and saw David, he went out from the threshing floor and prostrated himself with his face to the ground before David. ²²"Let me have the area of the threshing floor," David addressed Ornan, "so I can build an altar on it to the LORD. Give it to me at full price, that the plague may be restrained from continuing on the people." ²³"Take it for your own," Ornan remonstrated with David, "and let my master the king do whatever seems good in his eyes. See, I am giving the cattle^o for the burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for the offering of meal! I am giving it all." ²⁴"No," King David answered Ornan, "I will certainly buy it at full price; I will not take for the LORD what belongs to you, or offer a burnt offering that costs me nothing!"^p ²⁵So David paid Ornan for the area 6,000 dollars' worth of gold by weight.^q ²⁶Then

David built an altar there to the LORD and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings. Besides, he called out to the LORD, who answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering. ²⁷The LORD also gave orders to the angel, who returned his sword to its sheath.

²⁸It was at that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite,^r that he made sacrifice there. ²⁹Now the tabernacle of the LORD that Moses had made in the desert and the altar of burnt offering were during that period at the high place in Gibeon; ³⁰but David could not go before it to seek God, because he was so terrified by the sword of the LORD's angel.

22 DAVID THEN SAID, "THIS PLACE is the temple of the LORD God; and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel."

²So David proceeded to assemble the resident aliens that were in the land of Israel and assigned stonecutters to prepare squared stones for building God's temple. ³David next made ready great quantities of iron to make nails for the doors of the gates and for binding plates; also bronze in an amount too great to be weighed ⁴and countless cedar logs, because the people of Tyre and Sidon brought David cedar logs in great quantity. ⁵David explained, "My son Solomon is still a youth and inexperienced;^s but the temple to be built for the LORD is to be made most magnificent, of fame and glory through all lands. I am therefore making preparations for it." So David made ample provision before his death.

⁶David also called in his son Solomon and charged him with building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁷David addressed Solomon, "My son, I had in mind personally to build a

n) Scripture frequently compares leader and people to shepherd and flock [see 11:2 and Ps. 23].
o) Used to pull the wooden threshing sledges over the grain.

p) So God expects us Christians to yield Him the best in our lives, not merely what involves no sacrifice.

q) Hebrew, 600 shekels. II Sam. 24:24 notes a small amount [50 shekels] in silver paid for the threshing floor itself.

r) Ornan's threshing floor on Mt. Moriah, on which Abraham offered Isaac to God. The temple was soon built by Solomon [II Chron. 3:1]. It seems therefore that Ps. 30, by David, "at the dedication of the temple," dates here; vs. 5, 6 well describe David's situation at this point.

s) See note on II Sam. 12:24. Born in 990 B.C., Solomon would be twenty at his accession.

temple to the name of the LORD my God,⁸ but the LORD's word came to me saying: You have shed too much blood and carried on great wars; you are not to build a temple to My name,¹ because you have spilled so much blood on the ground before Me.⁹ But see, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of peace; for I will give him relief from all his enemies on every side. Indeed, Solomon¹⁰ shall be his name; and peace and security will I ordain over Israel in his days.¹⁰ He then will build a house for My name — so that one shall be my son, and I will be His Father — and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.^v ¹¹Now, my son, the LORD be with you, so that you may prosper and build the temple of the LORD your God, even as He has spoken in reference to you.¹² Only the LORD grant you insight and understanding, so that when He gives you charge over Israel, you may keep the Law of the LORD your God.¹³ Then you will prosper, if you take care to execute the statutes and judgments which the LORD commanded Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and courageous! Do not fear; be not downcast! ¹⁴See, by my hard labor I have amassed for the LORD's temple 13,100,000 pounds of gold, 116,400,000 pounds of silver,^w and bronze and iron that cannot be weighed because of their abundance. I have prepared timbers and stores as well, to which you will want to make additions.¹⁵ You have also with you a great number of workers, cutters and carvers in stone and timber, and all kinds of skilled workers for every task,¹⁶ for gold, silver, bronze, and iron, a countless amount. Get up and do it, and the LORD be with you!"

¹⁷David also gave orders to all the leaders of Israel to provide assistance

for his son Solomon,¹⁸ "Is not the LORD your God with you? Has he not granted you peace on every side? For He has surrendered the inhabitants of the land into my power, so that the land lies subdued before the LORD and His people.¹⁹ Now set your minds and hearts to seek the LORD God so as to bring the ark of the LORD's covenant and the holy equipment of God into the temple that is to be built to the LORD's name."

971-970 B.C.

23 WHEN DAVID BECAME OLD AND advanced in years, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.^x ²He also assembled all the leaders of Israel and the priests and the Levites.³ After a census had been taken of the men of Levi aged thirty and above, the total of their heads, man for man, was 38,000.⁴ "Of these," said David, "24,000 are to supervise the work of the LORD's temple, 6,000 to act as officers and judges, 54,000 to be gatekeepers, and 4,000 to offer praise to the LORD on the instruments I have made for singing praise."

⁶David then organized them into divisions according to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.⁷ The descendants of Gershon were divided among Ladan and Shimei.⁸ The sons of Ladan were three; Jehiel, the leader, Zetham, and Joel: ⁹also the sons of Shimei,^z three: Shelomoth, Haziël, and Haran. The total of these constituted the clan leaders for Ladan.¹⁰ The sons of Shimei were: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah, the total for Shimei's sons being four,¹¹ with Jahath as leader and Zizah second; but since Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, they became, as a result, a clan with a single reckoning.

¹²The sons of Kohath were four: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel,

t) This was the word brought David by Nathan before Solomon's birth [17:4]. War may at times be required by God Himself [cf. 14:10 and 19:13]; but David had been guilty of needless bloodshed [see II Sam. 8:2]. u) Hebrew, "peaceful."

v) A direct quotation from II Sam. 7:13, 14, the prediction of Solomon's building the temple, though the clause about being God's son refers supremely to Christ.

w) Troy weight; Hebrew, 100,000 and 1,000,000 talents respectively. The value, even by modern standards, would be \$5,000,000,000; and its purchasing power in ancient days was much greater. x) The disputed succession and the details of his taking power are given in I Kings 1,2.

y) Compare the list in 6:16-30 and the references cited in the note to 6:1.

z) This Shimei could hardly be the Shimei, son of Gershon, listed in vs. 7 and 10. It is likely that he and Ladan were sons of Libni, the older son of Gershon and brother of Shimei [see 6:17]. Thus the clans of Gershon totaled 9; 6 for Ladan and 3 for Shimei, on the basis of the combination of Jeush and Beriah in vs. 11.

¹³the sons of Amram being Aaron and Moses. But Aaron was set apart to be sanctified as most sacred, that he and his sons forever should offer sacrifice before the LORD, serve Him, and pronounce blessings in His name at all times. ¹⁴As for Moses, the man of God,^a his sons were reckoned in with the tribe of Levi. ¹⁶Moses' sons were Gershom and Eliezer, ¹⁶Gershom's sons having Shebuel as leader ¹⁷and Eliezer's having Rehabiah as chief. Eliezer had no other sons, but Rehabiah's offspring came to be very numerous. ¹⁸Izhar's sons had Shelomith as leader. ¹⁹Hebron's sons consisted of Jeriah as leader, Amariah second, Jahaziel third, and Jekameam fourth. ²⁰Uzziel's sons were Micah as leader and Isshiah second.

²¹Finally, the sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi, the sons of Mahli being Eleazar and Kish. ²²Eleazar died leaving no sons, but only daughters; so their cousins, the sons of Kish, took them in marriage.^b ²³Mushi's sons were three: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth.

²⁴These were the descendants of Levi by their clan heads and leaders as they were registered according to the number of their individual names. They were to do the work of the ministry of the LORD's temple from the age of twenty upwards;^c ²⁵because David had explained, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has granted peace to His people and has taken up His perpetual dwelling at Jerusalem, ²⁶so the Levites need no longer carry the tent-dwelling and all the equipment for its service."^d ²⁷For by David's last orders, the number of the Levites included those aged twenty and above. ²⁸Their function was to assist the sons of Aaron to serve the

LORD's temple in reference to the courts, the rooms, and the purifying of all that was holy, and for the work of the service of God's temple: ²⁹for the bread which was set in rows;^d for the fine flour for the offerings of meal, including the cakes that were not raised with yeast, those from the baking pans, and the well-mixed ones; for every measure of capacity and size; ³⁰and for standing morning by morning to sing thanks and praise to the LORD, and the same at evening,^e ³¹and at every presentation of burnt offerings to the LORD on the Sabbaths, new moons, and feast days,^f in such number as was prescribed for them, continually before the LORD. ³²They were to keep charge of the tent of meeting and sanctuary and to carry out the requirements of their fellow tribesmen, the descendants of Aaron, for the service of the LORD's temple.

24 AS FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF Aaron, their divisions were these: the sons of Aaron had been Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar;^g ²but when Nadab and Abihu died before their father and left no children, Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests. ³So with the help of Zadok, who was of the descendants of Eleazar, and Ahimelech,^h who was of Ithamar's sons, David organized them according to their classes for service. ⁴Moreover, the descendants of Eleazar were found to be more numerous in respect to leaders than were the descendants of Ithamar; so they organized them under sixteen clan leaders of Eleazar's descendants and eight of Ithamar's.ⁱ ⁵Their assignments were determined by lot, the one group along with the other: for high

a) For this distinctive title, see also Deut. 33:1 and Ps. 90's title.

b) According to the Mosaic Law for the preservation of family property [Num. 36]. This gave the clan of Merari 4 divisions [1 for Mahli and 3 for Mushi], making then, with the 9 each of Gershom and Kohath, 22 Levitical divisions, plus the Aaronic priests.

c) Compare vs. 3. Moses had likewise taken the census of Levites aged thirty and above [Num. 4:3], but later included in the work those of twenty-five and upwards [8:23-26]. The explanation for David's further lowering of the age limit appears in vs. 26.

d) Compare 9:32, the showbread; literally, "bread of His presence."

e) The times of the two regular daily sacrifices [Ex. 29:38, 39].

f) There were the three great annual feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles [Ex. 23:14-17, Deut. 16:16]. g) For the priestly family [compare 6:3-15], and the accompanying notes.

h) The son of Abiathar [vs. 6], and grandson of Ahimelech, who had been high priests in the earlier days of David.

i) The 24 priestly classes continued as the basis for rotating the priestly duties into New Testament times. Although some of these classes died out or had to be consolidated with others, new ones were formed to take their places. In the return from exile, 538 B.C., four registered classes were represented, David's 2nd, 3rd, and 16th, and a new class, Pashhur [Ezra 2:36-39]; and by 520 B.C. 22 were again in operation [Neh. 12:1-7]. Compare vs. 12-21 and 10:2-8.

officers of the sanctuary, God's high officers, had come from the descendants both of Eleazar and of Ithamar; ⁶and the secretary from Levi, She-maiah, son of Nethanel, wrote them down in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the clan leaders of the priests and of the Levites. One clan was drawn for Eleazar and one for Ithamar.

⁷The first lot, then, came out for Jehoiarib; the second for Jedaiah; ⁸the third for Harim; fourth, Seorim; ⁹fifth, Malchijah; sixth, Mijamin; ¹⁰seventh, Hakkoz; eighth, Abijah; ¹¹ninth, Jeshua; tenth, Shecaniah; ¹²eleventh, Elia-shib; twelfth, Jakim; ¹³thirteenth, Huppah; fourteenth, Jeshebeah; ¹⁴fifteenth, Bilgah; sixteenth, Immer; ¹⁵seventeenth, Hezir; eighteenth, Happizzez; ¹⁶nineteenth, Pethahiah; twentieth, Jehezkel; ¹⁷twenty-first, Jachin; twenty-second, Gamul; ¹⁸twenty-third, Delaiah; and the twenty-fourth, for Maa-ziah. ¹⁹These made up their classes for service for going into the LORD's temple as prescribed for them through their ancestor Aaron, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

²⁰As for remaining descendants of Levi: included among the descendants of Amram were Shubael, ^k among whose sons were Jehdeiah ²¹and Rehabiah, the leader of whose sons was Isshiah. ²²For the people of Izhar there was Shelomoth, ¹ among whose sons was Jahath. ²³The sons [of Hebron^m were: first] Jeriah, Amariah second, Jahaziel third, and Jekameam fourth; ²⁴while the sons of Uzziel were Micah, among whose sons was Shamir ²⁵and Micah's brother Isshiah, among whose sons was Zechariah. ²⁶The sons of Merariⁿ were Mahli

and Mushi; and among the sons of Jaaziah^o was Beno; ²⁷in fact, Merari's descendants through Jaaziah were Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. ²⁸Of Mahli there were Eleazar, who had no sons, ²⁹and Kish, among whose sons was Jerahmeel; ³⁰while the sons of Mushi were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites by their clans. ³¹And they also,^p to correspond with their fellow tribesmen, the descendants of Aaron, cast lots in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the clan leaders of the priests and the Levites, the head of a clan being treated in the same way as his younger brother.

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25 DAVID AND THE HIGH ARMY OFFICERS next set apart for the service certain of the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, who should prophesy with lyres, harps, and cymbals. In reference to men who could carry out their service, ²their number for Asaph's sons consisted of Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Ashareliah, sons of Asaph and under his direction, Asaph prophesying^q under the direction of the king. ³As for Jeduthun, Jeduthun's sons were: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, a total of six, who were under the direction of their father, Jeduthun, who with the lyre prophesied in thanksgivings and praises to the LORD. ⁴As for Heman, Heman's sons were: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah,^r Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth. ⁵All these were sons of Heman, the king's seer in the words of God; for God exalted his power by giving He-

j) To this class Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, belonged [Luke 1:5].

k) In 23:16, "Shebuel." l) In 23:18, "Shelomith."

m) "Hebron"; for vss. 20-24 amplify 23:12-20 on the four sons of Levi's son Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

n) With Kohath and Gershon, one of the three sons of Levi; vss. 26-30 amplify 23:21-23.

o) A descendant of Merari whose precise relationship is not given.

p) The above mentioned list of non-Aaronic Levites. The list includes men from the clans of Kohath and Merari only, the special activities of Gershon being other than assisting in the temple worship.

q) Many of the O.T. prophecies are in poetic form; and much of the poetry is of prophetic nature, God's messages for His people. Compare the faith shown by the poem that Heman used to name his last nine sons [note to vs. 4], and such Psalms as 50 and 73-83 by Asaph and his descendants.

r) Starting with the sixth son, Hananiah, the names, when translated from Hebrew, form the following prayer of Heman about his work as a singer: [6] Be gracious, O LORD; [7] Be Thou gracious to me! [8] My God, Thee; [9] I have praised; [10] And exalted for helping; [11] Though sitting forlorn; [12] I have proclaimed; [13] Highest; [14] Visions.

man fourteen sons and three daughters. ⁶They were all under the direction of their father to sing in the temple of the LORD,^a for the service of God's temple with cymbals, harps, and lyres. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the direction of the king. ⁷The number of them along with their fellow tribesmen who were trained in singing to the LORD was 288, each one a master musician.

⁸The singers cast lots for their assignments, the younger in the same way as the older, the master as well as the student.^t ⁹The first lot came out for Asaph to Joseph; the second for Gedaliah, he and his fellow tribesmen and sons making a total of twelve. ¹⁰the third for Zaccur, with his sons and fellow tribesmen, twelve; ¹¹the fourth for Izri,^u with his sons and fellow tribesmen, twelve; made up in the same way, ¹²fifth, Nathaniah; ¹³sixth, Bukkiah; ¹⁴seventh, Jesharelah; ¹⁵eighth, Jeshaiiah; ¹⁶ninth, Mattaniah; ¹⁷tenth, Shimei; ¹⁸eleventh, Azarel; ¹⁹twelfth, Hashabiah; ²⁰thirteenth, Shubael; ²¹fourteenth, Mattithiah; ²²fifteenth, Jeremoth; ²³sixteenth, Hananiah; ²⁴seventeenth, Josbekashah; ²⁵eighteenth, Hanani; ²⁶nineteenth, Mallothi; ²⁷twentieth, Eliathah; ²⁸twenty-first, Hothir; ²⁹twenty-second, Giddalti; ³⁰twenty-third, Mahazioth; ³¹and the twenty-fourth, for Romamti-ezer, with his sons and fellow tribesmen, twelve.

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26 AS FOR THE CLASSES OF THE gatekeepers: belonging to the descendants of Korah^v was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. ²Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the first-born, second Jediael, third Zeba-

diah, fourth Jathniel, ³fifth Elam, sixth Jehohanan, and seventh Eliehoenai. ⁴Obed-edom^w also had sons: Shemaiah the first-born, second Jehozabad, third Joah, fourth Sacar, fifth Nethanel, ⁵sixth Ammiel, seventh Issachar, and eighth Peullethai; because God had blessed him. ⁶To his son Shemaiah were born sons, who became ruler over their clans because they were mighty heroes. ⁷Shemaiah's sons, then, were Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, and his able brothers, Elihu and Semachiah. ⁸All these, they and their sons and brothers, were among the descendants of Obed-edom, mighty men with capacity for the service, the total for Obed-edom being sixty-two. ⁹Meshelemiah likewise had sons and brothers who were men of ability, totalling eighteen. ¹⁰Then there was Hosah,^x of the descendants of Merari, who had sons: Shimri, the leader (for though he was not the first-born, still his father had made him chief); ¹¹second Hilkiah, third Tebaliah, and fourth Zechariah. All the sons and brothers of Hosah numbered thirteen.

¹²To these classes of the gatekeepers, that is, to the leaders of the men along with their relatives, were assigned various watches for them to serve in the LORD's temple. ¹³They cast lots according to their clans, the younger in the same way as the older, gate by gate. ¹⁴The lot to the east fell to Shelemiah;^y after which they cast lots for his son Zechariah, a counselor who had insight, and his lot came out northward. ¹⁵For Obed-edom it was to the south; for his sons, at the storehouse; ¹⁶and for Shuppim^z and Hosah, to the west, by the gate of Shellecheth on the highway that goes up,^a watch following

s) Including the daughters, it would seem.

t) Because the division by lot into classes seems to have included all 4,000 of the singers [23:5], not just the 288 master musicians.

u) In vs. 3, "Zeri"; compare similar spelling variants for the leaders of the 7th, 11th, 13th, and 15th classes.

v) The notorious Levite who rebelled against Moses; see 6:22 and 9:19 with the accompanying notes. From 9:19 it appears that the full spelling of Kore's father's name was Ebiasaph. "Asaph" could not be the famous musician of that name who belonged to the clan of Gershon, because Korah, and his descendants who were to guard the temple gates, belonged to the clan of Kohath. w) The Levite who had received God's blessing when he kept the ark after the death of Uzza [13:13, 14]. For his appointment, see 15:24, 25 and 16:38.

x) Appointed at the same time as Obed-edom [see 16:38]. The number there mentioned, 68, had increased to 93 men [18 plus 62 plus 13], who constituted the leaders for the total group of the 4,000 gatekeepers [23:5]. y) In vs. 1 and elsewhere, "Meshelemiah."

z) Not otherwise known, but probably, like Hosah, a gatekeeper from the clan of Merari.

a) From the lower city, through the Tyropeon Valley, to the higher elevation of the western side of the temple.

upon watch. ¹⁷To the east were posted six Levites, to the north four each day, to the south four daily, at the storehouse two posts of two each, ¹⁸and at the annex^b to the west four at the highway and two at the annex itself. ¹⁹These made up the classes of the gatekeepers, who belonged to the descendants of Korah and of Merari.

²⁰Among the men of Levi, Ahijah was in charge of the treasures, both those of God's temple and those of the dedicated gifts. ²¹Then the sons of Ladan, that is, the sons of Ladan's branch of the family of Gershon, and who specifically were the group of Jehieli;^c ²²these members of the group of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel, were in charge of the treasures of the LORD's temple. ²³Similarly, for the members of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel,^d ²⁴Shebuel the son of Gershon and grandson of Moses had been the chief treasure-officer; ²⁵but the line of descent from Eliezer^e went through Rehabiah, Jeshaiiah, Joram, and Zichri, down to Shelomoth. ²⁶This Shelomoth and his brothers were in charge of all the treasures of the dedicated gifts which King David, the clan leaders, the commanders of the units of 1000 and 100, and the high army officers had consecrated;^f ²⁷for out of the wars and their plunder they had made dedications for the maintenance of the LORD's temple. ²⁸Shelomith^g and his brothers, moreover, were in charge of everything that had been consecrated by Samuel the seer, by Saul the son of Kish, by Abner the son of Ner, and by Joab the son of Zeruiiah, by every man who had made dedications.

²⁹Among the members of Izhar, Chenaniah and his sons were appointed to the outside work over Israel, to act as officers and judges. ³⁰Then from the

members of Hebron, Hashabiah and his relatives, who numbered 1,700 able men, had the oversight of that part of Israel that lay west of the Jordan, both for all the LORD's work and for the service of the king. ³¹Also from the members of Hebron was the leader Jerijah, because in the fortieth year of the reign of David, men of Hebron were picked out by their clan genealogies, when mighty warriors among them were found at Jazer in Gilead. ³²His relatives numbered 2,700 men of power, clan leaders whom King David appointed over the men of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasse^h for every affair of God and the king.

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27 THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL BY their number, the clan leaders, the commanders of units of 1,000 and 100 and their officers who served the king in all the affairs of the military units were organized into army corps that were called to active duty and then released month by month throughout all the months of the year, each corps of which consisted of 24,000 men. ²Over the first corps, active in the first month, was Jashobeamⁱ the son of Zabdiel, his unit consisting of 24,000. ³He was of the descendants of Perez^j and was commander of all the officers of the corps for the first month. ⁴Over the corps for the second month was Dodai, the descendant of Ahoah, in whose unit, which also consisted of 24,000, was Mikloth as the executive officer. ⁵The commander of the third corps for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the priest, one of the high officers, his unit likewise consisting of 24,000. ⁶He was that Benaiah^k who was a hero among the thirty, and indeed over the thirty.

b) The form is uncertain, perhaps a colonnade or court.

c) Jehiel, Zetham, and Joel were sons of Ladan; but Jehiel was the accepted leader among the brothers [23:7]. d) The divisions of the clan of Kohath.

e) The brother of Shebuel's father Gershon [23:15-17].

f) See 18:11 and II Chron. 5:1 for David's devotion in this regard.

g) A variant spelling for Shelomoth; comp. vs. 25 and 26.

h) The tribes of Israel east of the Jordan. Being dedicated to God's law, the Levites could be entrusted with important public offices.

i) These "lieutenant generals" who commanded the twelve corps were distinguished military figures and are elsewhere described, with occasional variant spellings of their names.

j) One of the two chief divisions of the tribe of Judah [2:4].

k) See 11:22-25 and the note to 11:11.

His son Ammizabad was in his own contingent. ⁷The fourth, for the fourth month, was Asahel the brother of Joab, whose place was taken by his son Zebadiah after him, his unit consisting of 24,000 men. ⁸The fifth commander for the fifth month was Shammuth of the clan of Izrah,¹ his unit consisting of 24,000 men; ⁹and, in the same way, sixth, Ira son of Ikesh, from Tekoa; ¹⁰seventh, Helez from Beth-pelet, of the descendants of Ephraim; ¹¹eighth, Sibbecai from Hushah, of the clan of Zerah; ¹²ninth, Abiezer from Anathoth, of the men of Benjamin; ¹³tenth, Maharai from Netophah, of the clan of Zerah; ¹⁴eleventh, Benaiah from Pirathon, of the descendants of Ephraim; ¹⁵and the twelfth, for the twelfth month, was Heldai from Netophah, of the family of Othniel,^m his unit like the others consisting of 24,000 men.

¹⁶Then there were those over the tribes of Israel: for the men of Reuben, the tribal prince Eliezer the son of Zichri; for the men of Simeon, Shephatiah the son of Maacah; ¹⁷for Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel, with Zadok over Aaron's section; ¹⁸for Judah, Elihu,ⁿ one of David's brothers; for Issachar, Omri the son of Michael; ¹⁹for Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah; for Naphtali, Jeremoth the son of Azriel; ²⁰for the descendants of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azariah; ²¹for the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiiah; and for the Gilead half of Manasseh, Iddo the son of Zechariah; for Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner;^o ²²and for Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham. These were the princes of the tribes of Israel. ²³David, however, did not take the number of those who were twenty years old and under, because the LORD had promised to multiply Israel like the stars of heaven.^p ²⁴Joab the son of Zeruiah did

begin a census, but he never completed it. Moreover, because of it there was anger against Israel, and the total was not entered in the figures of King David's chronicle.

²⁵The man in charge of the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel; while over the stores of supplies in the field, the cities, the villages, and the fortified points, was Jonathan the son of Uzziah. ²⁶Over those who did the field work for tilling the soil was Ezri the son of Chelub; ²⁷over the vineyards, Shimei of Ramah; over the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars, Zabdi from Shiphmoth; ²⁸over the olive and mulberry trees in the lowland^q area, Baal-hanan from Geder; over the stores of oil, Joash; ²⁹over the herds that grazed in Sharon, Shitrai who was himself of Sharon, and over those in the valleys, Shaphat the son of Adlai; ³⁰over the camels, Obil of Ishmael; over the donkeys, Jehdeiah from Meronoth; ³¹and over the flocks, Jaziz the Hagrite. All these were the overseers of the property that belonged to King David.^r ³²David's uncle Jonathan, being a man of understanding and literary ability, was a counselor; Jehiel the son of a man of Hachmon tutored the king's sons; ³³Ahithophel was counselor to the king, though Hushai of Erech was the king's confidant; ³⁴and after Ahithophel,^s the post was filled by Jehoiada the son of Benaiah and by Abiathar. The commander of the king's armed forces was Joab.

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28 DAVID ASSEMBLED AT JERUSALEM all the leaders of Israel, including the tribal princes, the officers of the army corps that served the king, the commanders of the units of 1000 and 100, and the overseers of all the property and livestock that belonged

1) The other chief division of Judah [2:4].

m) The first of the Hebrew judges [Judg. 1:13; 3:9-11]. n) Elsewhere called Eliab [2:13].

o) The famous general and uncle of King Saul from Benjamin, [26:28 and I Sam. 14:50; compare with I Chron. 8:33; 9:39].

p) The promise given over 1,000 years before to Abraham [Gen. 22:17]. David, therefore, did not order a total numbering of the people, which would have left the impression of questioning the prophecy. He had, however, through lack of faith in the power of God to protect his kingdom, taken a sinful census of the men of fighting age [21:1-8].

q) Hebrew "Shephelah," between the Philistine coastal plain and the inland Judean hills.

r) This list of high officials supplements the earlier "cabinet" presented in 18:15-17 and II Sam. 20:23-26.

s) Ahithophel had deserted David for Absalom [II Sam. 15:12,31 and 16:20-23], but when thwarted by Hushai [15:32,37 and 17:1-16] had committed suicide [17:23].

to the king and his sons, together with the officials, the mighty men, and every powerful hero. ²Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I myself had in mind to build a temple as a resting place for the ark of the LORD's covenant and for the footstool of our God,^t even making preparations for building. ³But God told me: You are not to build a temple to My name, because you are a man of wars and bloodshed;^u ⁴even though the LORD, the God of Israel, had chosen me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever.^v For He did indeed choose Judah to be ruler and within the tribe of Judah my father's house and among my father's sons He chose me to be made king over the whole of Israel."^w

⁵"Then out of all my sons, because the LORD has given me many children, He chose my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the LORD's dominion over Israel. ⁶He told me, moreover: Your son Solomon, he will build My house and My courts — for I have chosen that one to be My son, and I will be his Father ⁷and I will establish his kingdom forever, if he loyally carries out my commands and judgments as is done at present. ⁸Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, which is the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, so that you may retain possession of this good land and transmit it as an inheritance to your children after you for ever.

⁹"As for you, my son Solomon, acknowledge your father's God and serve Him wholeheartedly with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every development of the thoughts; if you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you leave Him,

He will reject you for ever. ¹⁰Take note now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and do it!"

¹¹Then David handed his son Solomon the plans for the porch and the temple structures, its treasuries, upper rooms, inner rooms, and the place for the mercy seat.^x ¹²The plans, moreover, included all that came by the Spirit, who was with him:^y the courts of the house of the LORD; all the surrounding rooms for the treasuries of God's temple and the treasuries of the dedicated gifts; ¹³for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, for any work of the service of the LORD's temple; and for all the equipment used in this service, ¹⁴requisite weight in gold for all the articles of every kind of service; all the silver objects by weight for all the articles of every kind of service; ^{15a}a weight in gold for the golden lampstands and their lamps according to the weight of each lampstand and its lamps; and the silver lampstands in agreement with the weight of each lampstand, and its lamps corresponding to the service of each lampstand; ¹⁶also the weight in gold for the tables of the bread which was set in rows,^z table by table, and the silver for the silver tables; ¹⁷the forks, the basins, and the jars made of pure gold, and the golden bowls by weight for each bowl and the silver bowls by weight for each bowl; ¹⁸the incense altar made with refined gold by weight; and the plans for the chariot,^a the golden cherubim that spread out and made a covering over the ark of the LORD's covenant. ¹⁹"The LORD has given instructions in writing from His hand, which," (said David,) "came upon me, about all this, all the working out of the plans."

²⁰So David told his son Solomon, "Be strong and courageous, and do it!"

t) The "mercy seat," that covered the ark and above which the cloud of God's glorious presence appeared [cf. II Sam. 22:11 and the footnote].

u) Compare 22:7-16 and the notes. David had spoken of these matters with Solomon privately.

v) His dynasty, culminating in Christ, would be eternal [17:11].

w) For this progressively narrowing choice, see Gen. 49:8-10, I Sam. 16:1-13, and I Chron. 22:9-10. x) See the note on vs. 2.

y) Comp. vs. 19; the plans for the temple were divinely inspired, as had been those of Moses' tabernacle [Ex. 25:9, 40; 27:8]. Objects and their arrangement were typical of the way salvation was to be accomplished by Christ [Heb. 8-9, especially 8:5]. z) Comp. 9:32.

a) Cherubim are angelic beings, appearing in human form but also having wings [Ezek. 1:5; comp. Ezek. 10:1]. God's "riding upon" them [II Sam. 22:11], seems to be associated with His glorious presence between the cherubim on the ark [see I Chron. 13:6; Ex. 25:20-21].

Do not fear; be not downhearted, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not abandon you; He will not leave you until all the work of attending to the LORD's temple is completed. ²¹Look at the divisions of the priests and of the Levites for all the service of God's temple! Furthermore, for each task you will have with you all kinds of volunteers with skill for any task, along with the leaders as well as the whole people for all your orders."

970 B.C.

29 KING DAVID THEN WENT ON TO address the whole assembly, "My son Solomon, the one whom alone God has chosen, is still a youth and inexperienced;^b the work, however, is great, because the edifice is not to be for man but for the LORD God. ²For this temple of my God, therefore, I have, to the best of my ability, prepared gold, silver, bronze, iron, and timbers, each for its appropriate use, carnelian stones and jewels for settings, stones for hard mortar and mosaics, all kinds of precious stones, and large quantities of alabaster. ³Furthermore, because of my deep interest in my God's temple, I have, over and beyond all I have provided for the sacred temple, a private treasure of gold and silver, which I have designated for the temple of my God: 393,000 pounds of gold of the kind that comes from Ophir^c and 815,000 pounds of refined silver^d for overlaying the walls of the buildings; ⁶gold for the gold articles and silver for the silver things, and for any assignment at the hands of the engravers. So now, who will make a voluntary offering this day, consecrating himself to the LORD?"

⁶At that, the clan leaders, Israel's

tribal princes, the commanders of the units of 1000 and 100, and the supervisors of the king's business responded with a voluntary offering ⁷and gave for the service of God's temple 655,000^e pounds plus 50,000 dollars worth^f of gold, 1,164,000 pounds of silver, 1,656,000 pounds of bronze, and 9,200,000 pounds of iron.^g ⁸Also, whoever found precious stones in his possession delivered them over to the treasury of the LORD's temple under the direction of Jehiel,^h descended from Gershon. ⁹The people, moreover, rejoiced over their freewill offering, because they offered to the LORD voluntarily and wholeheartedly.ⁱ King David too felt deeply happy.

¹⁰In the presence then of the whole assembly, David expressed his adoration to the LORD. David declared, "Blessed be Thou, LORD God of our father Israel,^j from eternity to eternity. ¹¹Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the pre-eminence, and the majesty;^k for everything in heaven and earth is Thine. Thine, O LORD, is the dominion and the exalting of Thyself as head over all. ¹²Wealth and honor come from Thy presence; Thou art the ruler over all. In Thy hand are power and might; it lies in Thy hand to make anything great or strong. ¹³So now, our God, we are offering thanks to Thee and are praising Thy glorious name; — ¹⁴Yet who am I, or who are my people, that we should have the ability to make such a voluntary offering? For everything comes from Thee, and it is from Thine own hand that we have given back to Thee.^l ¹⁵We are mere tenants before Thee, temporary residents, as all our ancestors have been; our days on the earth are like a shadow,

b) This section contains thoughts similar to those expressed at the time David commenced his preparations for the temple [see 22:5,14].

c) High quality [see II Chron. 8:18; 9:10].

d) Troy weight; Hebrew, 3000 gold and 7000 silver talents, or about \$90,000,000, and \$14,000,000, respectively [cf. 22:14]. In ancient days, however, its purchasing power was much greater. e) Troy weight; Hebrew, 5000 gold talents, or about \$150,000,000.

f) 10,000 darics, Persian gold coin worth about \$5. It circulated when Chronicles was written in the days after the exile, so the author [Ezra?] used it to describe this offering in 970 B.C., when coining had still been unknown.

g) Troy weight; Hebrew 10,000, 18,000, and 100,000 talents respectively. The silver would be worth about \$20,000,000. h) The official family of temple treasures [26:21-22].

i) As all offerings to God should be [II Cor. 9:7]. j) Jacob [Gen. 32:28].

k) From these praises come the words at the close of our Lord's prayer [Matt. 6:13].

l) This is the basis of stewardship. Everything we have and are is from God, being held in trust by us, and it should therefore be used for Him.

and we are without permanence. ¹⁶O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build Thee a house for Thy holy name comes from Thy hand; all of it is Thine!

¹⁷"But O my God, I know that Thou dost test the heart and dost take pleasure in what is right; so I, in the honesty of my heart, willingly offered all these things. Now then, with what gladness have I seen Thy people, who are present here, make a voluntary offering to Thee! ¹⁸O LORD, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, preserve this for ever as the attitude of the thoughts of Thy people's hearts; and direct their hearts toward Thyself. ¹⁹And grant my son Solomon a heart of integrity to carry out Thy commands, Thy solemn charges, and Thy statutes to do everything and to erect the edifice, for which I have made the preparations."

²⁰Then David directed all the assembly, "Now bless the LORD your God!" So the whole assembly expressed their adoration of the LORD God of their fathers, bowing down and prostrating themselves to the LORD and to the king. ²¹The following day they made sacrifices to the LORD and offered to the LORD burnt offerings: 1,000 each of bullocks, rams, and lambs, with their corresponding drink offerings, also a large number of sacrifices for all

Israel.^m ²²Thus they ate and drank that day with great joy in the presence of the LORD. Then for a second time they made David's son Solomon king and anointed him as ruler for the LORD,ⁿ with Zadok as priest. ²³So Solomon took his seat on the LORD's throne as king in the place of his father David; he prospered, and all Israel became obedient to him, ²⁴all the officers and men of power, as well as the whole number of King David's sons,^o rendering their submission to Solomon the king. ²⁵The LORD, moreover, highly magnified Solomon in the eyes of all Israel, bestowing upon him royal majesty such as no king over Israel before him had enjoyed.

970 B.C.

²⁶David the son of Jesse was king of all Israel. ²⁷The time he reigned over Israel was forty years, ruling seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ²⁸Then at a good old age he died, advanced in years, wealthy and honored, and with his own son Solomon taking up the rule after him. ²⁹Now the affairs of King David, from first to last, are recorded in the works of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet, and Gad the receiver of visions, ³⁰together with all his reign and power and the times that transpired for him, for Israel, and for all the kingdoms of the lands.

m) Probably "offerings of peace," which were eaten by the people in a feast, as the LORD's guests. n) He had already been proclaimed king, but probably there was but one anointing [23:1 and see I Kings 1]. Confirmatory rites were of value, particularly where there had been a disputed succession. Cf. I Sam. 10:24 and 11:15, on Saul.

o) Particularly Adonijah, his older brother, who had attempted to take the throne [I Kings 1:53].

THE SECOND BOOK OF

CHRONICLES^a

970 B.C.

1 SOLOMON, THE SON OF DAVID, WAS established in his kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and magnified him greatly. ²Then Solomon, when he had given the word to all Israel, to the leaders of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every prince of Israel and all the heads of clans, ³went with the whole congregation to the high place in Gibeon, because at that place was God's meeting-tent—the one which Moses, the LORD's servant, had made in the wilderness. ⁴For, though David had brought the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to a prepared place in Jerusalem where he had pitched a tent for it,^b ⁵the bronze altar, made by Bezaleel son of Uri, son of Hur, still stood in front of the LORD's tabernacle, and Solomon and the assembly resorted to that place. ⁶There Solomon sacrificed before the LORD on the bronze altar of the meeting-tent, presenting on it 1000 burnt offerings.

⁷That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him: What shall I give you? Ask Me! ⁸Solomon answered God, "Thou didst treat David my father with much loving-kindness and hast made me king in his place. ⁹Now, O LORD God, confirm Thy promise to David my father,^c since Thou hast made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰Give me wisdom and knowledge that I may

properly conduct myself before this people, for who is able to govern this great people of Thine?"

¹¹Then God replied to Solomon: Because you had this in mind and did not ask for wealth, riches, and honor, or the death of your adversaries, or even for long life, but rather asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge so as to govern wisely My people over whom I have made you king, ¹²therefore, wisdom and knowledge are granted you, and I will add to these wealth, riches, and honor such as none of your royal predecessors have had, nor will any successor compare with you. ¹³So Solomon returned to Jerusalem from the high place of Gibeon, from before the congregation's meeting-tent; and he reigned over Israel.

¹⁴Solomon amassed chariots and cavalry^d so that he had 1400 chariots and 12,000 cavalry, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. ¹⁵The king also made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as are sycamore trees in the lowland. ¹⁶Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt, a caravan of the king's traders purchasing each drove for a set price. ¹⁷They brought a chariot out of Egypt for 400 dollars in silver, and a horse for 100,^e for in this way they were export agents^f also for all the kings of the Hittites and of Syria.

a) If Chronicles continues I Chronicles as part of one originally unified book.

b) The old tabernacle and bronze altar were at Gibeon, though David had prepared a place in Jerusalem for the ark as described in I Chron. 15. c) Recorded in I Chron. 22:9,10.

d) An early mistake of Solomon; accumulation of horses was divinely disapproved by God (Deut. 17:16). e) Heb., 600 shekels, and 150 shekels. f) The Israelites had aptitude as middlemen.

970 B.C.

2 SOLOMON DETERMINED TO BUILD a temple in honor of the name of the LORD, and a palace for himself; ²and for this work he enrolled 70,000 burden bearers, 80,000 woodcutters in the mountains, and 3600 foremen over them.

³Solomon also sent to Hiram^g king of Tyre, saying, "You were a great help to David my father in sending him cedars to build himself a house in which to live. ⁴Now you will observe that I am about to construct a temple in honor of the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to Him so as to offer before Him fragrant incense offerings morning and evening, on Sabbaths and new moons, and at the set occasions of the LORD our God, this being ordained for Israel eternally.

⁵"The temple I am about to build must be great, because our God is greater than all other gods. ⁶Yet, who is capable of building Him a temple, since heaven—yes, even the highest heaven—cannot contain Him? Who, indeed, am I that I should build Him a temple, though only to offer incense before Him? ⁷So now, send me a skilled craftsman for working in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and with purple, crimson, and blue, and proficient in carving engravings, along with the experts who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. ⁸Also send me cedar, cypress, and red sandalwood from Lebanon,^h for I realize that your servants are experienced in felling the trees of Lebanon. And I assure you that my servants will work with your servants, ⁹to prepare me a large amount of lumber, since the temple I am about to build will be great and marvelous. ¹⁰In addition, I will give to your servants, the woodcutters, 20,000 sacksⁱ of threshed wheat, 20,000 sacks of barley, 20,000

barrels^j of wine, and 20,000 barrels of oil."

¹¹Then Hiram king of Tyre replied in a letter which he sent to Solomon, "Because the LORD loved His people, He has made you king over them. ¹²Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who made the heaven and the earth," continued Hiram, "who has given David the king a wise son possessing understanding and ability to build a temple to the LORD and a palace for himself. ¹³So now I will send a master craftsman, my famed Hiram, skilled in understanding—¹⁴the son of a woman from the people of Dan,^k whose father was a man of Tyre—expert at working in gold, silver, copper, iron, and stone; in wood, blue, and purple; in fine linen and scarlet, and at carving all kinds of engravings, and at inventing any device assigned him—to work along with your experts and those of my master David your father. ¹⁵Regarding the wheat, barley, oil, and wine which my master mentioned, let him ship it to his servants,^l ¹⁶and we will cut as much timber of Lebanon as you need and bring it by sea in floats to Joppa, that you may convey it up to Jerusalem."

¹⁷Then Solomon registered all the aliens in the land of Israel after the census which David his father took of them, and they were found to be 153,600, ¹⁸of whom he made 70,000 burden bearers, 80,000 woodcutters in the mountains, and 3600 foremen to keep the people at work.

966 B.C.

3 SOLOMON BEGAN TO BUILD THE temple of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah,^m where the LORD had appeared to David his father, making preparation at the site chosen by David, on the threshing floor of Ornanⁿ the Jebusite. ²He started building on the second day of the second

g) Heb., "Hiram," called Hiram throughout I and II Kings, but to be distinguished from Hiram, the master craftsman, who is sometimes referred to as "Hiram" in Kings.

h) These are not commands but trade orders. Solomon would pay for deliveries.

i) Heb., "cors." A cor—10 bushels.

j) Heb., "baths." A bath—9 gallons.

k) Probably of Dan by birth, though a widow of a man of Naphtali [I Kings 7:14]. Solomon's choice of a man half-Hebrew undoubtedly was pleasing to his people.

l) King Hiram's workmen, for their daily food.

m) Of redemptive significance because of David's sacrifice there [I Chron. 21:18-30] and as the probable site of Abraham's offering of Isaac [Gen. 22:2 ff., Heb. 11:17].

n) Spelled "Araunah," in II Sam. 24:16.

month^o during the fourth year of his reign.

³This is the foundation which Solomon laid for building the house of God: it was 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. ⁴The porch at the front end of the house reached across the 30-foot width of the house and was 180 feet high, covered on the inside with pure gold. ⁵He veneered the large room with cypress, overlaid with fine gold on which he designed palms and chain work. ⁶The house was decorated with precious stones for beauty; its gold was Parvaim gold,^p and the structure was overlaid with gold. This included its beams, its sills, its doors, and its walls on which cherubim were carved.

⁸He also constructed the room of the Holy of Holies, measuring 30 by 30 feet—the width of the temple—and overlaid it with 18,000,000 dollars^q worth of fine gold. ⁹The weight of the nails was 26 ounces^r of gold. The upper rooms also were overlaid with gold.

¹⁰For the room of the Holy of Holies he made two cherubim of sculptured work, overlaid with gold. ¹¹Their wing-spread totalled 30 feet, since each had one wing 7½ feet long touching the wall of the building and the other wing 7½ feet long, grazing the wing of the other cherub. ¹²The two cherubim thus spread across the 30 feet. ¹³They stood on their feet, facing the house. ¹⁴The veil^s was made of violet, purple, crimson, and fine linen and adorned with cherubim.

¹⁵Finally, in front of the house he set up two pillars, 52 feet high, each crowned with a 7½-foot capital. ¹⁶He made chains in the inner room to put on top of the pillars, fashioning also 100 pomegranates,^t which he attached to the chains. ¹⁷Thus he erected the pillars in front of the temple, one at the right and one at the left, naming the former Jachin^u and the latter Boaz.^v

966 B.C.

4 FURTHERMORE, HE CONSTRUCTED a bronze altar 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 15 feet high. ²He made the cast reservoir^w circular, 15 feet in diameter and 7½ feet high; a 45-foot tape would reach around it. ³Figures like oxen stood around within the 15-foot diameter underneath the reservoir and surrounded it; these were cast in two rows, simultaneously with its casting. ⁴The reservoir rested on top of 12 oxen, three of them facing north, three west, three south, and three east, and all having their rear sections inward. ⁵It was a handbreadth thick with a brim made like a cup's brim, like a lily blossom; when full, it held 3,000 barrels.^x ⁶He fashioned ten basins for washing, placing five at the right side and five at the left, in which they rinsed what was to become the burnt offering; but the reservoir was for the priests to wash in.

⁷He molded ten golden lampstands according to pattern and set them in the temple, five on the right hand and five on the left. ⁸He also built ten tables and placed them in the temple, five to the right and five to the left, and he made a hundred golden bowls. ⁹Further, he constructed the priests' court and the great court, with its doors, and he overlaid their doors with bronze. ¹⁰He put the reservoir on the right side of the temple, facing south-east. ¹¹Huram^y made the pots, shovels, and basins.

So Hiram finished doing the work which he was to do for King Solomon for the house of God: ¹²two pillars, the bowls, and the capitals on top of the two pillars, the two pieces of network to cover these two bowls of the capitals surmounting the pillars, ¹³four hundred pomegranates for the two pieces of network, two rows of pomegranates for each piece of network to cover the two bowls of the capitals on the pillars. ¹⁴It was he who made the

o) The month Ziv [I Kings 6:1] which began in mid-April.

p) Probably named for the region where it was mined, as Ophir in S.E. Arabia mentioned in ch. 9:10, Job 28:16. q) Heb., "600 talents." A talent—92 lb. Troy.

r) Heb., "50 shekels," or 400 dollars. A shekel—.512 oz.

s) Which hung in front of the Holy of Holies.

t) A common Palestinian fruit, looking somewhat similar to an apple. u) "He shall establish."

v) "Strength," or "In it is strength." w) Heb., "the sea," so called because of its great size; it was a huge basin used by the priests for washing.

x) See ch. 2:10. y) Of Tyre, under orders of King Solomon.

stands and the basins on the stands, ¹⁶the reservoir, and the twelve oxen under it.

¹⁶Now Hiram, his honored craftsman, had used polished bronze to make for King Solomon the pots, shovels, pronged meat-forks, and all their equipment for the house of the LORD. ¹⁷The king did his casting in the Jordan plain in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. ¹⁸Solomon made so large a number of all these articles that the weight of the bronze was not calculated.

¹⁹Solomon made out of fine gold all the things which were for the temple of God, including the golden altar, the tables which held the showbread, ²⁰the lampstands and their lamps which, by commandment, were to burn in front of the inner room; ²¹even the flowers, lamps, and tongs were of gold — perfect gold! ²²The snuffers, basins, spoons, and fire pans, too, were of fine gold. Even the doorway of the house, the inner doors to the Holy of Holies, and the doors of the house — that is, the temple — were of gold.

960 B.C.

5 AT VARIOUS TIMES, WHILE THE work which Solomon did for the house of the LORD was being finished, he brought the things which David his father had dedicated,^z both the silver and the gold, and all the items, to store them in the treasuries of the house of God.

²Then Solomon assembled in Jerusalem the elders of Israel and all the tribal heads, princes of the clans of the people of Israel, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David, which is Zion. ³So, when all the men of Israel were gathered to the king at the feast — the feast of the seventh month^a — ⁴then all the elders of Israel presented themselves, ⁵and the Levites lifted up the ark.^b The priests and Levites brought up the ark, the meeting-tent, and all the sacred

articles which were in the tent. ⁶Then King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, which was assembled with him in front of the ark, sacrificed so many sheep and oxen that they could neither be numbered nor calculated. ⁷So the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD into its place under the wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies, in the inner chamber of the temple. ⁸For the cherubim stretched out their wings over the place for the ark, so that these formed a covering over the whole ark and its carrying poles. ⁹These poles, however, were so long that their ends beyond the ark were visible at the front of the inner room but did not show outside, and it remains there up to the present. ¹⁰Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets which Moses had put there at Horeb,^c where the LORD had made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

¹¹Then the priests went out of the holy place; for all the priests who were present had dedicated themselves, not observing the priestly rotation.^d ¹²All the singing Levites, too, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and brothers, dressed in fine linen, were standing at the east of the altar with cymbals, lyres, and harps, along with 120 priests who sounded the trumpets. ¹³Then the trumpeters and singers united to lead out as one voice to praise and give thanks to the LORD. They also burst out with the sound of trumpets, cymbals, and instruments of music in praise to the LORD, "Because He is good, because His loving-kindness is everlasting." It was then that the house, the LORD's temple, was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴so that the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

960 B.C.

6 SOLOMON SAID, "THE LORD HAS declared that He would dwell in

z) David desired to build the house himself [I Chron. 17], but being forbidden to do so, he made all possible preparations. These treasures had mostly been obtained through his successful warfare.

a) Probably as part of the completion of the temple, the month prior to the completion month mentioned in I Kings 6:38.

b) Only Levites were allowed to do this work [Num. 4:15] — a lesson deeply illustrated by the death of Uzzah [I Chron. 13:1-10] and henceforth strictly observed by David and Solomon [I Chron. 15:2]. c) Commanded in Ex. 25:16; accomplished in Ex. 40:20.

d) On such an important occasion the usual division of ministries was abandoned, all the priests taking part in the ceremony, regardless of their turn to serve.

the heavy cloud.^e ²I now have built a residence for Thee, yes, a place for Thy continual presence." ³Then the king turned around and blessed all the congregation of Israel while the whole Israelite assembly stood.

⁴He said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who by His hands has brought to pass that which He spoke by His mouth to David my father, saying: ⁵From the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt I have not chosen any city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house where My name should be, neither have I selected a man to be ruler over My people Israel. ⁶But now I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.^f ⁷When David my father planned on building a temple to the name of the LORD God of Israel, ⁸the LORD said to David my father: You have done well that you had in mind to build a temple to My name; ⁹nevertheless, you yourself shall not build the house, but your son, who shall come forth out of your loins, is the one who will build the temple to My name.^g ¹⁰And the LORD kept His word which He spoke, for I have arisen in the place of David my father and sit on the throne of Israel as the LORD promised; ¹¹I have now built this temple to the name of the LORD God of Israel, and there I have placed the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with the children of Israel."

¹²He stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands, ¹³for Solomon had made a bronze platform, seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high, which he had put in the center of the outer court; and he stood upon it, knelt down on his knees before all the congregation of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven, ¹⁴and said,^h "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven or on earth, who dost observe

the covenant and faithful love with Thy servants who walk before Thee with all their hearts. ¹⁵Thou hast done for David my father what Thou didst promise him, for Thou hast spoken with Thy mouth and hast performed it with Thy hand just as it is now. ¹⁶So then, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what Thou hast spoken to him, saying: You shall not lack a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel, if onlyⁱ your sons will take heed to their way to walk in My Law as you have walked before Me. ¹⁷Now then, O LORD, the God of Israel, make Thy word come true which Thou hast spoken to Thy servant David.

¹⁸"But will God actually dwell with men upon earth? For see, even heaven, yes, the highest heaven, cannot contain Thee; how much less this house which I have built! ¹⁹Yet, have regard to the prayer and supplication of Thy servant, O LORD my God, to listen to the appeal and the prayer which Thy servant is praying before Thee. ²⁰Let Thine eyes be open toward this house day and night, even toward this place where Thou didst promise to put Thy name, and listen to the prayer which Thy servant makes toward this place. ²¹Be Thou attentive to the supplications of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel when they pray toward this place, and hear Thou from heaven, Thy dwelling place; and when Thou hearest, forgive.

²²"If a man sins against his neighbor, who then puts him under oath, forcing him to swear, and he comes in to swear the oath before Thine altar in this house, ²³then hear Thou from heaven, take action, and judge between Thy servants, requiting the wicked by bringing his conduct upon his own head and vindicating the righteous by giving to him according to his righteousness.

²⁴"Should Thy people Israel be defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against Thee, but they turn

e) Mentioned in Ex. 19:9; Lev. 16:2. f) Note I Chron. 17:4-14. g) Recorded in II Sam. 7:13. h) Solomon's prayer, one of the most beautiful of Scripture, shows much familiarity with, and reverence for, God's warnings given to all Israel through Moses in Lev. 26, and Deut. 28. i) Solomon seemed conscious of the condition required for blessing [see I Kings 2:4; 6:12,13]. Note also the frequent reminders to God of His promises — a practice in prayer much used in O.T. [as in Ex. 32:13; Num. 14:18; Neh. 1:8,9; Dan. 9:13].

again to Thee, confess Thy name, pray, and make supplication in this house, ²⁶then hear Thou from heaven, forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them back to the land which Thou gavest them and their fathers.^j

²⁶"If heaven is shut up so that there is no rain because they have sinned against Thee, but they pray toward this place and confess Thy name, turning also from their sin because Thou hast afflicted them,^k ²⁷then hear Thou in heaven, forgive the sin of Thy servants and of Thy people Israel — when Thou shalt instruct them about the good way in which they should walk — and give rain on Thy land which Thou hast given Thy people for an inheritance.

²⁸"When there is famine in the land, or pestilence, blight or mildew, locust or grasshopper, or when their enemies besiege them in the city areas, or when there is any other plague or disease, ²⁹then if prayer or supplication be made by any man or by all Thy people Israel — who knows each his own plague and pain, so that he spreads out his hands toward this house — ³⁰then hear Thou from heaven, Thy dwelling place, and forgive, rendering to each man, whose heart Thou knowest according to all his ways — for only Thou dost know the hearts of the children of men — ³¹so that they may revere Thee and walk in Thy ways as long as they live in the land which Thou didst give to our fathers.

³²"Also when a foreigner who is not of Thy people Israel but comes from a distant country^l because of Thy great name and Thy strong hand and Thine outstretched arm,^m who shall come and pray toward this house, ³³hear Thou from heaven, Thy dwelling place, and do Thou according to all which the stranger shall request of Thee, so that all people of the earth may know Thy name and revere Thee, as do Thy people Israel, and that they may realize that this house which I have built is called by Thy name.

³⁴"Should Thy people go to war against their enemies by Thy commission and pray to Thee toward this city which Thou hast chosen and this house which I have built for Thy name, ³⁵then listen Thou from heaven to their prayer and their supplication and defend their cause. ³⁶If they sin against Thee — for there is none who does not sin — and Thou be angry with them and dost deliver them to their enemy, so that the victors take them captive to a country either far away or near by, ³⁷even then, if they take it to heart — while in the country to which they were taken captive — and repent, making supplication to Thee in the country of their captivity, confessing, 'We have sinned; we have acted perversely, we have done wickedly,'ⁿ ³⁸and so return to Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the country of their captivity to which they were taken prisoner, praying toward their own country which Thou gavest to their fathers, and toward this city which Thou hast chosen, toward this house which I have built for Thy name, ³⁹then hear Thou from heaven, Thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplication; maintain their right, and forgive Thy people, who have sinned against Thee.

⁴⁰"Now, my God, let Thine eyes be open and Thine ears attentive to prayer from this place. ⁴¹Arise now, O LORD God, unto Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength. Let Thy priests, O LORD God, be robed with salvation, and let Thy saints rejoice in prosperity. ⁴²O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Thine anointed one.^o Remember Thy acts of loving-kindness to David Thy servant."

7 WHEN SOLOMON HAD FINISHED praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple, ²so that the priests could not enter the LORD's

j) As every one who leads audibly in public worship should aim to represent before God the needs and aspirations of the group, so Solomon is broad in remembering the situations that will occur among Jehovah's worshippers.

k) "Sorrow works repentance," [II Cor. 7:10; comp. Ps. 119:67,71]. l) Missionary interest.

m) Comp. Isa. 52:10, and our "roll up the sleeves," an expression of power and action.

n) Giving vent to deep contrition, as in Ps. 106:6; Dan. 9:5.

o) Formula used when the ark was moved during the wilderness journey and preserved in Ps. 132:8-10; see also Num. 10:35,36.

house because the glory of the LORD had filled His temple.^p ³All the people of Israel were looking on, when both the fire and the glory of the LORD came down on the temple — then they bowed down upon the pavement with their faces to the ground and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, "Because He is good; because His loving-kindness is everlasting."

⁴Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁵King Solomon himself offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep; in this manner the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. ⁶The priests were standing at their posts, the Levites also with instruments of music for the LORD which David the king had made for giving thanks to the LORD, "Because His loving-kindness is everlasting," when David gave praise through their service. As the priests blew the trumpets before them, all Israel stood. ⁷Solomon consecrated the inside of the court which was in front of the LORD's house, where he offered up the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, for the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to hold the burnt offerings and the meal offerings and the fat.

⁸So Solomon at that time held the feast seven days and all Israel with him, a very large gathering from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt. ⁹On the eighth day they held a solemn meeting, for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days. ¹⁰Finally, on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, he dismissed the people to their tents, joyful and glad-hearted over the good which the LORD had done for David and Solomon and Israel, His people. ¹¹So Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and he succeeded in all that entered his mind to do in the house of the LORD and in his own palace.

¹²The LORD appeared to Solomon by night and said to him: I have heard

your prayer and have selected this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.^q ¹³If I shut up heaven so there is no rain, or if I command the grasshopper to devour the land, or if I send epidemic among My people, ¹⁴and My people, who are called by My name, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land. ¹⁵My eyes shall be open and My ears attentive to prayer from this place, ¹⁶for I have now chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there always. ¹⁷As for you, if you will walk before Me as David your father walked, obeying all that I have commanded you and observing My laws and judgments, ¹⁸then I will make your kingdom's throne secure just as I covenanted with David your father saying: You shall not lack a man to rule over Israel.

¹⁹But if you on your part turn away and forsake My laws and My commandments, which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰then I will pluck them out of My land, which I gave them, and will cast away from My presence this house which I have sanctified for My own name, making it a byword and a taunt among all peoples. ²¹To every passerby there shall be such astonishment over this house, which was exalted, that he will exclaim, "Why has the LORD done so to this land and to this house?" ²²And they will reply, "It is because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out from the land of Egypt, and they seized upon other gods and worshiped and served them; therefore He has brought all this calamity against them."

946 B.C.

8 AT THE END OF THE TWENTY years^r during which Solomon had built the LORD's house and his own palace, ²Solomon built up the cities which Hiram had given him^s and

p) Probably similar to the occurrence at the dedication of the tabernacle [Ex. 40:34,35].

q) Notice the central place sacrifice held in worship [as in Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22].

r) Seven years on the temple [I Kings 6:38]; 13 years on his palace [I Kings 7:1].

s) Probably in the land given to King Hiram [I Kings 9:11-13] but returned by him as unsatisfactory.

made Israelites settle there. ³Also Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and conquered it. ⁴Moreover, he built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the cities that were supply centers in Hamath. ⁵He fortified the store-cities Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon with walls, gates, and bars; ⁶also Baalath, and all the cities that were supply centers which Solomon had, and all the chariot cities and the cities for the cavalry. Indeed, Solomon built everything he wanted to construct in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

⁷Now regarding all the people that remained of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not of Israel, ⁸from among their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel had not wiped out, Solomon conscripted slave labor, as it is up to the present time. ⁹But those who were of the sons of Israel, Solomon did not make into slaves for his work, because they were soldiers and his captains and commanders over his chariotry and cavalry. ¹⁰These were the chiefs of the leaders King Solomon had: 250 men in charge of the people. ¹¹Solomon also brought up the daughter of Pharaoh^t from the city of David to the palace he had built for her, because he said, "My wife shall not reside in the house of David king of Israel, inasmuch as those places into which the ark of the LORD has entered are holy."

¹²Solomon then^u offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the LORD's altar, which he had built in front of the porch, ¹³in the daily routine of offering according to Moses' commandment^v — on the Sabbaths, and new moons, and set feasts, which are three times annually: at the feast of unleavened bread, at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of tabernacles. ¹⁴According to the ordinance of David his father,^w he appointed the divisions of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their duties of praising and ministering be-

fore the priests in the daily routine, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate, for this had been the command of David, the man of God. ¹⁵Indeed, they did not deviate from the king's command to the priests and Levites in any respect, including the treasures. ¹⁶So all the work of Solomon was established from the day of the founding of the house of the LORD, and until its completion when the house of the LORD was finished.

¹⁷Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and Elath on the seacoast in the land of Edom; ¹⁸and Huram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea, who went with Solomon's servants to Ophir and took from there 13,000,000 dollars^x in gold and brought it to King Solomon.

946 B.C.

9 WHEN THE QUEEN OF SHEBA^y heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test out Solomon with hard questions. She had a large retinue, including camels carrying spices, much gold, and precious stones. During her visit with Solomon, she talked over with him all that she had in mind, ²and Solomon answered all her questions; indeed, there was not a thing concealed from Solomon which he could not explain to her. ³Finally, when the queen of Sheba had observed Solomon's wisdom, also the house that he had built, ⁴the food for his table, the assembly of his retainers, the attendance of those who waited on him in full dress, his cupbearers, their clothes, and the upright position of his body-guards, it took her breath away. ⁵Then she remarked to the king, "The report which I heard in my own country about your affairs and your wisdom was true! ⁶But I did not take their words seriously until I came and saw with my own eyes. Truly, half the greatness of your wisdom was not told me! You excel the report that I heard. ⁷Happy are your men, and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom.

^t) Although Pharaoh's daughter is not included in the "foreign wives" who caused Solomon to sin (1 Kings 11:1), yet she could hardly have joined him in the worship of God.

^u) With the temple completed, worship was conducted there, not at Gibeon as in ch. 1:3.

^v) In Lev. 23:37. ^w) Given in 1 Chron. 24.

^x) Heb., "450 talents." A talent of gold—\$30,000. ^y) Kingdom in S. W. Arabia, Aden.

⁸Blessed be the LORD your God who took delight in you, to set you on His throne as king to the LORD your God!¹² It was because your God loved Israel to establish it forever, that He set you as king over them to administer equity and justice."

⁹She also presented to the king \$1,680,000^a in gold and a great quantity of spices and precious stones. There had never been any such spices as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon, ¹⁰though the servants of both Hiram and Solomon who carried gold from Ophir imported sandalwood and precious stones. ¹¹With the sandalwood the king made raised walks for the house of the LORD and for the king's palace, as well as lyres and harps for the singers. Previously such as these had never been seen in the land of Judah. ¹²Then King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba everything she wanted and requested, besides what she had brought the king.^b After this she and her servants turned and departed for their own country.

¹³Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was \$19,980,000^c in gold, ¹⁴which was in addition to what the merchants and traders brought in; all the kings of Arabia, together with the governors of the land, brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵Out of beaten gold Solomon made 200 large shields, using \$280,000^d of gold per shield, ¹⁶and 300 smaller shields, using \$140,000^d of gold per shield; these the king assigned to the palace of the forest of Lebanon. ¹⁷The king also fashioned a large throne out of ivory, overlaying it with pure gold. ¹⁸This throne had six steps and a footstool of gold fastened to the throne, with arms on each side by the place of the seat, and two lions standing beside these arms. ¹⁹Twelve lions stood on the six steps, arranged on both sides — never before had such been made for any kingdom. ²⁰All of King Solomon's drinking service, too,

was of gold and the utensils of the palace of the forest of Lebanon were of costly gold — silver was not considered precious during the days of Solomon. ²¹For the king had ships that went to Tarshish with Hiram's^e servants; every three years these ships of Tarshish arrived laden with gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

²²So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³In fact, all the kings of the earth were accustomed to seek audience with Solomon, to hear the wisdom which God had put in his heart. ²⁴And each used to bring his own gift — silver and gold articles, robes, armor, spices, horses, and mules — a yearly amount. ²⁵In addition, Solomon had 4000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen; these he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. ²⁶He ruled over all the kings from the river^f to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. ²⁷The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as cobblestones, and he made cedars as plentiful as the sycamores which abound in the lowlands. ²⁸Horses for Solomon were imported from Egypt and from all regions.

²⁹As regards the rest of Solomon's affairs, both first and last, are they not recorded in the words of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah of Shiloh, and in the visions of Iddo the seer about Jeroboam Nebat's son? ³⁰For forty years Solomon reigned as king in Jerusalem over all Israel. ³¹So Solomon slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of his father David; and Rehoboam^g his son reigned in his place.

930 B.C.

10 REHOBAM WENT TO SHECHEM^h because all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ²Now Jeroboam, Nebat's son, had been in Egypt, where he had fled for fear of King Solomon,ⁱ but when he heard of this, he returned from Egypt. ³They

z) As the Hebrew priest was priest to the LORD, so the king was king to the LORD.

a) Heb., "120 talents."

b) i.e. His exchange gifts corresponded to those presented by her.

c) Heb., "666 talents."

d) Heb., "600 (shekels) of gold," [vs. 15]; "300 (shekels) of gold," [vs. 16]; one shekel— .512 oz.

e) Heb., "Hiram," see note on Ch. 2:3. f) Euphrates. g) "The nation is enlarged."

h) Forewarning of a rebellious attitude — Jerusalem was the proper place. i) I Kings 11:40.

sent and called for him; and so Jeroboam came with all Israel and told Rehoboam, "Your father made our yoke severe; now then, ease up on the burdensome servitude of your father and the heavy yoke that he imposed on us, and we will serve you."⁶ He answered them, "Wait for three days and then come to me again." So the people left.

⁶King Rehoboam consulted with the elderly men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was still alive. "How would you advise me to answer this people?" he asked. ⁷They replied to him, "If you will be kind to this people and please them and speak favorable words to them, then they will become your subjects for all time."

⁸But he turned a deaf ear to the advice which these elders recommended and conferred with the young men who had grown up with him and were standing in his presence. ⁹To them he also put the question: "What do you advise that we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Ease up on the yoke which your father put on us?'" ¹⁰The young men who had grown up with him suggested, "In this way you should answer the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke severe, but as for you, ease up on our yoke!' This is the way you should reply to them, 'My little finger will be thicker than my father's thighs. ¹¹Though my father imposed a heavy yoke on you, yet now I will add to that yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I [will discipline you] with scorpions.'"^j

¹²On the third day Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam as the king had appointed them, saying, "Come to me again on the third day." ¹³But the king answered them sharply; for king Rehoboam had disregarded the advice of the old men ¹⁴and instead spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I

will increase it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will do so with scorpions."^k ¹⁵The king would not listen to the people, because the turn of events was of God, that the Lord might carry out His word which He had spoken through Ahijah of Shiloh to Jeroboam, Nebat's son.^k

¹⁶As for all Israel, when the king would not listen to them, the people replied to the king, "What part do we have in David? No inheritance at all in Jesse's son! Each man to your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, David!" So all Israel left for their tents; ¹⁷but as for the children of Israel who resided in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam remained king over them. ¹⁸King Rehoboam sent off Hadaram,^m who had charge of the labor gangs, but the people of Israel stoned him to death; so King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹In this way Israel revolted against the house of David even to this day.

930 B.C.

11 WHEN REHOBOMAM CAME TO Jerusalem, he mustered the 180,000 choice troops of the houses of Judah and Benjamin for war with Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.ⁿ ²But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God: ³Say to Rehoboam, Solomon's son, king over Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, ⁴This is what the Lord has spoken: You shall not go up, neither shall you fight against your brothers. Go back, every man, to his own house; for this thing has happened by My decree. They paid attention to the Lord's words and turned back from marching against Jeroboam. ⁵So Rehoboam settled in Jerusalem, and he fortified cities in Judah for defense. ⁶He worked on Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, ⁷Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam. ⁸Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, ⁹Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, ¹⁰Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron; these became fortified cities in

j) A metal-tipped scourge. k) See I Kings 11:30, 31.

l) Slogan used by Sheba in rebellion against David [II Sam. 20:1].

m) Probably to negotiate with dissatisfied Israel.

n) That Jerusalem was mostly located in Benjamin enhanced the loyalty of that tribe to the house of David. For them the worship in the temple remained a vital element of true living.

Judah and Benjamin. ¹¹He reinforced the strongholds, stationing commanders in them, along with food supplies, oil, and wine. ¹²With shields and spears in every city he strengthened them greatly; so Judah and Benjamin remained his.

¹³Furthermore the priests and Levites throughout all Israel took their stand with him from all their localities. ¹⁴For the Levites abandoned their suburban lands and property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from ministering to the LORD, ¹⁵and he had ordained for himself priests for the high places and the goat idols and the calves he had made. ¹⁶Laymen, too, out of all the tribes of Israel who had made up their minds to seek the LORD, the God of Israel, followed them to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁷During three years they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and upheld Rehoboam, Solomon's son; for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.^o

¹⁸Rehoboam married Mahalath daughter of David's son Jerimoth and of Abihail daughter of Jesse's son Eliab. ¹⁹She bore sons to him: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. ²⁰Later he took Maacah daughter^p of Absalom, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. ²¹Rehoboam loved Maacah, Absalom's daughter,^p more than any of his other wives or concubines (for he took 18 wives and 60 concubines, and had 28 sons and 60 daughters). ²²Rehoboam appointed Abijah son of Maacah as head and prince among his brothers so as to make him king. ²³He displayed wisdom^q in distributing his sons throughout all the districts of Judah and Benjamin and all the fortified cities, giving them ample provisions and seeking a large number of wives.^r

926 B.C.

12 WHEN REHOBAM'S ROYAL POWER became established and he

had become strong, he and all Israel forsook the Law of the LORD. ²Then, because of their unfaithfulness to the LORD, Shishak Egypt's king ³marched against Jerusalem in the fifth year of King Rehoboam with 1200 chariots, 60,000 cavalry, and innumerable troops, who came with him from Egypt—Lubians, Sukkiites, and Ethiopians. ⁴He captured the stronghold cities of Judah, advancing as far as Jerusalem. ⁵Meanwhile, Shemaiah the prophet met with Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered into Jerusalem for fear of Shishak, and said to them, "This is what the LORD has spoken: You have abandoned Me, so I, now, do abandon you into Shishak's hands." ⁶Then the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and acknowledged, "The LORD is righteous."^s ⁷Accordingly, when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, this message came to Shemaiah from the LORD: They have humbled themselves. Therefore I will not bring them to ruin but will shortly give them an escaped remnant, and My anger shall not be poured out against Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. ⁸But they will become his servants and recognize the difference between servitude to Me and to the kingdoms of the lands.

⁹So Shishak king of Egypt advanced against Jerusalem and confiscated the treasure of the LORD's temple and of the king's palace, taking it all, including the shields of gold which Solomon had made.^t ¹⁰In their place King Rehoboam made bronze shields and committed them to the hands of the captains of the guard, who kept the gate of the king's palace. ¹¹Whenever the king came to the temple of the LORD, this guard would present itself to carry them and then would replace them in the guardroom. ¹²Because he had humbled himself, the LORD's anger was turned aside from him, so that

o) Until he became strong and self-reliant [ch. 12:1].

p) General term meaning female descendant, here granddaughter. Almost certainly Absalom's daughter surpassed all others in beauty.

q) Perhaps a lesson learned from David's sad experience [II Sam. 13, esp. vss. 26,27].

r) For these sons.

s) Acknowledgment of God's justice in punishment is a leading factor in genuine repentance.

t) Ch. 9:15,16.

the LORD did not send total destruction; in fact, there remained good things in Judah.

¹³So King Rehoboam established himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to place His name. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. ¹⁴Nevertheless, he did wrong in that he did not fix his heart^u to seek the LORD. ¹⁵As for the activities of Rehoboam, both first and last, are they not recorded in the words of Shemaiah the prophet and Iddo the seer in the register of genealogy? There were hostilities between Rehoboam and Jeroboam constantly. ¹⁶So Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David, and Abijah his son became king in his place.

913 B.C.

13 ABIJAH BECAME KING OVER Judah in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, ²and he reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Micaiah^v daughter of Uriel from Gibeah. When war broke out between Abijah and Jeroboam, ³Abijah engaged in battle with an army of mighty warriors—400,000 picked troops, whereas Jeroboam ordered the battle against him with 800,000 picked troops—strong, courageous men.^w ⁴Then Abijah stood up on Mount Zemaraim^x which lies in the Ephraim hill country and called, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel! ⁵Should you not understand that the LORD, the God of Israel, has given the monarchy over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons by a salt covenant?^y ⁶Yet Jeroboam,^z Nebat's son, and servant to David's son Solomon, turned and rebelled against his master. ⁷And certain good-for-nothing ne'er-do-wells joined

him and defied Rehoboam, Solomon's son—for Rehoboam was immature^a and faint-hearted and failed to assert himself against them. ⁸Now you plan on using your strength against the LORD's kingdom in the hand of David's sons, and you are a huge multitude, but you have with you the calves of gold which Jeroboam made as gods for you. ⁹Have you not driven out the LORD's priests, Aaron's son and the Levites, and like the people of the nations made your own priests out of anyone who came with a young bullock and seven rams to consecrate himself, to become a priest to no god?

¹⁰"But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him. We have priests from Aaron's descendants ministering to the LORD, and the Levites carrying on their service, ¹¹sacrificing burnt offerings to the LORD every morning and evening, burning incense of spices, and caring for the rows of bread on the pure table,^b and the golden lampstand that its lamps may be burning every evening. We are observing the injunction of the LORD our God; but you—you have forsaken Him. ¹²See here! God is with us at our head as are His priests with the alarm bugles to signal the advance against you. O sons of Israel! Do not fight against the LORD, the God of your fathers, for you shall not win."

¹³Nevertheless, Jeroboam sent an ambush around to come at them from behind;^c in this way they were in front of Judah and at the same time had the ambush at their rear. ¹⁴When Judah faced about, look! the battle was both in front of and behind them. They cried out to the LORD, and the priests blew their bugles. ¹⁵The men of Judah shouted, and when the men of Judah shouted, then it was that God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶For the men

u) Example of O.T. emphasis on the heart. See also I Sam 16:7.

v) Called Maacah in ch. 11:20, where her relationship is given to Absalom, whose only daughter Tamar [II Sam. 14:27] married Uriel.

w) Entirely plausible figures in view of David's census [II Sam. 24:9].

x) A scene reminiscent of Jotham's fable [Judg. 9:7].

y) Since unbreakable friendship was signified by eating salt together, and salt's preservative use made it an appropriate symbol for eternity, the immutability of the covenant is stressed, [as in Num. 18:19]. z) Mentioned in I Kings 11:28.

a) Heb., "youth"; in view of the fact that Rehoboam was 41 [Ch. 12:13] at that time, Abijah probably refers to inexperience. b) Called such in Lev. 24:6.

c) Tactics also of Joshua [Josh. 8:4,5].

of Israel fell back before Judah, and God gave them over into their hand. ¹⁷Abijah and his people struck them down with a great slaughter, fatally wounding 500,000 picked troops of Israel. ¹⁸At that time the men of Israel were subdued, but the men of Judah were strengthened, because they relied on the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁹So Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured some cities from him: Bethel with its suburbs, Jeshanah with its surrounding territories, and Ephraim with its suburbs. ²⁰Neither could Jeroboam regain power during Abijah's lifetime, and at length the LORD smote him and he died. ²¹But Abijah built up his strength. Moreover, he took fourteen wives for himself; he had twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. ²²The rest of Abijah's affairs, his ways and his words, are recorded in the exposition of the prophet Iddo.

910 B.C.

14 ABIJAH SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS,^d and they buried him in the city of David. Then Asa his son became king in his place and during his days the land had ten years of peace, ²for Asa^e did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God. ³He removed the foreign altars and the high places; he shattered the pillars and chopped down the Asherahs.^f ⁴He ordered Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment. ⁵He removed the high places and incense altars out of all the cities of Judah.^g Therefore the kingdom was peaceful under him. ⁶He also built fortified cities in Judah while the land lay undisturbed—for he had no war during those years, the LORD having given him peace. ⁷He instructed Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround them with walls having towers, gates, and bars, while we are still in possession of the land by reason of our hav-

ing sought the LORD our God. We have sought Him; therefore He has given us rest on all sides."^h So they built and thrived. ⁸And Asa commanded an army of 300,000 from Judah bearing light shields and spears and 280,000 from Benjamin armed with larger shields and bows; these were all strong and mighty men.

About 899 B.C.

⁹Now Zerahⁱ the Ethiopian came up against them with an army of a million and 300 chariots, advancing as far as Mareshah. ¹⁰Asa marched against him, drawing up the battle lines in the valley of Zephathah by Mareshah. ¹¹Then Asa called on the LORD his God, praying, "O LORD, there is none but Thee to help the powerless against the mighty;^j help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on Thee, and in Thy name do we come against this horde. O LORD, Thou art our God, do not let man hold out against Thee!" ¹²Then the LORD struck down the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah so that the Ethiopians fled. ¹³Asa and the people with him chased them as far as Gerar, and there fell so many of the Ethiopians that none were left alive, for they were beaten before the LORD and His army. They collected a large amount of plunder. ¹⁴They also overthrew all the cities around Gerar,^k because the awe of the LORD had come over them;^l and because there was abundant booty they plundered these cities. ¹⁵They went so far as to attack the cattle tents, capturing many sheep and camels; but finally they returned to Jerusalem.

895 B.C.

15 NOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD CAME on Azariah, Oded's son, ²and he went out to meet Asa, saying to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin! The LORD is with you while you are with Him; if you seek Him, He will be found by you; but

d) Ch. 13:23 in Heb. e) Ch. 14:1 in Heb.

f) Pillars were stone monuments dedicated to Baal worship; Asherahs were wooden poles or tree trunks dedicated to the worship of the nature goddess, Astarte. On one pole or stump the likeness of the female secret organ was carved, and on another that of the male; a Baal altar was between the two. g) A reform suggesting that of Josiah [Ch. 34:3,4].

h) Excellent illustration of Prov. 16:7.

i) Probably Osorkon I, successor to Sheshenq I [Shishak of Ch. 12:2] and second ruler of the 22nd dynasty of Egypt, a period of revived power.

j) See Jonathan's conviction [I Sam. 14:6]. k) In the Philistine country about six miles south of Gaza.

l) As over Jericho [Josh. 2:9,11], and foretold by Moses [Ex. 15:16].

if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.^m ³For some time Israel has been without the true God, without a teaching priest, and without law. ⁴But in their extremity they returned to the LORD, the God of Israel;ⁿ when they sought Him, He was found by them. ⁵During those times there was no security for anyone who went out or came in, because many disturbances came to all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶Nation dashed against nation, and city against city, for God plagued them with all sorts of adversity. ⁷But you, be strong, and do not lose heart, for your efforts shall be rewarded.^o ⁸When Asa heard these words and this prophecy coming from the prophet Oded, he gained courage to remove the detestable things^p from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had taken from the Ephraim hill country, and he renewed the LORD's altar which stood in front of the porch of the LORD.

⁹Then he brought together all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who lived among them. For a large number came over to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. ¹⁰These were assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign. ¹¹That day they sacrificed to the LORD some of the plunder they had brought — 700 cattle and 7000 sheep — ¹²and entered into the covenant^q to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul.^r ¹³Indeed, anyone who would not seek the LORD God of Israel was to die, whether small or grown, man or woman. ¹⁴They made this oath to the LORD with a loud voice and a cheer, with trumpets and horns. ¹⁵All Judah was glad for the oath, because they had sworn with all their heart and sought

Him with all their will; He was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.

¹⁶King Asa even deposed Maacah his mother from being queen,^s for she had made a repulsive Asherah image.^t This image Asa cut down, smashing and burning it at the brook Kidron. ¹⁷Although the high places were not removed from Israel, yet Asa retained his integrity of heart all his lifetime. ¹⁸He also brought the dedicated articles belonging to his father and himself to the temple of God — silver, gold, and utensils. ¹⁹No war occurred until the thirty-fifth year^u of Asa's reign.

894 B.C.

16 IN THE THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF Asa's reign, Baasha, Israel's king advanced against Judah and built Ramah, to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. ²Then Asa withdrew silver and gold from the treasures of the LORD's temple and from the king's palace and sent it to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived at Damascus, saying, ³"There is a treaty between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Note that I have sent you silver and gold. Go, break your treaty with Baasha Israel's king, that he may withdraw from me."^v ⁴So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies to the cities of Israel, and they overpowered Ijon, Dan, and Abel-maim, along with all the storage cities of Naphtali. ⁵When Baasha heard this, he quit building Ramah and gave up his enterprise. ⁶Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timbers of Ramah with which Baasha had been building, and with these he built Geba and Mizpah.

⁷At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of

m) Clear statement of the proportionate relationship between consecration and God's fellowship and blessing. Compare I Sam. 2:30.

n) How often distress is used by God to turn us to Him! o) Cf. I Cor. 15:58. Reward is sure. p) Presumably images, particularly the carved poles at which the people indulged in lewd practices under cover of religion. q) Renewal of covenant of Ex. 19:5-8.

r) Thus fulfilling conditions listed in Deut. 4:29.

s) Grandmother of King Asa; daughter or granddaughter of Absalom.

t) See explanation of Asherah of ch. 14:3.

u) Dated from the division of Israel from Judah of 930 B.C.

v) An ungodly move that cost him and his people dearly.

Syria and did not rely on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped out of your hand. ⁸Were not the Ethiopians and Lubians a large horde with a great many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand.^w ⁹For the eyes of the LORD flash back and forth over the whole earth to display His strength on behalf of those whose heart is full of integrity toward Him.^x In this you acted foolishly, for from now on you will be engaged in wars."¹⁰But Asa was angered at the seer and threw him into prison stocks, for he was enraged at him over this. Also at this time Asa cruelly oppressed certain of the people. ¹¹Note that the affairs of Asa from first to last are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

872-870 B.C.

¹²In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and this illness grew severe; yet even in his sickness, he did not seek the LORD but rather the physicians. ¹³Asa slept with his fathers, expiring in the forty-first year of his reign, ¹⁴and they buried him in the vault which he had chiseled out for himself in the city of David, laying him on a bed that was filled with sweet spices and various kinds of ointments mixed by the perfumer's skill, and a very impressive burning^y was held for him.

872-869 B.C.

17 HIS SON JEHOSEPHAT BECAME king in his place and strengthened himself against Israel. ²He quartered troops in all the fortified cities of Judah and stationed garrisons throughout all the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken. ³The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the old paths of David his father² and did not seek the Baalim.^a ⁴Instead he followed the God of his father and walked in His commandments—not according to the doings of Israel. ⁵So

the LORD established the kingdom in his hand, and all Judah presented gifts to Jehoshaphat so that he attained great riches and honor. ⁶He took heart in the ways of the LORD and went on to remove the high places and shame images^b from Judah. ⁷Also in the third year of his reign he sent out his princes—Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah—to teach in the cities of Judah, ⁸accompanied by the Levites—Shemaiah, Nathaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites—and by Elishama and Jehoram, priests. ⁹So these taught throughout Judah, taking with them the book of the Law of the LORD, and they went around into all the cities of Judah, teaching among the people.

¹⁰The awe of the LORD had come over all the kingdoms of the lands which surrounded Judah so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.^c

¹¹In fact, some of the Philistines did regularly bring gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; even the Arabians brought him flocks: 7700 rams and 7700 he-goats. ¹²So Jehoshaphat grew greater, outstandingly so, building fortresses and store cities throughout Judah. ¹³He had much construction work in the cities of Judah and mighty, courageous warriors in Jerusalem. ¹⁴Now this is how they were enrolled by their clans: In Judah the commanders of thousands were: Adnah, commander, accompanied by 300,000 strong and brave men; ¹⁵next to him, Jehohanan, commander, accompanied by 280,000; ¹⁶next to him, Amasiah, Zichri's son, who willingly offered himself to the LORD,^d accompanied by 200,000 strong and brave men. ¹⁷From Benjamin: Eliada, a strong and brave man, and with him 200,000 equipped with bow and shield; ¹⁸next to him Jehozabad, with 180,000 fitted out for war. ¹⁹These were the king's officers besides the ones whom the king had stationed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

w) Related in Ch. 14:9-13. x) Quality of heart noted of Asa in Ch. 15:17.

y) A kindling of fragrant spices in honor of the generally good King Asa.

z) Term here applies broadly to a male ancestor; refers to faithfulness of David, especially prior to II Sam. 11. a) General term for all false gods. b) See note on Ch. 14:3.

c) Again illustrates Prov. 16:7. d) A willing heart produces devotion which calls forth this brief commendation of an otherwise unknown leader.

853 B.C.

18 WHEN JEHOSEPHAT HAD AMPLE riches and honor, he made a marriage alliance with Ahab.^e ²After a few years he visited Ahab in Samaria. Ahab butchered a large number of sheep and cattle for him and his company and persuaded him to march against Ramoth-gilead. ³For Ahab king of Israel inquired of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go to Ramoth-gilead with me?" To this he responded, "I am as you, and my people as your people, we will be with you in the war. ⁴But first of all," requested Jehoshaphat of the king of Israel, "let me ask that you seek the word of the LORD." ⁵So the king of Israel called together the prophets,^f 400 men, and said to them, "Shall we advance against Ramoth-gilead for battle or shall I desist?" "Go up," they replied, "and God will deliver it into the king's hand." ⁶But Jehoshaphat queried, "Isn't there another prophet of the LORD around here that we may inquire from him?" ⁷The king of Israel responded to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man by whom to seek the LORD,^g but I hate him, for he never prophesies good about me, but always bad.^h He is Micaiah, Imla's son." Then Jehoshaphat said, "Oh, let not the king say so!" ⁸So the king of Israel summoned an officer and ordered, "Hurry and get Micaiah, Imla's son."

⁹The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne dressed in his robes. This was in the threshing area of the entrance gate to Samaria, where all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹⁰Then Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, made iron horns for himself and said, "This is what the LORD says: With these you will gore Syria until they are destroyed." ¹¹And all the prophets were prophesying the same way, saying, "Go against Ramoth-gilead and win, for the

LORD will give it into the king's hand."

¹²Meanwhile, the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah informed him, "Listen, the prophets' messages to the king are unanimously good. How about making your message like one of theirs and speaking favorably?" ¹³Micaiah replied, "As the LORD lives, whatever my God shall say, that will I proclaim."ⁱ ¹⁴When he came to the king, the king inquired of him, "Micaiah,^j shall we march against Ramoth-gilead to battle or should I give it up?" He retorted, "Go on up and win, that they may be delivered into your hands!" ¹⁵But the king took him to task, "How many times have I adjured you never to speak to me anything except the truth in the name of the LORD?"^k ¹⁶Then he responded, "I saw all Israel scattered out over the hills like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said: These have no master. Let everyone of them return to his own house in safety." ¹⁷"What did I tell you?" remarked the king of Israel to Jehoshaphat. "He does not prophesy good about me, but rather calamity!" ¹⁸"That being so," he^l continued, "listen to the LORD's word: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne with all the throngs of heaven standing around Him at His right and left. ¹⁹The LORD said: Who will persuade Ahab, Israel's king, to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? As one said one thing, and another said something else, ²⁰one spirit^m moved forward, stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' The LORD quizzed him: In what way? ²¹He replied, 'I will go out and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' You will succeed in persuading him, He answered; go ahead and do this. ²²Now notice, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of these your prophets, for the LORD has decreed evil against you."

e) Of his son Jehoram with Athaliah, Ahab's daughter [Ch. 21:6]. An unwise alliance rebuked in Ch. 19:2, and illustrating Amos 3:3 and II Cor. 6:14.

f) Probably prophets connected with the calf worship established by Jeroboam in Dan and Bethel, carried on under the name of the LORD [I Kings 12:28]. g) God has His man for each generation.

h) Typical attitude of considering, not ourselves, but the preacher, wrong.

i) Baalam so resolved, too [see Num. 22:18-20,38; 24:13].

j) Short form of the prophet's name, as Silas for Silvanus in I Thess. 1:1.

k) Ahab sensed Micaiah's sarcasm. l) Micaiah.

m) Reference here to one spirit may indicate current familiarity with a specific angelic being, possibly "the accuser" (Satan) of Job 1:6,7.

²³Then Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, stepped up and struck Micaiah on the cheek, saying, "Which way did the Spirit of the LORD cross over from me to speak to you?" ²⁴"Look," said Micaiah, "you will see in that day, when you enter an inside room to hide yourself!" ²⁵The king of Israel ordered, "Take Micaiah and remand him to Amon, officer of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, ²⁶with orders, 'The king commands this, Put this man in prison and feed him prison fare of bread and water until I return safely.'" ²⁷Micaiah rejoined, "If you actually return safely, the LORD has not spoken by me! Hear this, all you peoples!" he called.

²⁸Even so, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead. ²⁹The king of Israel, moreover, proposed to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your own regalia." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they entered the battle. ³⁰Now the king of Syria had ordered his chariot captains, "Do not fight against small or great, but only against the king of Israel." ³¹So it happened that when the chariot captains saw Jehoshaphat, they concluded, "That is the king of Israel," and encircled him to fight against him. But Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; God drew them away from him. ³²When the chariot captains realized he was not the king of Israel, they retired from pursuing him. ³³But one of the men took a shot with his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the layers of breastplate and body armor. He ordered his driver, "Turn your hand and take me out of the front line, for I am wounded." ³⁴Through that day the battle raged, while the king of Israel kept himself standing in his chariot opposite Syria until evening; but about sundown he died.

853 B.C.

19 THEN JEHOSEPHAT, JUDAH'S king, returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem. ²But Jehu son of Hanani the seer, went out to meet him,

and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you give help to the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, indignation from the LORD shall come upon you. ³Even so, there are good things found in you, for you have destroyed the shame images out of the land and have set your heart to seek God."

⁴Jehoshaphat then settled down in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beer-sheba to the Ephraim hill country, turning them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ⁵He appointed judges throughout the land, in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, ⁶and instructed these judges: "Watch what you do, for you are not judging for men, but for the LORD who will be beside you in judicial affairs. ⁷Now may reverence for the LORD come over you; pay attention and perform this, for with the LORD our God there is no injustice, partiality, or bribe-taking."

⁸In Jerusalem Jehoshaphat also stationed some of the Levites and priests along with clan leaders of Israel for the judgment of the LORD and for disputes, after they had returned to Jerusalem. ⁹These he charged, "So shall you do, in reverence for the LORD, in faithfulness, and with a heart of integrity. ¹⁰Regarding every case which may come before you from your brothers living in the cities, which involves blood versus blood, law, commandment, regulations or ordinances, you shall warn them not to be guilty before the LORD, lest anger should come on both you and your brothers. This you shall do so as not to incur guilt. ¹¹Note also: Amariah is high priest over you in all matters regarding the LORD, and Zedabiah, Ishmael's son, ruler of the house of Judah, in all matters regarding the king; the Levites are officials before you. Deal fearlessly, and the LORD be with the good."

853 B.C.

20 LATER THIS HAPPENED: THE men of Moab and Ammon, together with some Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat in battle. ²Men came to inform Jehoshaphat, saying, "A

huge multitude has come against you from beyond the sea,^o from Syria; and note this, they are at Hazazon-tamar" (which is En-gedi). ³In fear, Jehoshaphat set his face to seek the LORD and proclaimed a fast throughout Judah. ⁴And Judah came together to seek the LORD; indeed they came to seek the LORD out of all the cities of Judah.

⁵Then, in the house of the LORD in front of the new court, Jehoshaphat stood up in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem ⁶and said: "LORD God of our fathers, art Thou not God in heaven, and dost Thou not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? There is both strength and might in Thy hand, and there is none who can stand up against Thee. ⁷Didst Thou not, O, our God, dispossess the inhabitants of this land in favor of Thy people Israel, giving it to the descendants of Thy friend Abraham forever? ⁸Later they settled in it and built a sanctuary in it for Thy name, saying, ⁹'If calamity, sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine come on us,^p we will stand before this house and before Thee—for Thy name is in this house—and cry to Thee out of our distress, and Thou wilt hear and save.' ¹⁰See, now! The men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom Thou didst not let Israel invade as they came out of the land of Egypt^q—instead they turned away from them and did not destroy them—¹¹see how they are repaying us by coming to drive us out from Thy possession, which Thou didst cause us to inherit. ¹²O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? For we have not power against this huge array which has come against us, and we are at a loss what to do; but our eyes are on Thee."^r ¹³All Judah was standing before the LORD, including their infants, wives, and children.

¹⁴Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel^s in the midst of the congregation—he was the son of Zechariah the son of Benaiah, Jeiel's son, a son of the Levite Mattaniah, one of Asaph's sons—¹⁵and he said, "Pay attention, all Judah and Jerusalem residents and King Jehoshaphat. The LORD has said to you: Be not afraid, neither be discouraged on account of this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.^t ¹⁶Go down against them tomorrow. Surely now they are going up by the upward slope of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷But you will not need to fight in this; just hold your place, stand still, and see^u the victory of the LORD who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Fear not; be not perplexed; tomorrow go out before them, and the LORD be with you." ¹⁸Then Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the residents of Jerusalem fell before the LORD to worship the LORD. ¹⁹The Levites, of the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, on their part, arose to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.^v

²⁰Early the next morning they got up and marched out to the wilderness of Tekoa. When they were setting out, Jehoshaphat stood to say, "Hear me, O Judah and you residents of Jerusalem! Trust in the LORD your God, and you will be established. Trust in His prophets, and you will be successful." ²¹He took counsel with the people, appointing those who were to sing to the LORD and those who were to give praise in sacred vestments as they advanced in front of the troops, saying, "Praise the LORD, because His loving-kindness is everlasting!"^w

²²When they began the ringing

^o) Dead Sea; "from beyond the sea" [Edom] and "from Syria."

^p) Summary of part of Solomon's prayer [ch. 6:28-30]. From this occasion the 46th Psalm may have been inspired. ^q) Cited from Deut. 2:4,5,9,19. ^r) Compare Ps. 123:2.

^s) This inspired descendant of the psalmist Asaph may be the specific author (referred to by family name in the title) of Psalm 83 wherein the military situation seems similar to that in this text. ^t) So said David when facing Goliath [I Sam. 17:47].

^u) The same advice God had given Moses at the Red Sea [Ex. 14:13].

^v) As our LORD on earth taught us and practiced — and so did Paul — they gave thanks for answered prayer before the battle had begun.

^w) In 1632 A.D., when Gustaf Adolph of Sweden faced Wallenstein, who had brought the Austrian forces to bring Northern Europe back to the Roman Church, 20,000 Swedes joined their king in singing, "A mighty fortress is our God," and gained a mighty victory.

shout and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah, and they were beaten. ²³For the men of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them, and when they had wiped out the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. ²⁴When Judah arrived at the lookout in the wilderness and faced toward the horde, what were they but corpses, lying on the ground, none having escaped! ²⁵Jehoshaphat and his people proceeded to collect the plunder and found much among them, including goods with the bodies and precious articles. They stripped off for themselves more than they could carry, spending three days collecting the loot; for it was enormous.^x ²⁶On the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Berachah;^y for there they blessed the LORD, and as a result they have called the name of that place the valley of Berachah to this day. ²⁷Then they turned—all the men of Judah and Jerusalem, headed by Jehoshaphat—to go back with joy to Jerusalem, for God had made them rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸So they went into Jerusalem to the house of the LORD with harps, lyres, and trumpets. ²⁹Again the awe of God came over all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰The kingdom of Jehoshaphat had peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

³¹So Jehoshaphat ruled over Judah; he was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. ³²He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not turn aside from it, doing right in the eyes of the LORD—³³except that the high places were not removed and the people still would not fix their heart on the God of their fathers. ³⁴Now the rest of Jehoshaphat's affairs, both first and last, see, they are written in the words of Jehu the son

of Hanani, which he inscribed in the book of the kings of Israel. ³⁵Later on, Jehoshaphat king of Judah made an alliance with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted wickedly; ³⁶he joined with him in making ships to go to Tarshish.^z They made the ships in Ezion-geber.^a ³⁷But Eliezer, Dodavahu's son, from Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has broken up your efforts." So the ships were so damaged that they could not sail to Tarshish.

848 B.C.

21 JEHOSEPHAT WENT TO REST with his fathers, was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place. ²His brothers, other sons of Jehoshaphat, were Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat, Judah's king. ³Now their father gave to each of them large gifts of silver, gold, and valuable items, together with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the first-born.

⁴When Jehoram took over his father's kingdom and had strengthened his position, he killed^b all his brothers with the sword and even some of the princes of Judah. ⁵Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for eight years. ⁶But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, doing as the dynasty of Ahab had done, for Ahab's daughter had become his wife.^c He did wrong in the eyes of the LORD. ⁷However, the LORD was unwilling to destroy the dynasty of David because of the covenant^d which He had made with David, in which He had promised to give a lamp^e both to him and to his sons for all time.

⁸During his time, the Edomites revolted from being under Judah's control and set up their own king. ⁹Then Jehoram, accompanied by his captains and all his chariotry, crossed over and, attacking by night, struck down the

x) Because they had been coming to settle in the land [vs. 11]. y) Means "blessing."

z) Phoenician colony in Spain, or possibly Sardinia. a) On the Red Sea.

b) This may indicate the character difference cited in vs. 13, as well as jealous protection for his throne rights. c) Mentioned in ch. 18:1. d) II Sam. 7. e) Right to the throne.

Edomites and their chariot captains who had surrounded him. ¹⁰Nevertheless, Edom revolted from the domination of Judah to this day. At that time, because he had left the LORD, the God of his fathers, Libnah also revolted from his sway.

¹¹He also made high places in the hill country of Judah, causing the inhabitants of Jerusalem to become unfaithful and turning Judah astray. ¹²Then a writing came to him from the prophet Elijah, warning him, "The LORD, the God of your father David, has said this: Because you have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³but have rather followed in the way of the kings of Israel, causing Judah to be unfaithful and making the inhabitants of Jerusalem commit harlotry like that of the dynasty of Ahab,^f and because you have killed your brothers, your father's own family, who were better than you, ¹⁴now listen! The LORD is going to strike a great blow to your people, including your sons, your wives, and all your goods. ¹⁵You also will become severely ill from an intestinal disease until your vitals fall out because of the day-after-day disease."

¹⁶Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians who are located beside the Ethiopians. ¹⁷Advancing against Judah, they invaded it and captured all the property they found there belonging to the king's household, including his sons and his wives. Thus no son was left to him, except Jehoahaz,^g his youngest.

¹⁸After all this, the LORD struck him with an incurable intestinal disease. ¹⁹So it came about as time passed, that by the end of two years his intestines came out because of his sickness, and he died in intense suffering. His people made no burning for him

like the burning for his fathers.^h ²⁰He was thirty-two years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years, expiring without being mourned. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

841 B.C.

22 THEN THE INHABITANTS OF Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place; for all his older sons had been killed by the band of marauders that had come with the Arabians against the camp. So Ahaziah, Jehoram's son, reigned as king of Judah. ²Ahaziah was forty-twoⁱ years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for one year; his mother's name was Athaliah, Omri's granddaughter.^j ³He too, walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was counselor to him in his doing what was wrong. ⁴So he did evil in the eyes of the LORD as the dynasty of Ahab had done, because, after his father's death, they became his advisors, leading him to ruin.

⁵Following their advice, he joined with Ahab's son, Joram the king of Israel, to make war against Hazael the king of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead. The Syrians wounded Joram,^k and he returned to Jezreel to recuperate from the wounds he had received while fighting at Ramah against Hazael king of Syria. So, because of this illness, Azariah, Jehoram's son, king of Judah, went down to Jezreel to visit Joram.

⁷The downfall of Ahaziah — his visiting Joram — was of God; for after he had arrived, he went out with Joram to meet Jehu, Nimshi's son, whom the LORD had anointed to put an end to the dynasty of Ahab.^l ⁸It came about that while Jehu was executing judgment against the house of Ahab, he encountered the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers who

f) Given in greater detail in I Kings 16:31-33.

g) More frequently called Ahaziah [Ch. 22:1]. Both mean "The LORD holds," differing only in whether "ahaz" (meaning "holds") is first or last. Somewhat parallel is our Dorothy and Theodore; both mean "God's gift," differing only in whether "dor(e)" (meaning "gift") is first or last.

h) Recorded in ch. 16:14. i) Should probably read "22." The miscopying of one letter could cause the apparent disagreement with II Kings 8:26. j) And daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

k) Joram is a shortened form of Jehoram, as is Silas of Silvanus. Though the longer form (Jehoram) is that actually used in vss. 5, 6b, and 7b, the spelling Joram has been adopted so as to keep distinct the Jehoram of Judah from the Jehoram (Joram) of Israel.

l) Told in II Kings 9:6,7.

served Ahaziah,^m and he killed them. ⁹He then made search for Ahaziah, who was captured while hiding in Samaria; he was brought before Jehu, who had him killed. Even so they buried him, for they reasoned, "He was the son of Jehoshaphat who sought the LORD with all his heart." But there was no one from the house of Ahaziah who was able to exercise control over the kingdom.

¹⁰When Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw that her son was dead, she set out and killed all the royal descendants of the house of Judah.ⁿ ¹¹But Jehoshabeath, the king's daughter, took Joash, Ahaziah's son, stole him away from among the king's sons, who were put to death, and placed both him and his nurse in the storeroom for beds. This Jehoshabeath, being Ahaziah's own sister as well as the daughter of King Jehoram and wife of the priest Jehoiada, hid him away from Athaliah, so that she could not kill him. ¹²He stayed with them, hidden in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah was queen over the land.

835 B.C.

23 IN THE SEVENTH YEAR JEHOIADA took courage and brought into a mutual agreement the captains of hundreds: Azariah, Jeroham's son; Ishmael, Jehohanan's son; Azariah, Obed's son; Maaseiah, Adaiah's son; and Elishaphat, Zichri's son. ²They toured through Judah, called together the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, also Israel's clan leaders, and these came to Jerusalem. ³This whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the temple of God. He told them, "See, the king's son is to reign as the LORD promised concerning David's sons. ⁴This is the thing for you to do: a third of you priests and Levites who come in on the Sabbath will serve at the entrance as gatekeepers. ⁵Another third will be at the king's palace, and a third at the foundation gate, while all the people will stay in the courts of the LORD's temple.

⁶Let no one enter the LORD's house, except the priests and the ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy; but all the people must observe the LORD's injunction.^p ⁷The Levites are to encircle the king completely, each with his weapon in hand, and anyone who enters the house is to be executed. Stay with the king as he enters and as he leaves."

⁸So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest had commanded and each took his men, both those entering on the Sabbath and those leaving on the Sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed the divisions. ⁹Then Jehoiada the priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears, shields and the smaller shields that were in the temple of God and had been King David's. ¹⁰He had all the people stand around the king, weapons in hand, from the south side of the house to the north side by the altar and the temple itself. ¹¹Then they brought out the king's son, placed the crown on him, and presenting him with the testimony,^q they made him king. Jehoiada and his sons then anointed him and proclaimed, "Long live the king!"

¹²When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and cheering the king, she came in to the people at the LORD's house. ¹³She looked, and there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, the princes and the trumpeters near the king, all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing horns, and the musicians leading the praise with musical instruments. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried out, "Treason! Treason!" ¹⁴At that, Jehoiada the priest sent out the captains of hundreds, army officers, having instructed them, "Take her out from the inner ranks and have anyone who follows her killed with the sword." This was because the priest had insisted, "She is not to be killed in the LORD's house." ¹⁵So they laid hands on her

m) Apparently young nephews and cousins who called themselves "brothers" (male relatives) of Ahaziah in II Kings 10:13.

n) This account is also given in II Kings 11:1-3 with slight variations as, for instance, in spelling, o) Jehoiada the high priest. p) No lay people were allowed to enter the temple proper, which means the holy place and the Holy of Holies [Num. 3:10].

q) That is, the Law [Ex. 23:21], which was to be his constant guide [Deut. 17:18-20].

as she came to the entrance of the horse gate of the king's palace, and there they executed her.

¹⁶Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king to be the LORD's people.

¹⁷All the people went to the temple of Baal, broke it down with its altars, and smashed its images; they executed Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars. ¹⁸Jehoiada placed the administrative officers of the LORD's house under direction of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned to be over the LORD's house. Their task was to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, as is written in the law of Moses, with joy and singing, as ordered by David. ¹⁹He stationed the doorkeepers near the doors of the LORD's temple, so that no one who was unclean for any cause could enter in. ²⁰Then taking the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers among the people, and all the people of the land, he escorted the king down from the LORD's temple. They came through the upper gate to the king's palace where they set the king on the throne of the kingdom. ²¹So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city had quiet because Athaliah had been put to death with the sword.

835 B.C.

24 JOASH WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years; his mother's name was Zibiah from Beersheba. ²Joash, too, did right in the eyes of the LORD during the priest Jehoiada's lifetime. ³Jehoiada obtained two wives for him,^r and he had sons and daughters.

⁴Later on it came into the heart of Joash to restore the LORD's temple.

⁵Gathering the priests and Levites together, he said to them, "Go out into the cities of Judah and collect money from all Israel for the repairing of the temple of your God year by year—and you are to hurry the matter!" But the Levites did not hurry it. ⁶Then

the king summoned Jehoiada the high priest and said to him, "Why is it that you have not required the Levites to bring from Judah and Jerusalem the assessment^s of Moses the LORD's servant, which was levied on the congregation of Israel for the tent of testimony?"^t ⁷For the sons of that wicked Athaliah had broken into God's house and had even turned over to the Baalim all the dedicated articles of the LORD's house.

⁸So the king ordered them to make a chest^u and place it outside at the gate of the LORD's temple. ⁹Then they issued a proclamation in Judah and in Jerusalem to bring in to the LORD what was assessed on Israel in the wilderness by Moses, God's servant. ¹⁰All the princes and all the people were glad and brought it in, dropping it into the chest until all had given. ¹¹Whenever the chest was brought to the king's officers by the Levites and they saw that it contained much money, the king's secretary and the high priest's deputy would empty the chest, take it up, and return it to its place. This they did daily and collected money abundantly. ¹²The king and Jehoiada passed it on to those in charge of the service of the LORD's temple, who, in turn, were hiring masons and carpenters to renew the LORD's house, and iron-workers and coppersmiths to restore the temple of the LORD. ¹³So these workers labored, and the restoration work progressed under them; they restored the house of God to its proper condition and made it strong. ¹⁴When they had finished, they brought in to the king and to Jehoiada what was left of the silver, and it was made into utensils for the LORD's temple—instruments for serving and for making sacrifices, bowls, and gold and silver items. They continued sacrificing burnt offerings in the LORD's house regularly throughout Jehoiada's lifetime.

¹⁵Jehoiada, however, grew old and advanced in years and died. He was

r) More wives than God had arranged for, but less than kings were accustomed to take.

s) See Ex. 30:15,16. t) Because the tabernacle housed the tables of the Law or Testimony (Ex. 25:16), it was sometimes called "the tent of testimony" [Num. 9:15].

u) From this comes the "Joash chest" custom, for contributions in some churches.

130 years old at his death,¹⁶ and they buried him with the kings in the city of David, for he had done noble things in Israel, both toward God and toward His temple.¹⁷ Nevertheless, after Jehoiada's death the princes of Judah came and bowed down to the king, and at that time the king began to listen to them.¹⁸ They disregarded the temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, serving the shame images and idols instead, and because of their guilt in this, anger came on Judah and Jerusalem.¹⁹ He^v sent prophets among them to turn them back to the LORD, and these bore witness among them, but they would not listen.^w

²⁰Then the Spirit of God came on^x Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest, who went and stood above the people, saying to them, "This is what God has said: Why are you transgressing the commandments of the LORD so that you cannot succeed? Because you have left the LORD, He has left you."²¹ But they conspired against him, and at the king's command they stoned him in the court of the LORD's temple.^y ²²Thus King Joash did not bear in mind the loving faithfulness which Jehoiada his father had practiced in his behalf, but killed his son. As he was dying, he cried, "Observe, O LORD, and pay back!"

²³So it came about that, at the year's end, the army of Syria advanced against him,^z reaching Judah and Jerusalem. They destroyed all the people's leaders from among them, and they shipped all their plunder to the king of Damascus.²⁴ Though the Syrian army advanced with but few men, yet the LORD delivered a very large army into their hand, because they^a had left the LORD, their fathers' God. So they executed judgment against Joash.

²⁵Then after these had gone from him—for they did leave him, though with many wounds—his servants plotted against him, because of his murder of the priest Jehoiada's son,

and killed him on his bed. He died and was buried in the city of David, but not in the royal tombs.²⁶ Now those who conspired against him were Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabitess.²⁷ Concerning his sons, the many prophecies against him, and the restoration of God's house, note, these are written in the exposition of the book of the kings. Amaziah his son became king in his place.

796 B.C.

25 AMAZIAH WAS TWENTY-FIVE years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother's name was Jehoaddan, from Jerusalem.² He did what was right in the LORD's eyes, but not wholeheartedly.³ When the kingdom had become established under him, he killed those servants of his who had assassinated his father the king;⁴ but he did not put their children to death, because he did what was written in the Law, in the book of Moses^b where God commanded, "Fathers shall not be executed for children, neither shall children be executed for fathers; each may be executed only for his own sin."

⁵Amaziah called Judah together and assigned them by their clans to leaders of groups of thousands and of hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin.^c He then took a census of those from twenty years old and above and found them to be 300,000 capable men who could go out to war and handle a spear and shield.⁶ In addition, he hired 100,000 strong and courageous men from Israel for \$218,000 in silver.^d ⁷But a man of God came to him and said, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, because the LORD is not with Israel and all these men of Ephraim!"⁸ But if you do go, carry on! Act strong in battle. God will yet make you fall before your enemy, for God has the power to help or to overthrow."⁹ Then replied Amaziah to the man of God, "But what shall I do

v) God. w) Compare II Chron. 30:6,10. x) Lit. "clothed Himself with."

y) Referred to by Jesus in Matt. 23:35 where an ancestor Barachiah is mentioned; this priest should not be confused with the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah [Zech. 1:1].

z) Joash. a) The Jews. b) In Deut. 24:16.

c) Most of Benjamin had remained with Judah when the northern tribes separated. Simeon had already been absorbed with Judah, and the tribe of Levi was mostly in the southern section.

d) Heb., "100 talents"; one talent—92 lbs. Troy, or about \$2176.

about the \$200,000 which I have given to the troops from Israel?" The man of God responded, "God is able to give you far more than that."^e ¹⁰So Amaziah dismissed them to return home, those troops which had come to him from Ephraim; but they were highly incensed at Judah and returned home burning with rage.

¹¹Amaziah, however, took courage, led his forces out, and marched to the Valley of Salt where he struck down 10,000 men of Seir. ¹²The men of Judah also captured 10,000 alive, brought them to the top of a cliff, and there pushed them over the cliff's top so that all of them were dashed to pieces. ¹³Meanwhile the men of the troops, which Amaziah had sent back from accompanying him to war, made raids on the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon. They killed 3000 of the inhabitants and took much loot.

¹⁴After Amaziah had come back from the slaughter of the Edomites, he brought in the gods of those men of Seir and set them up as his own gods, bowing before them and burning sacrifices to them. ¹⁵Therefore the LORD became angry with Amaziah and sent a prophet to him, who said to him, "Why do you look to the gods of these people, who did not deliver their own people out of your hand?" ¹⁶But as he was speaking, he^g broke in, "Have you been appointed counselor to the king? Quiet! Why should you be killed?" ^hSo the prophet stopped with, "I notice that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not given heed to my advice."

790 B.C.

¹⁷After consultation, Amaziah, Judah's king, sent a challenge to Joash son of Jehoahaz, Jehu's son, king of Israel, "Come, let us face each other in battle!" ¹⁸But Joash, Israel's king, sent this answerⁱ back to Amaziah king of Judah, "A bramble bush on Lebanon sent to a cedar which was

on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to be my son's wife.' But a wild animal that was on Lebanon passed by and trampled that bramble down. ¹⁹You have said to yourself, 'See, I have beaten Edom,' so you have the audacity to boast! Stay at home now; why ask for trouble which will only make you fall, both you and Judah with you?"

²⁰But Amaziah would not listen, for it was of God, so that He might turn them over into the hand of their enemies, because they had looked to the gods of Edom. ²¹So Joash, Israel's king, marched up and he and Amaziah, Judah's king, faced each other in battle at Beth-shemesh which belongs to Judah. ²²But Judah was defeated before Israel, and each man fled to his own tent. ²³At Beth-shemesh Israel's King Joash even captured Amaziah, Judah's king, the son of Joash, Jehoahaz's^j son, and brought him to Jerusalem where he demolished 200 yards of the Jerusalem wall, from the Ephraim gate to the corner gate. ²⁴He returned to Samaria with all the gold, silver, and utensils found with Obed-edom^k in the house of God, with the treasures of the king's palace, and with hostages.

²⁵Amaziah son of Joash king over Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of the king of Israel, Joash the son of Jehoahaz. ²⁶The rest of Amaziah's affairs, first and last, see, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? ²⁷From the time that Amaziah turned away from the LORD, they conspired against him at Jerusalem; he fled to Lachish, but they sent after him to Lachish and assassinated him there. ²⁸They then brought him by horse and buried him with his fathers in Judah's capital.

790 B.C.

26 ALL THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH took Uzziah who was sixteen years old and made him king in place

e) Beautiful O.T. combination of Matt. 6:33 and Eph. 3:20.

f) The unanswerable argument against Israel's idolatry. g) The king, Amaziah.

h) Amaziah affords an illustration of the pagan idea that the king stood superior even to God's law; the attitude of Jezebel showed in bringing about the death of Naboth to obtain his property [I Kings 21]. Only in God-fearing Israel were kings, as well as commoners, made accountable to the Law of God. i) By use of a fable; comp. Judg. 9:7 ff.

j) Same as Abaziah [see ch. 21:17 note]. k) See I Chron. 26:15.

of his father Amaziah. ²He was the one who, after the king slept with his fathers, built up Eloth and won it back for Judah. ³Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for fifty-two years; his mother's name was Jechiliah, from Jerusalem. ⁴He did right in the eyes of the LORD in all the ways that Amaziah his father had done. ⁵He made a point of seeking God during the lifetime of Zechariah, who had insight in divine visions, and while he sought the LORD, God made him thrive.

⁶He went out and fought against the Philistines, demolishing the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, and building cities near Ashdod and among the Philistines; ⁷God helped him against the Philistines; also against the Arabians who lived in Gurbaal, and against the Meunites.¹ ⁸The Ammonites, too, paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread even to the entrance of Egypt, because he strengthened himself still more. ⁹For Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem on the corner gate, on the valley gate and at the corner buttress, thus strengthening each. ¹⁰He built lookouts in the wilderness and dug out many cisterns, for he had much cattle, both in the lowlands and in the plain. He also had plowmen and vinekeepers in the hill country and in the garden land, for he loved the soil. ¹¹Uzziah, moreover, had a combat army for waging war by regiments according to the number of their levy as directed by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the adjutant, and as ordered by Hananiah, one of the king's commanders. ¹²The total number of the clan leaders, strong and courageous men, was 2600. ¹³Under these was the army corps, 307,500 with great power for making war and for aiding the king against his enemies. ¹⁴Uzziah prepared shields, spears, helmets, coats of armor, bows, and slingstones for these men who made up the entire army. ¹⁵In Jerusalem also he made machines devised by inventors, to stand on the towers and corners for

shooting arrows and heavy stones. Thus his fame spread for a great distance, because he received exceptional help so that he grew strong.

751 B.C.

¹⁶But when he was mighty, his heart grew haughty to his own destruction;^m for he transgressed against the LORD his God by entering the LORD's temple to make an offering on the incense altar.ⁿ ¹⁷Azariah the priest came in after him with eighty priests of the LORD who were courageous men. ¹⁸They stood up to Uzziah the king and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to offer sacrifices to the LORD, for that is the right of the priests, Aaron's descendants, who have been consecrated for such offering.^o Get out of the holy place, for you have transgressed! This will bring you no glory from the LORD God."

¹⁹Uzziah was indignant, but in his very rage at the priests, while holding the censer for burning incense in his hand, leprosy broke out on his forehead^p in front of the priests in the LORD's house near the incense altar. ²⁰The high priest Azariah stared at him, as did all the priests, and as they watched, he became leprous in his forehead. Then they rushed him out of there; indeed, he himself lost no time in getting out, for the LORD had struck him. ²¹To the day of his death King Uzziah remained a leper and lived in a separate house as a leper, for he was excluded from the LORD's house, and Jotham his son had charge of the royal palace, judging the people of the land. ²²The rest of Uzziah's affairs, first and last, were written by the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz. ²³So Uzziah went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the burial field which belonged to the kings, "because," they said, "he was a leper." Jotham his son became king in his place.

751 B.C.

27 JOTHAM WAS TWENTY-FIVE years old when he became king,

l) A people, probably living in Edom, several times enemies of Israel. Apparently some of these captives and their descendants served about the temple; therefore "Nethinim" [Neh. 10:28].

m) Success has ruined many a useful life, when God's help was forgotten and self-glorification set in.

n) Belonging to the Holy of Holies for ministries by the high priest. o) In Num. 16:40.

p) Compare the punishments of Gehazi [II Kings 5:27], and of Miriam [Num. 12:10].

and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Jerushah, Zadok's daughter. ²He did right in the eyes of the LORD according to all that Uziah his father had done; however, he did not enter the temple of the LORD. Nevertheless the people were still corrupt.^q ³He was the one who constructed the upper gate of the LORD's temple, and on the walls of the citadel hill he built extensively. ⁴He also built cities in the hill country of Judah, and on the wooded heights he erected fortresses and towers. ⁵He fought the king of the Ammonites, whom he overpowered. The men of Ammon that year gave him \$200,000^r in silver, 10,000 measures^s of wheat, and 10,000 of barley. The men of Ammon brought this to him in the second and third years, too. ⁶So Jotham became mighty, for he established his ways before the LORD his God. ⁷The rest of Jotham's affairs and all his wars and his ways, see, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸He was twenty-five years old when he became king and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. ⁹Then Jotham went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. Ahaz his son became king in his place.

736 B.C.

28 ¹HAHAZ WAS TWENTY YEARS OLD when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He failed to do what was right in the LORD's eyes as David his father had done; ²for he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel in that he made molten images to the Baalim,^t ³made sacrifices in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burned his sons in the fire,^u according to the detestable practices of the nations which the LORD had dispossessed before the children of Israel. ⁴He also killed and offered sac-

rifices on the high places and hills and under every leafy tree.

734 B.C.

⁵Therefore the LORD his God gave him over into the hand of the king of Syria, who defeated him, captured a large number of prisoners from him, and deported them to Damascus. He was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted heavy casualties on him. ⁶Indeed, because they had left the LORD, the God of their fathers, Pekah^v the son of Remaliah killed 120,000 in Judah in one day, all able men. ⁷Zichri, a hero of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah, the king's son,^w Azrikam the palace official, and Elkanah second to the king.

⁸The men of Israel took from their kindred people 200,000 wives, sons, and daughters as captives; they plundered much booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria. ⁹But a prophet of the LORD was there, Oded by name, who went out to meet the army as it was coming to Samaria. He said to them, "Observe! Because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hands; but you have gone and killed them in fury that reaches to heaven. ¹⁰Despite that, you are now thinking to oppress these people of Judah and Jerusalem as male and female slaves! Do you not have enough transgressions of your own against the LORD your God? ¹¹Now listen to me! Send back these prisoners whom you have captured from your kindred people, for the heat of the LORD's indignation is on you."

¹²So certain of the chiefs of the men of Ephraim: Azariah son of Johanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehiskiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, took a stand against those returning from the battle. ¹³They said to them, "You should not have brought

q) Given in more detail in II Kings 15:35.

r) Heb., "100 talents"; one talent = 116.4 lbs. Troy, or about \$2,000.

s) Heb., "cors"; one cor = 10:5 bushels. t) See Note on ch. 17:3.

u) Human sacrifice was forbidden by the Law [Deut. 18:10], condemned by the prophets [Ezek. 23:37,39]. Though deemed the greatest of sacrifices by many cultures of Biblical (and present) times, as reflected in Micah 6:7, God clearly implied His disapproval as early as Abraham's time [Gen. 22:12,13].

v) The king of northern Israel.

w) Son here means "close male relative"; Ahaz was scarcely old enough to have a son of military age.

these captives here, for thereby you are proposing to bring on us guilt before the LORD, adding still more to our sins and to our trespasses! Our guilt is already great so that His anger is on Israel." ¹⁴So the armed men left the prisoners and the loot in front of the princes and the whole gathering. ¹⁵Then the men already mentioned by name got up and took charge of the prisoners, giving clothing from the loot to the naked. They clothed them and gave them sandals, fed them, and gave them water. They anointed^x them and led the feeble on donkeys. So they took them back to the side of their fellow tribesmen at Jericho, the city of palm trees, and then returned to Samaria.

¹⁶At that time King Ahaz sent for the king of Assyria to help him, ¹⁷for the Edomites had again invaded and attacked Judah, carrying captives away with them. ¹⁸The Philistines,^y too, had invaded cities in the lowlands and in the south country of Judah, had captured Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco and its suburbs, Timnah and its suburbs, Gimzo and its suburbs, and had settled down there. ¹⁹For the LORD humbled Judah on account of Ahaz king of Israel,^z who had fostered lack of restraint in Judah and had transgressed greatly against the LORD. ²⁰But when Tilgathpiles^a king of Assyria arrived, he afflicted him, rather than strengthening him; ²¹for after Ahaz had stripped the LORD's temple, the king's palace, and the princes to pay off the king of Assyria, it still helped him not at all.

²²Even so, in the time of his distress he — that same king Ahaz — transgressed yet more against the LORD; ²³for he offered sacrifice to the gods of Damascus, which had attacked him, reasoning, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria are those who have helped them, it is to them I will sacrifice, so they may help me."^b But they proved, in fact, to be the cause of his

downfall and of all Israel. ²⁴Moreover, after Ahaz had collected the utensils of God's temple, he cut up those utensils from the house of God and closed up the doors of the LORD's temple. He also made altars in every corner of Jerusalem. ²⁵Indeed, in every city throughout Judah he made high places for sacrificing to other gods, provoking the LORD, the God of his fathers. ²⁶Now the rest of his affairs, and all his ways, from first to last, see, they are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷So Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, but they did not bring him to the tombs of the kings of Israel. Then his son Hezekiah became king in his place.

725 B.C.

29 HEZEKIAH BECAME KING WHEN he was 25 years old, and he remained king in Jerusalem for 29 years; his mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. ²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD according to all that David his father had done.

³In his first year as king, in the first month, he opened the doors of the LORD's house and repaired them. ⁴He also brought in the priests and the Levites, assembling them at the open space to the east, ⁵and said to them, "Listen to me, O Levites! Sanctify yourselves now, and sanctify the temple of the LORD, the God of your fathers, taking away the unclean things from the holy place. ⁶For our fathers have broken faith and have done wicked things in the eyes of the LORD our God by leaving Him. They have turned away their faces from the LORD's dwelling place and have turned their backs. ⁷They have even closed the doors of the porch and extinguished the lamps; they have failed to burn incense offerings and to offer the burnt offering in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸Consequently, the LORD's

x) For medicinal purposes, as oil [Isa. 1:6], or wine [Luke 10:34], or salve [Rev. 3:18] could be used. y) The situation described here, Israel suffering defeat at the hands of Edom and the Philistines, fits the prophecies of Joel 3:4 and Obadiah:10. These two prophets could then be dated at 735 B.C. Isaiah warned Ahaz to trust God [Isa. 7:9], but Ahaz relied on Assyria, to his own regret. z) Not of the northern kingdom, but as in vs. 27, of Israelites in Judah.

a) Supposed to be an ally [vs. 16], spelled Tiglath-pileser [III, 745-727 B.C., in II Kings 15:29; 16:7]. b) Purely selfish reasoning which purposely ignores God's conditions of righteousness, prerequisite to blessing.

anger has come down on Judah and Jerusalem, and He has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. ⁹Look! It is because of this that our fathers have fallen by the sword and our sons, our daughters, and our wives are in captivity. ¹⁰Now then, it is in my heart to enter into a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, that His fierce anger may be diverted from us. ¹¹So now, my sons, be not negligent, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him to serve Him, to be His ministers and to offer sacrifice."

¹²Then these Levites stood up, from the descendants of the Kohathites: Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah; from the sons of Merari: Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; and from the Gershonites: Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah. ¹³From the sons of Elizaphan: Shimri and Jeuel; from the sons of Asaph: Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴from the sons of Heman: Jehuel and Shimei; and from the sons of Jeduthun: Shemaiah and Uzziel. ¹⁵These, in turn, summoned their brothers, sanctified themselves, and went in to cleanse the LORD's temple according to the king's command by the words of the LORD. ¹⁶The priests went into the inside of the LORD's house to cleanse it, bringing all that was unclean which they found in the temple of the LORD out into the court of the LORD's house, from which place the Levites took it out to the brook Kidron. ¹⁷Having begun to sanctify it on the first day of the first month, they reached the porch of the LORD on the eighth day of the month, a total of eight days for sanctifying the house of the LORD, finishing on the sixteenth day of the first month. ¹⁸Then they went in to King Hezekiah and reported, "We have cleansed the entire house of the LORD, including the altar for the burnt offerings with all its utensils and the table

for the showbread with all its utensils. ¹⁹All the utensils, too, which King Ahaz in his unfaithfulness had set aside while he was king, we have put in order and sanctified. There they are in front of the LORD's altar."

²⁰Early in the morning King Hezekiah called together the princes of the city and went up to the LORD's temple. ²¹They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs,^e and seven he-goats as a sin offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah. He ordered the sons of Aaron, the priests, to offer these on the LORD's altar.^f ²²So they killed the cattle, and the priests took the blood and sprinkled it toward the altar; then they killed the rams and sprinkled the blood toward the altar; then they killed the lambs and sprinkled that blood toward the altar. ²³Next, they brought the he-goats near for the sin offering before the king and the assembly and laid their hands on them. ²⁴The priests then killed them and made a sin offering with their blood on the altar to atone for all Israel, because the king had ordered that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be for all Israel.

²⁵He had stationed the Levites at the LORD's temple with cymbals, with lyres, and with harps, according to David's orders,^g together with Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet, for the order had come from the LORD's hand through His prophets.^h ²⁶So as the Levites stood with the Davidic instruments and the priests with the trumpets, ²⁷Hezekiah gave orders to offer up the burnt offering on the altar. At the time of the commencement of the burnt offering, the song of the LORD began, with the trumpets and on the instruments of David king of Israel. ²⁸Thus, as all the congregation worshiped, the song was pouring forth and the trumpeters were sounding; all this continued until the burnt offering had been completed.

c) The first six men are listed according to their descent from Kohath, Merari, and Gershom, Levi's three sons. Elizaphan is of the Kohath line [Num. 3:30], and Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun [Ethan] are the leaders of the Levitic musicians from the families of Gershom, Korah, and Merari, respectively.

d) Both the temple and the porch (court). e) For burnt offerings.

f) Not on any false altars as those of Ahaz [ch. 28:24].

g) Refers to I Chron. 15:16.

h) This states a principle of inspiration: God, the primary source, speaks through an agent — prophet, writer, king, etc. [as in Amos 3:7; Acts 1:16; Heb. 1:1].

²⁹Again at the conclusion of the burnt offering, the king and all those present with him bowed down and worshiped. ³⁰Then King Hezekiah and the princes ordered the Levites to sing praises to the LORD in the words of David, and of Asaph¹ the seer; so they sang joyful praises while they¹ bowed down and worshiped.

³¹Then Hezekiah spoke out, "Now that you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the LORD's temple." So the congregation brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and everyone so inclined brought burnt offerings. ³²The number of burnt offerings which the congregation brought was 70 cattle, 100 rams, and 200 lambs; all these were for burnt offerings to the LORD. ³³The consecrated items, moreover, totaled 600 cattle and 3000 sheep. ³⁴But there were not enough priests, so that they could not skin all the burnt offerings; therefore their fellow tribesmen, the Levites, came to their aid until the work was accomplished, or until more priests had sanctified themselves; for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests were.^k

³⁵With the many burnt offerings was the fat of the peace offerings, also the liquid offerings which accompanied the burnt offerings. Thus the service in the LORD's temple was re-established. ³⁶And Hezekiah rejoiced with all the people over God's preparation of the people; for the thing happened suddenly.

725 B.C.

30 HEZEKIAH SENT WORD TO ALL Israel and Judah and even wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh inviting them to come to the LORD's temple at Jerusalem for the observance of the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel. ²The king, his princes, and the whole assembly at Jerusalem, had decided to keep the Passover in the sec-

ond month,¹ ³for they had not been able to observe it in its time because not enough priests had sanctified themselves and the people had not assembled at Jerusalem. ⁴This decision seemed proper in the king's eyes and in the eyes of the whole assembly. ⁵So they decreed to dispatch heralds through all Israel, from Beer-sheba to Dan, that they come and keep the pass-over to the LORD God of Israel in Jerusalem; for they had not, in any number, observed it as it was prescribed.

⁶So the couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the hand of the king and his princes, and according to the king's command they proclaimed, "Sons of Israel! Return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel! Then will He return to the remainder of you who have been left by the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷Be not like your fathers or like your brothers, who transgressed against the LORD, the God of their fathers. For, as you can see, He turned them over to desolation. ⁸Now then, do not stiffen your necks like your fathers did, but yield to the LORD and attend His sanctuary which He has sanctified forever. Serve the LORD your God, that His fierce anger may be diverted from you. ⁹If you return to the LORD, your brothers and sons will gain favor with their captors so that they may return to this land. For the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate and will not turn away His face from you, if you return to Him."

¹⁰So the couriers traveled from city to city in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and on to Zebulun. But people made fun of them and mocked them. ¹¹Even so, certain men from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun did humble themselves^m and came to Jerusalem. ¹²God's hand also moved in Judah to give them one heart to observe the orders of the king and of the princes by the word of the LORD.

i) The two chief authors of our book of Psalms. Asaph was David's appointee for the regular praising of God with music [1 Chron. 16:5,37]. j) Everyone else.

k) Neither the Levites nor the priests had for long periods received sufficient support from tithes to sustain their lives and that of their families.

l) Rather than the first month, as prescribed in the law [Ex. 12:18], because the temple was in process of being cleansed [ch. 29:17]. Such an exception was allowed by Num. 9:9-11.

m) Access to God's fellowship always involves self-humbling; note Isa. 57:15; Luke 18:13,14.

¹³So there assembled at Jerusalem a huge throng to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month — it was an exceptionally large assembly. ¹⁴They set out and did away with the altars that had stood in Jerusalem,ⁿ and they removed all the incense altars, dumping them in the brook Kidron.

¹⁵On the fourteenth day of the second month, they killed the Passover. The priests and the Levites, having been put to shame, sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings into the LORD's temple. ¹⁶They stood at their posts according to their assignment prescribed by the Law of Moses, the man of God, and the priests sprinkled the blood received from the hand of the Levites.

¹⁷Since there were many in the congregation who had not sanctified themselves, the Levites took over the killing of the Passover for all who were not clean, to sanctify them to the LORD. ¹⁸For many of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves. Nevertheless, because Hezekiah had prayed on their behalf, they ate the Passover — though not as written. He had prayed, "The good LORD pardon everyone ¹⁹who has set his heart to seek God, the LORD, the God of his fathers, though it be not according to the purification rules of the sanctuary."^o

²⁰The LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

²¹The people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread for seven days with great joy. The Levites and the priests were also giving praise to the LORD day after day on loud instruments to the LORD, ²²and Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all those Levites who displayed good skill for the LORD. So they ate that appointed feast for seven days,^p sacrificing peace offerings and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

²³Then all the congregation decided to observe seven more days, and they

did observe those seven days joyfully.

²⁴For Hezekiah king of Judah had made 1000 young bulls and 7000 sheep available for the congregation; the princes too had donated 1000 bulls and 10,000 sheep for the congregation, and a large number of the priests had sanctified themselves. ²⁵So they rejoiced, the whole congregation of Judah, the priests and Levites, all the congregation who had come from Israel, and the foreign residents,^q both those who came from the land of Israel and those who resided in Judah. ²⁶The rejoicing^r in Jerusalem was great indeed; for there had not been anything like this in Jerusalem since the day of Solomon son of David, king of Israel. ²⁷In conclusion, the Levitical priests stood up and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, for their prayer reached to His holy dwelling place, to heaven.

725 B.C.

31 AFTER ALL THIS WAS ENDED, all the Israelites who had been present went out to the cities of Judah, demolished the pillars, chopped down the shame images, tore down the high places and altars from all Judah and Benjamin, and even in Ephraim and Manasseh until they had finished; then all the men of Israel went home, each to his own property and city.

²Hezekiah then re-established the divisions of the priests and Levites according to their groupings, each man in accordance with his service, both of the priests and of the Levites: that is, for burnt offerings and peace offerings, and to minister and give thanks and praise in the gates of the LORD's camp.^s

³The king's portion from his private fortune for the burnt offerings, namely for the morning and evening sacrifices, and the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths, new moons, and set feasts, was according to that written in the Law of the LORD.^t ⁴And he ordered the people who lived in Jerusalem to contribute their portion^u for the priests

n) Set up by King Ahaz [ch. 28:24], as were most other objects of Hezekiah's cleanup.

o) Clearly stressing the "spirit of the law," — not merely the letter; a picture of the future King's constant emphasis [as in Matt. 23:23; Luke 14:1-6].

p) As specified in Ex. 12:16-18. q) Sanctioned since the very first Passover [Ex. 12:49].

r) Genuine joy accompanies right relationship to God [note Ps. 16:11; Acts 8:8, 39].

s) An old phrase, applied to God's dwelling as in I Chron. 9:19, here also refers to the temple.

t) In Num. 28 and 29. u) Prescribed in the Law [as in Ex. 23:19 and Lev. 27:30-33].

and Levites, that they might stand firm^v in the Law of the LORD. ⁵When this order had been circulated, the men of Israel brought generously of the first fruits of grain, new wine, oil, honey, and all their field crops; indeed, they brought an abundant tithe of everything. ⁶The children of Israel and Judah who resided in the cities of Judah also brought their tithe of cattle and sheep and the tithe of the holy things consecrated to the LORD their God; they brought and piled them up in heaps. ⁷In the third month they began to pile up the heaps, and in the seventh month they were finished. ⁸When Hezekiah and his princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel; ⁹and Hezekiah inquired of the priests and Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰Azariah the high priest of the house of Zadok answered him, "Since contributions began to come in to the LORD's temple, we have eaten to the full,^w and there has been great superabundance; for the LORD has blessed His people, and this large quantity is left over."

¹¹Hezekiah then ordered that they prepare rooms in the LORD's house; and when they had made them ready, ¹²they scrupulously brought in the contributions, tithes, and dedicated things. Conaniah the Levite was appointed as officer over them, with Shimei his brother as assistant. ¹³Appointed under charge of Conaniah and his brother Shimei, by order of King Hezekiah and Azariah prince of God's temple, were Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah. ¹⁴Kore son of Imnah the Levite, the doorkeeper toward the east, was appointed over the voluntary offerings that were presented to God, to distribute those contributions of the LORD and the most holy things. ¹⁵Under him were Eden, Miniamin, Ieshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, faithful men for making allo-

cations in the priests' cities to their brothers by divisions, to great and small, ¹⁶with the exception of all those males on the genealogical register from three years old and above, who went to the LORD's temple for their daily portions, while serving by their assignments according to their divisions.

¹⁷In the genealogical register the priests were listed according to their clans and the Levites from twenty years old and above, according to their ministries by their divisions. ¹⁸The allocations were for the rest of those of the register, including all their little ones, wives, sons, and daughters, for the whole congregation. For by their faithful service they were sanctifying themselves in this matter of the holy things. ¹⁹As regards the sons of Aaron, the priests, in their city-suburb fields, men were appointed by name for each city to give out portions to every male of the priests, and to all those registered of the Levites.

²⁰Hezekiah acted in like manner throughout all Judah and did the good, the right, and the faithful thing before the LORD his God. ²¹In every task which he undertook for the service of the house of God, for the Law, and for the commandment in seeking his God, he did it with all his heart and was successful.

701 B.C.

32 AFTER THESE EVENTS AND these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah,^x encamping against the fortified cities, which he proposed to take for himself. ²When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come with intentions of waging war against Jerusalem, ³he consulted with his princes and brave men to stop up the waters of the springs that were outside the city. They aided him ⁴by getting together many people who stopped up all the springs and the stream which ran

v) Subsistence for the priests and Levites depended on the gifts of the people [Num. 18:12, 21, 24]. Therefore, in time of backsliding, the priests and Levites were tempted to use other means to gain a living; for example, by hiring out to a family or clan [Judg. 17:10; 18:19]. A call for proper tithing was a near essential for a consecrated priesthood.

w) Note on vs. 4 indicates close connection of the offering with the priests' subsistence.

x) The siege by Sennacherib and Hezekiah's sickness and pride are mentioned in detail in II Kings 18-20 and Isa. 36-39; much corresponds verbatim.

through the middle of the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find good water supplies?"^y ⁵He augmented his strength by rebuilding all the wall that had been broken down and adding to the towers and outer wall. He also reinforced the Millo^z in the city of David and provided a good supply of weapons and shields. ⁶He set combat leaders over the people and, gathering them at the open place near the city gate, he spoke encouragingly to them, ⁷"Be strong! Stand firm! Be not afraid or disheartened because of the king of Assyria, or in the face of all the throng that is with him, for there are more with us than with him."^a ⁸With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

⁹After this, Sennacherib king of Assyria while he himself remained at Lachish with all his imperial force, sent men to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah and to all Judeans who were at Jerusalem, saying, ¹⁰"This is what Sennacherib the king of Assyria has said: 'On what are you relying, that you remain in this besieged Jerusalem?' ¹¹Has not Hezekiah deceived you, only to give you over to death through famine and thirst, by saying, 'The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria.'?" ¹²Is not this same Hezekiah the very one who got rid of His high places and His altars^b and ordered Judah and Jerusalem, "Before one altar you are to worship, and on it you are to offer sacrifice."?" ¹³Do you not realize what I have done, both I and my fathers, to all the people of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of those countries able by any means to deliver their land out of my hand? ¹⁴Who, among all the gods of those nations which my fathers

wiped out, could save his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? ¹⁶Now then, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or persuade you this way. Do not believe him, for there is not a god of any nation or kingdom able to deliver his people from my hand, or from the hand of my fathers. Surely then, your God cannot deliver you from my hand."

¹⁶His servants raged still more against the LORD God and against Hezekiah His servant. ¹⁷In addition, he wrote letters reproaching the LORD, the God of Israel, speaking against Him, "Just as the gods of the nations of other lands could not deliver their people from my hand, so also Hezekiah's God cannot deliver His people from my hand." ¹⁸They also shouted loudly in the Jewish language to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and demoralize them, so that they might capture the city. ¹⁹In this way they made reference to the God of Jerusalem as being like the gods of the people of the earth, the work of men's hands.^c

²⁰On this account both Hezekiah the king and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed and cried out to heaven. ²¹Therefore the LORD sent an angel who annihilated all the strong fighting men, the officers and commanders of the camp of the king of Assyria, so that he returned to his home country in disgrace. There, as he entered the temple of his god, certain of his own offspring assassinated him with the sword. ²²So it was that the LORD saved Hezekiah and the residents of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all; for He gave them rest on all sides. ²³Many were then bringing gifts to Jerusalem for the LORD, along with valuable presents for Hezekiah king of

y) Excellent military strategy in arid terrain.

z) A particular stronghold within Jerusalem used by David [II Sam. 5:9] and Solomon [I Kings 11:27], and apparently part of the old Jebusite stronghold [II Sam. 5:7].

a) Elisha voiced similar assurance in II Kings 6:16; applied for the individual Christian in I John 4:4.

b) The God-inspired reforms of Hezekiah, although according to Deut. 12:2-11, were considered iconoclastic and "narrow" by pagan Sennacherib.

c) Since such "gods" are only man's handicraft [Deut. 4:28], Scripture heaps devastating ridicule on idols and idol-worshippers [as in Ps. 115:4-8; Isa. 44:9-17; Jer. 10:3-5].

Judah, for he was exalted in the eyes of all nations from then on.^d

711 B.C.

²⁴Now in those days Hezekiah became critically ill, but after praying to the LORD, He spoke to him and gave him a sign.^e ²⁵Hezekiah, however, failed to respond adequately to the benefits that had been shown him; for his heart grew proud. Therefore indignation came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶Then Hezekiah humbled himself regarding his heart's pride, both he and the residents of Jerusalem; consequently, the LORD's indignation did not come on them during Hezekiah's lifetime.

²⁷Hezekiah had so much wealth and honor that he made himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and all sorts of precious articles, ²⁸as well as storage places for crops of grain, wine, and oil; stalls for all kinds of cattle and herds and flocks for the stalls. ²⁹He procured cities for himself and abundant possessions, in flocks and herds, for God gave him much property. ³⁰This same Hezekiah stopped the upper outlet of the waters of the Gihon and turned them straight down along the west side of the city of David.^f Indeed, Hezekiah was successful in all his undertakings. ³¹So, then, when ambassadors from the princes of Babylon were sent to him to enquire about the sign which had occurred in the land,^g God left him to test him, to find out all that was in his heart.

³²Now the rest of Hezekiah's affairs and his acts of faithful love, see, they are recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah^h son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ³³So Hezekiah went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the slope of the tombs of the sons of David. All Judah and the residents of Jerusalem honored him at his death. His son

Manasseh became king in his place.

696 B.C.

33 MANASSEH WAS TWELVE YEARS old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for fifty-five years. ²But he did what was wicked in the eyes of the LORD, like the detestable practices of the nations which the LORD had dispossessed before the children of Israel. ³For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had torn down; he reared up altars to the Baalim and constructed shame images;ⁱ he rendered worship to all the host^j of heaven and served them. ⁴He built altars in the very temple of the LORD about which the LORD had said: My name shall be in Jerusalem forever.^k ⁵He constructed altars to all the host^j of heaven in the two courts of the LORD's house. ⁶He made his sons pass through the fire^l in the valley of the son of Hinnom; he practiced spiritism, fortune-telling, and sorcery, as well as encouraging mediums and wizards. He multiplied evil practices in the LORD's eyes and thus provoked Him to anger. ⁷He even set up the image of the idol he had made inside the temple of God, of which God had stated to David and Solomon, his son: In this house, here in Jerusalem, which I chose from all the tribes of Israel, I will place My name forever^m and I will not again cause the foot of Israel to stir from the land that I have appointed for your fathers, provided they observe to do all that I have commanded them in all the Law and regulations and judgments by the hand of Moses.ⁿ ⁹But Manasseh led Judah and the residents of Jerusalem astray into evil beyond that of the nations which the LORD had destroyed before the people of Israel.

648 B.C.

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, but they would not

d) Practical example that "righteousness exalts a nation," [Prov. 14:34].

e) The sickness and the sign of the sundial are recorded in Isa. 38.

f) This and the "conduit" of II Kings 20:20 refer to the remarkable tunnel which connects the Virgin's Well with the Pool of Siloam. This tunnel has provided us with an interesting piece of archaeological evidence. "The Siloam Inscription," on the right wall of the tunnel, tells the story of the boring through to complete the conduit.

g) The sign of the sundial, recorded in Isa. 38:7-8; II Kings 20:8-11.

h) The portion of Isaiah is here spoken of as being in the frequently alluded to [ch. 16:11], but now lost "book of the kings of Judah and Israel."

i) Explained in ch. 14:3 note.

j) Multitude of stars, as in "starry host of heaven"; such worship was expressly forbidden in Deut. 4:19; 17:3.

k) Cited from ch. 6:6. l) See ch. 28:3 note. m) See ch. 7:16. n) II Sam. 7:10.

listen. ¹¹So the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria. They seized Manasseh with hooks, binding him in double fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. ¹²There in his distress, he appealed to the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. ¹³Because he prayed to Him, He^o was entreated by him and granted his request by restoring him to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh acknowledged that the LORD indeed is God.

¹⁴Afterwards he built up the outer wall of the city of David westward to Gihon in the valley and toward the fish gate, and he surrounded the citadel hill, making it very high. He stationed combat leaders in all the fortified cities of Judah. ¹⁵He removed the foreign gods and the image from the LORD's temple, all the altars too which he had built on the hill of the LORD's temple and in Jerusalem; he dumped them outside the city. ¹⁶He further set up the LORD's altar and sacrificed on it peace offerings and thank offerings and ordered Judah to serve the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁷Nevertheless the people still continued sacrificing at the high places,^p although it was only to the LORD their God.

¹⁸Now the rest of the affairs of Manasseh, his prayer to his God^q and the words of the prophets who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, notice, they are in the records of the kings of Israel. ¹⁹His prayer, His being entreated of him,^r all his sin and rebellion, and the locations where he built high places and erected shame images^s and idols before he humbled himself — see, these are written among the words of the seer. ²⁰So Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in his own house. Amon his son became king in his place.

641 B.C.

²¹Amon was twenty-two years old

when he became king and remained king in Jerusalem for two years. ²²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as Manasseh his father had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the images which his father Manasseh had made^t and served them. ²³He, however, did not humble himself before the LORD as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; instead, Amon multiplied his guilt. ²⁴His servants conspired against him and assassinated him in his palace. ²⁵But the people of the land executed all the conspirators against King Amon, and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

639 B.C.

34 JOSIAH WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem thirty-one years. ²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, for he walked in

631 B.C.

the ways of David his father, not deviating to the right or to the left. ³In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began seeking the

627 B.C.

God of his father David. In the twelfth year he began to clean up Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, shame images, and carved and molten images. ⁴In his presence they tore down the altars to the Baalim; the incense stands set high above them he chopped down and the shame images and the carved and molten images he broke in pieces and ground up, scattering them over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵He burned the bones of the priests on their own altars;^u so he cleaned up Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶Even in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their surrounding ruins,^v he broke down the altars and shame images. ⁷When he had beaten the images to powder and chopped down all the incense stands in all the land of

^o) God.

^p) The pitfall also of better kings, for example Asa [I Kings 15:14], and Solomon [I Kings 3:3].

^q) This verse suggested the "Prayer of Manasses," a later false writing found in the Apocrypha.

^r) That is, how God heard his prayer. ^s) See ch. 14:3 note.

^t) Re-erected after Manasseh's reform which, it seems, was not thoroughgoing; sin leaves scars which cannot be removed.

^u) So was fulfilled the prophecy to Jeroboam, the founder of the false altars [I Kings 13:2].

^v) The cities of the northern kingdom were, to a large extent, allowed to go to ruin after the fall of Israel to Assyria.

Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

621 B.C.

⁸In the eighteenth year of his reign, as he was cleaning up the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah, mayor of the city, and Joah son of Joahas, the recorder, to repair the temple of the LORD his God. ⁹They went to Hilkiah the high priest and turned over the money brought to the house of God which the doorkeepers, the Levites, had gathered from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim and from the whole remnant of Israel, and from all Judah, Benjamin, and the residents of Jerusalem. ¹⁰They, in turn, gave it to those doing the supervisory work in the temple of the LORD; and those doing the work, who were at work in the house of the LORD, put it toward repairing and strengthening the house. ¹¹That is, they handed it to the carpenters and builders to purchase quarried stones and lumber for couplings and to furnish beams for the buildings which the kings of Judah had abandoned to ruin. ¹²The men worked on the job conscientiously. Over them as foremen were Jahath and Obadiah, Levites of the descendants of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam of the descendants of the Kohathites, to supervise. All the Levites skilled on musical instruments ¹³were both in charge of the burden bearers and assigned as foremen over all the workers for each job. Some of the Levites served as scribes, as officers and as doorkeepers.

¹⁴Now as they were bringing out the money which had been brought to the LORD's temple, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the Law of the LORD given through Moses. ¹⁵Hilkiah brought it to the attention of Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the Law in the LORD's house." So Hilkiah turned the book over to Shaphan. ¹⁶Shaphan in turn brought the book to the king when he reported to the king again, saying, "Everything that was made your servants' responsibility, they have accomplished; ¹⁷for they have taken

out the money found in the LORD's house and have turned it over to the supervisors and the workers on the job." ¹⁸It was then that Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest gave me a book," and Shaphan read from it to the king.

¹⁹When the king heard these words of the Law,^w he tore his robes. ²⁰The king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, ²¹"Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for the remnant of Israel and Judah concerning the words of the book which has been found. For the LORD's indignation is great which is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD to do according to all that is written in this book."

²²So Hilkiah and the others who were from the king went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, Hasrah's son, keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in the second quarter^x of Jerusalem, and they spoke to her as instructed. ²³She answered them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: Tell this to the man who sent you to me. ²⁴The LORD has spoken: See, I am bringing calamity against this place and against its residents, even all the curses written in the book which was read before the king of Judah. ²⁵Because they have abandoned Me and have sacrificed to other gods so as to provoke Me with all the works of their hands,^y therefore My indignation will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched. ²⁶But concerning the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, this you shall tell him. This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: About these words which you have heard, ²⁷because your heart was receptive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its residents and because you humbled yourself before Me and tore your robes and wept before Me, there-

w) This illustrates "by the law is the knowledge of sin", [Rom. 3:20]. From Shaphan's reading of the Mosaic Law [Gen. through Deut.], it was probably Deut. 28-30 which brought about Josiah's immediate reaction. x) District.

y) A phrase often used to refer with contempt to idols [as in Deut. 4:28; ch. 32:19].

fore I also have heard you. The LORD has spoken. ²⁸See, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; surely, your eyes shall not see all the punishment which I will bring on this place and on its inhabitants." So they brought back word to the king.

²⁹Then the king sent, and summoning all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, ³⁰the king went up to the LORD's temple accompanied by all the men of Judah, the residents of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites, and all the people, great and small. There he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant, which had been found in the LORD's temple. ³¹Then the king stood at his place and renewed the covenant before the LORD: to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments, testimonies, and statutes with all his heart and with all his soul; to observe the words of the covenant written in this book. ³²Also he had all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin accept it; and the residents of Jerusalem did according to this covenant with God, the God of their fathers. ³³So Josiah got rid of all the detestable things from the lands belonging to the people of Israel. He also led all who were in Israel to serve the LORD their God. During his lifetime they did not turn away from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

620 B.C.

35 ¹JOSIAH KEPT THE PASSOVER TO the LORD in Jerusalem, and they killed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. ²He set the priests at their tasks and encouraged them for the service of the LORD's temple. ³Then he ordered the Levites who taught in all Israel and were dedicated to the LORD, "Put the holy ark in the temple which Solomon, David's son, king of Israel, built. It is no longer your responsibility to carry it on your shoulders. Minister now to the LORD your God and to His people Israel, ⁴and prepare yourselves by your clans,

according to your divisions as written by David^z king of Israel and as written by Solomon his son. ⁵Stand in the holy place with the Levitical clan divisions corresponding to the groupings of the clans of your fellow tribesmen, the lay people, ⁶and then kill the Passover. Sanctify yourselves and prepare for your brothers to do according to the word of the LORD by the agency of Moses."

⁷Josiah made a contribution of flocks of lambs and kids for the people. The entire amount was for the Passover sacrifices in behalf of all those present and numbered 30,000^a besides 3000 cattle; these were from the king's own property. ⁸His officials also donated willingly for the people, priests, and Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, leaders in God's temple, contributed 2600^a for the Passover sacrifice of the priests, as well as 300 cattle. ⁹Conaniah, with Shemaiah and Nethanel his brothers, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, princes of the Levites, donated for the Levites 5000 Passover lambs, as well as 500 cattle.

¹⁰The service, therefore, having been made ready, the priests stood at their posts and the Levites by their divisions according to the king's orders. ¹¹These killed the Passover; the priests sprinkled blood as it was passed to them, and the Levites did the skinning. ¹²Then they separated the burnt offerings to distribute them by divisions to the clans of the lay people, so they might offer them to the LORD as it is written^b in the book of Moses. They did this also with the cattle. ¹³So they roasted the Passover in the fire according to the ordinance, and the other consecrated offerings they boiled in the pots, kettles, and pans, and then brought them speedily to the whole group of the people. ¹⁴After that they made preparation both for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, Aaron's sons, were offering up burnt offerings and fat offerings until nighttime; therefore the Levites prepared both for themselves and for the priests,

z) Preserved, at least partially, in I Chron. 23-26.

a) Lambs and goats as distinguished from cattle — calves, heifers, and bullocks.

b) Compare Hezekiah's Passover [ch. 30:18].

the sons of Aaron. ¹⁵Also the singers, the sons of Asaph, stayed at their posts according to the orders of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the doorkeepers stayed by each door; they did not need to leave their stations because their fellow tribesmen, the Levites, made preparation for them.

¹⁶So all the service of the LORD was prepared on that day according to the command of King Josiah; that is, the observance of the Passover and the offering up of burnt offerings on the LORD's altar. ¹⁷The men of Israel who were present there observed the Passover at that time together with the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. ¹⁸There had never been held such a Passover in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet; for none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah did, involving the priests and Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the residents of Jerusalem. ¹⁹It was in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign that this Passover was held.

608 B.C.

²⁰After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Neco king of Egypt came for battle at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to engage him. ²¹He^c sent messengers to him saying, "What do I have to do with you, king of Judah, for it is not against you that I have come up this day, but against the power with which I am at war,^d and God has commanded me to hurry. Quit interfering with God, who is with me, that He may not destroy you." ²²However, Josiah did not turn away from him, but went to battle against him disguised,^e for he did not listen to the words of Neco which really were from the mouth of God but went to fight in the valley of Megiddo. ²³The archers shot at King

Josiah with the result that the king called out to his servants, "Take me away, for I am gravely wounded." ²⁴So his servants took him out of the chariot and put him into the second chariot which he had and brought him to Jerusalem. There he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers, and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. ²⁵Jeremiah composed a lament over Josiah and all the men and women singers spoke about Josiah in their lamentations as they do to this day, for they made them a standing custom in Israel. Note that they are written in the lamentations.^f ²⁶Now the rest of the affairs of Josiah and his acts of faithful love in accord with what is written in the Law of the LORD, ²⁷and his affairs, from first to last, see, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

608 B.C.

36 THEN THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king in Jerusalem in the place of his father. ²Jehoahaz^g was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for three months. ³Then the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem and put the land under tribute for \$200,000 in silver and \$30,000 in gold.^h ⁴The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakimⁱ king over Judah and Jerusalem, changing his name to Jehoiakim; and Neco took his brother Jehoahaz and brought him to Egypt.

⁵Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for eleven years, but he did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD his God. ⁶Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon advanced against him and bound him in brass chains to take him to Babylon.^j ⁷Nebuchadrezzar also took part of the utensils of the LORD's temple to Babylon,

c) Neco. d) Neco was attempting to defeat Babylon, chief contender for world power following the decline of Assyrian supremacy.

e) Ahab also went disguised into his final and fatal battle [ch. 18:29].

f) These lamentations, or dirges, were well known at the time this account was written, but should not be confused with our book of Lamentations which was composed after the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem.

g) Short form of Jehoahaz, as Joram is of Jehoram [ch. 22:5 note], and Micah of Micaiah [ch. 18:14 note].

h) Heb., "100 talents of silver and a talent of gold," 1 talent of silver equals \$2,000; 1 talent of gold equals \$30,000. i) Older brother of Jehoahaz; compare vs. 2 and 5.

j) Neco was defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadrezzar who, as part of his tactics against occupied Judah, took Daniel and others captive to Babylon.

depositing them in his temple in Babylon. ⁸Now the rest of the affairs of Jehoiakim, his detestable practices and the things found against him, see, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.

597 B.C.

⁹Jehoiachin was eighteen* years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for three months and ten days; but he did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

¹⁰At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadrezzar sent to bring him to Babylon, with the precious utensils from the LORD's temple. He appointed his uncle¹ Zedekiah as king over Judah and Jerusalem.

¹¹Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he remained king in Jerusalem for eleven years.

¹²But he did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. ¹³Besides, he rebelled against King Nebuchadrezzar, who had made him swear by God. He stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁴All the leaders too of the priests and people acted most unfaithfully by taking part in all the detestable practices used by the nations; and they desecrated the LORD's temple which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.

¹⁵Nevertheless the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by the hand of His messengers, rising early and sending them,^m for He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶But they repeatedly mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and made sport of His prophets

until the LORD's indignation was stirred up against His people beyond remedy.

586 B.C.

¹⁷Accordingly He sent up against them the king of the Chaldeans who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and did not spare young man or maiden, old man or very aged. He gave them all into his hand. ¹⁸All the utensils of God's temple, large and small, and the treasures of the LORD's temple and of the king and his princes—all these he took to Babylon. ¹⁹They burned the temple of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, setting fire to all the palaces and destroying all its precious utensils. ²⁰As for the rest, who were spared from the sword, he took them captive to Babylon, where they became servants to him and to his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. ²¹This was to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah,ⁿ until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths; for as long as it lay desolate it had a Sabbath-rest, fulfilling seventy years.

538 B.C.

²²In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah,^o the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia that he should proclaim in all his kingdom and even by writing: ²³"This is what Cyrus king of Persia has said, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has commissioned me to build Him a temple in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of any of His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.'"^p

k) "Eighteen" is given by several manuscripts and agrees with II Kings 24:8, though the majority of manuscripts read "eight."

l) Heb., "brother" in the sense of male relative; in this case, it means "uncle," according to II Kings 24:17.

m) We would say, early and late, or time and again. Jeremiah repeatedly uses the phrase to describe the urgency of God's warning through the prophets (as in Jer. 25:4; 44:4); a brief summary of the message may be seen in Jer. 35:15. n) See Jer. 29:10.

o) See Jer. 25:12.

p) These last two verses appear again almost identically as the introduction to the book of Ezra, which continues the same narrative. Is Ezra perhaps the writer of the books of Chronicles?

EZRA

538-537 B.C.

1 IN THE FIRST YEAR^a OF CYRUS, king of Persia, in order that what the LORD had predicted through Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD aroused the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, to proclaim throughout all his kingdom, both orally and in writing: ²"Thus has Cyrus, king of Persia, declared: 'The LORD, the God of heaven, who has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, has directed me to build a house for Him in Jerusalem in Judah. ³Therefore anyone among you belonging to His people, let him return to Jerusalem in Judah and let him build the house for the LORD, the God of Israel—He is God^b—in Jerusalem; and may his God be with him! ⁴Also let assistance be rendered to every survivor,^c wherever he may be located, by his neighbors in the granting to him of silver, gold, animals, and miscellaneous articles in addition to a free-will offering for the house of God in Jerusalem.'"

⁵So the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, also the priests and the Levites, all from these whom God so inclined, made preparations for going up to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. ⁶And all their neighbors assisted them with articles of silver and gold, with animals, with precious things and with miscellaneous items in addition to a free-will offering. ⁷Also Cyrus

the king brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and had placed in the house of his gods; ⁸these did Cyrus, king of Persia, direct Mithredath, the treasurer, to bring forward and count out to Sheshbazzar,^d prince of Judah. ⁹And this is their number: 30 gold and 1000 silver dishes, 29 knives, ¹⁰30 gold bowls,^e 410 silver bowls of another type, and 1000 other vessels. ¹¹All the vessels of gold and of silver were 5400.^f All of these did Sheshbazzar take along when they of the captivity trekked from Babylon to Jerusalem.

537 B.C.

2 NOW THESE ARE THE SONS OF THE province^g who came out of the captivity to Babylonia which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had imposed upon them, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own city. ²They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel: ³The sons of Parosh, 2172; ⁴the sons of Shephatiah, 372; ⁵the sons of Arah, 775; ⁶the sons of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, 2812; ⁷the sons of Elam, 1254; ⁸the sons of Zattu, 945; ⁹the sons of Zaccai, 760; ¹⁰the sons of Bani,

a) Recent findings show Cyrus took Babylon in the fall, 539 B.C. b) Or, "He is the God who is in Jerusalem." c) Those, or descendants of those, who had been taken captive. d) Babylonian name for Zerubbabel, cf. 5:14,16.

e) Covered vessels, cf. I Chron. 28:17 and Ezra 8:27 for same word.

f) These fifty-four hundred must include many articles not definitely mentioned. g) Jews.

642; ¹¹the sons of Bebai, 623; ¹²the sons of Azgad, 1222; ¹³the sons of Adonikam, 666; ¹⁴the sons of Bigvai, 2056; ¹⁵the sons of Adin, 454; ¹⁶the sons of Ater of Hezekiah, 98; ¹⁷the sons of Bezai, 323; ¹⁸the sons of Jorah, 112; ¹⁹the sons of Hashum, 223; ²⁰the sons of Gibbar, 95; ²¹the sons of Bethlehem, 123; ²²the men of Netophah, 56; ²³the men of Anathoth, 128; ²⁴the sons of Azmaveth, 42; ²⁵the sons of Kiriatharim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743; ²⁶the sons of Ramah and Geba, 621; ²⁷the men of Michmas, 122; ²⁸the men of Bethel and Ai, 223; ²⁹the sons of Nebo, 52; ³⁰the sons of Magbish, 156; ³¹the sons of the other Elam, 1254; ³²the sons of Harim, 320; ³³the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 725; ³⁴the sons of Jericho, 345; ³⁵the sons of Senaah, 3630.

³⁶The priests: The sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, 973; ³⁷the sons of Immer, 1052; ³⁸the sons of Pashhur, 1247; ³⁹the sons of Harim, 1017.

⁴⁰The Levites: The sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel of the sons of Hodaviah, 74. ⁴¹The singers were the sons of Asaph, ⁴²128. ⁴²The sons of the gatekeepers were the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, in all 139.

⁴³The temple attendants: The sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁵the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub, ⁴⁶the sons of Hagab, the sons of Shamlai, the sons of Hanan, ⁴⁷the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah, ⁴⁸the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam, ⁴⁹the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai, ⁵⁰the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephisim, ⁵¹the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Hamur, ⁵²the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵³the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, ⁵⁴the sons of Nezhiah, and the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁵The sons of Solomon's servants: ¹The sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda, ⁵⁶the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, ⁵⁷the sons of Shephathiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the sons of Ami. ⁵⁸All of the temple attendants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392.

⁵⁹Those who also went out of Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, but who could not show their ancestral houses nor their race to prove that they were of Israel: ⁶⁰The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, 652. ⁶¹Those of the sons of the priests: The sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, and the sons of Barzillai, who married one of the daughters of Barzillai, ¹the Gileadite and then took her family name. ⁶²These sought their names among those recorded in the register, but as they were not found, they were considered polluted and were barred from the priesthood. ⁶³Moreover, the governor^k ordered them to refrain from eating of the most holy things until the priest should stand up with Urim and Thummim.¹

⁶⁴The total number of the group was 42,360 ⁶⁵besides 7337 servants, both men and women, and 200 singers, both men and women. ⁶⁶They had 736 horses, 245 mules, ⁶⁷435 camels, and 6720 asses.

⁶⁸Some of the heads of father's houses, upon their arrival at the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, gave willingly for the house of God, so as to erect it again on its site; ⁶⁹according to their ability they gave a total of 305,000 dollars of gold, 170,000 dollars of silver and 100 priests' garments.

⁷⁰So the priests, the Levites, the common people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple attendants dwelt in their cities, even all Israel in their cities.

537-536 B.C.

3 IN THE SEVENTH MONTH^m, THE children of Israel, now being in their cities, gathered as one man to

h) A chief musician under David. i) A division of temple custodians similar to the temple attendants, cf. v. 43, often mentioned along with them.

j) Cf. II Sam. 17:27; 19:31 f; I Kings 2:7. k) Hebrew "Tirshatha" referring to Zerubbabel.

l) For determining the will of God. m) October, likely the first year of the return, 537 B.C.

Jerusalem. ²Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak, with his fellow-priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, with his brothers, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel so that they might offer burnt-offerings upon it as directed in the law of Moses, the man of God. ³They erected the altar on its base, being afraid of the people of the neighboring lands, after which they offered on it burnt-offerings to the LORD both in the morning and in the evening. ⁴Then they kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is prescribed,ⁿ and the number of daily burnt-offerings as set forth in the law for each day of the Feast,^o and afterwards the continual burnt-offerings and the (offerings) at the new moon and at all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were dedicated, and of all who willingly offered a free-will offering to the LORD. ⁶Beginning with the first day of the seventh month^p they offered the burnt-offerings to the LORD, even though they had not yet laid the foundation of the LORD's temple.

⁷Then they hired masons and carpenters^q and they paid the people of Sidon and Tyre with food, drink, and oil so that they would bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea and down to Joppa in accordance with the permission which Cyrus, king of Persia, had given. ⁸In the second month of the 536-535 B.C.

year following that of their return to the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brothers, the priests and the Levites, along with all who returned from the captivity to Jerusalem, began to build the house of the LORD, having first appointed the Levites who were at least twenty years of age, to superintend the work. ⁹Jeshua with his sons and his brothers and Kadmiel with his sons, all of whom were descendants of

Judah,^r along with the sons of Henadad^s with their sons and their brothers, all Levites, together took the oversight of the workmen of the house of God.

¹⁰When the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they^t appointed the priests, officially clothed, with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals to praise the LORD in accordance with the direction of David, king of Israel. ¹¹They sang responsively in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, saying that He is good because His lovingkindness endures forever toward Israel. Indeed, all the people shouted resoundingly in their praise to the LORD because the foundation of the house of the LORD had been laid. ¹²But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, who were old enough to have seen the first temple, as they looked upon the foundation of this new temple now laid, wept sorely;^u while others raised their voices in shouting for joy. ¹³However, the people could not distinguish between the sound of the shouts of joy and the sound of those who wept because the shouting was so loud that it was heard for a great distance.

535-534 B.C.

4 WHEN THE ENEMIES^v OF JUDAH and Benjamin^w heard that those who had recently returned from captivity were building the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, ²they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' houses and said to them, "We would like to help you build, because we also worship your God and have sacrificed to Him since the day when Esarhaddon,^x king of Assyria, brought us to this country." ³But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the heads of fathers' houses replied to them, "We cannot permit you to help us build the house of our God, but we, ourselves together, will build to the LORD, the God of Israel, in ac-

n) Cf. Lev. 23:34-42; Deut. 16:13-15. o) Cf. Num. 29:12-38. p) Feast of Tabernacles not beginning until the fifteenth day, some fourteen days of burnt-offerings must have preceded it. q) "Masons" here may refer to rougher workmen in both wood and stone, and "carpenters" to finishers in both. r) Not Judah, the son of Jacob, but one called Hodaviah, 2:40. Notice, this Jeshua is another person than mentioned in v. 8. s) Probably three families here, though possibly Henadad was a common ancestor of Jeshua and Kadmiel. t) Refers not to the builders but to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, v. 8. u) This temple would be far less majestic than the earlier one. v) Samaritans, who became enemies. w) Includes all who returned, with most being of these two tribes. x) Reigned 730-668 B.C., son and successor of Sennacherib.

cordance with the order of Cyrus, king of Persia." ⁴Then the inhabitants of the land began to hinder and to bring trouble^y upon the people of Judah in their building; ⁵even hiring counselors to work against them by frustrating their plans, which they continued to do all the days of Cyrus,^z king of Persia, and until the reign of Darius,^a king of Persia.

About 480-460 B.C.

^{6b}Later on, shortly after Ahasuerus^c began to reign, a letter of accusation was written against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. ⁷Also in the days of Artaxerxes,^d king of Persia, a letter was sent by Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and their companions, written in the Aramaic language using Aramaic characters. ⁸Rehum, the governor, and Shimshai, the secretary, penned the letter, it also being against Jerusalem, to Artaxerxes the king. ⁹In addition to Rehum, the governor, and Shimshai, the secretary, others having a part were their companions, the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Shushanchites, the Dehaites, the Elamites ¹⁰and peoples of the other nations whom the famous and honored Asnapper^e brought to and made live in the city of Samaria and neighboring lands west of the River^f and so forth.^g

¹¹This is a copy of the letter which they sent to Artaxerxes the king: "Your servants, the men on this side of the River, and so forth."^h ¹²Be it known to the king that the Jews which came from you to our territory, to Jerusalem, are building that rebellious and bad city. They are erecting its walls and diggingⁱ its foundations. ¹³Also be it known to the king that if this city is built and its walls are completed, the people will not pay tax of any kind and consequently you as king will suffer loss.

y) Or "terror."

z) Cyrus died in 529 B.C. a) Darius began to reign, 522 B.C. b) Verses 6-23 give, parenthetically, events out of chronological order here, but involving similar opposition of later years. c) Reigned 485-465 B.C. d) Reigned 465-425 B.C.

e) A shortened form of Ashurbanipal, 668-626 B.C., son and successor of Esarhaddon, v. 2.

f) Euphrates. g) Writer thus indicates an intended omission. h) Writer thus indicates an intended omission. i) Or "repairing." j) Euphrates.

k) A probable reference to rebellions under Jehoiaqim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah against Nebuchadnezzar. l) True especially of David and Solomon. m) Or "troops."

n) The close of the parenthetical section beginning with v. 6. o) 520 B.C., cf. Hag. 1:1 and Zech. 1:1.

Enemies Would Infiltrate; Work Stops

¹⁴Now because we receive sustenance from the king, it does not seem proper for us to see the king suffer such a dishonor; we, therefore, send this letter that the king may be informed, ¹⁵and that a search be made in the records of your predecessors wherein shall be found that this city has been rebellious and unprofitable to kings and countries, against whom, in past days, it has continually revolted and for which it was finally destroyed. ¹⁶We are informing the king that if this city is built and its walls are completed, as a result he will lose his control over all territory west of the River."

¹⁷Then the king sent a reply to Rehum, the governor, and Shimshai, the secretary, and their companions who lived in Samaria and the neighboring lands west of the River;^j "Peace, and so forth. ¹⁸The letter which you sent to us has been plainly read to me. ¹⁹I gave direction, search was made, and it was found that this city in days past did rise up against kings with rebellion and revolution being made therein.^k ²⁰Also there have been powerful kings in Jerusalem whose rule extended even over all the land west of the River and to whom taxes of various kinds were paid by the conquered people.^l ²¹Therefore, you are to order these people to cease building this city until further notice, ²²and beware of failure to do this, for the king does not wish to experience loss in this matter."

²³So when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read to Rehum and Shimshai, the secretary, and their companions, they went immediately to Jerusalem to the Jews and by strength and force^m made them quit building."⁵³⁴ B.C.

²⁴Then the work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased and nothing further was done until the second yearⁿ of the reign of Darius, king of Persia.

520 B.C.

5 THEN THE PROPHETS, HAGGAI THE prophet,^p and Zechariah the son^q of Iddo, began to preach to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, ²with the result that Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, arose and, with the prophets of God helping them, began to build the house of God in Jerusalem. ³About that time Tatnai, the governor west of the River,^r and Shethar-bozenai, with their companions, came and asked them, "Who gave you official permission to build this house and to finish this wall?" ⁴Then we told them^s what the names of the men were who were doing the building. ⁵The eye of God was watching over the elders of the Jews, however, for they were not made to cease work^t while a letter was sent to Darius and he gave reply to it.

⁶This is a copy of the letter which Tatnai, the governor west of the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his companions, the Apharsachites who lived west of the River sent to Darius the king. ⁷These jointly sent the letter in which they wrote: "Peace be to Darius the king. ⁸Be it known to the king that we have gone into the province of Judah to the house of the great God and have found that it is being built with large^u stones, that timbers are being joined into the walls and that the work is being done diligently with rapid progress being made. ⁹Also we spoke with the elders asking them who had given them official permission to build the house and finish the wall. ¹⁰In addition we asked of them the names of the leaders in this project, that you might have this information as well. ¹¹The following is the answer which we received from them:

"We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and we are building this house which was first constructed many years ago, when a great king of Israel built and finished it."

¹²But because our fathers provoked the God of heaven, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried the people away into Babylon. ¹³Then in the first year of Cyrus, king of Babylon, Cyrus decreed that this house of God should be rebuilt. ¹⁴Moreover, in regard to certain gold and silver vessels of the house of God which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and put in a temple in Babylon, these did Cyrus the king take out again from that temple in Babylon and deliver to Sheshbazzar^w whom he had appointed as our governor. ¹⁵And he said to him, "Take these vessels and place them in the temple in Jerusalem and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site."^x ¹⁶Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God in Jerusalem and from that time on it has been in building but still is not completed.'

¹⁷"So now, if the king is so pleased, let search be made in the treasure-house^y of the king there in Babylon to see if Cyrus did thus decree that this house of God in Jerusalem should be rebuilt and then let the king communicate to us his pleasure in this matter."

6 THEN DARIUS THE KING GAVE THE order and search was made in the house of records wherein also the treasures of Babylon were kept. ²And in the palace at Ecbatana in the province of Media a book was found containing the following record:

³"In his first year, King Cyrus made a decree^z concerning the house of God in Jerusalem: 'Let the house be built, a place for the offering of sacrifices, and let its foundation be strongly laid. Both its height and width shall be ninety feet, ⁴with three courses of great stones and a course of new timber; and the expense shall be met out of the royal treasury. ⁵Also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God,

p) The common designation of Haggai, cf. 6:14 and Hag. 1:1.

q) Grandson, Zech. 1:1; word may be so used for later descendant. r) Euphrates.

s) Or "Then they asked what the names..." t) These officials could have required the work to cease. u) Literally "stones of rolling," i.e., too large to carry.

v) Solomon, who ruled forty years, about 970-930 B.C.

w) Babylonian name for Zerubbabel, cf. 1:8. x) On the site of the former temple.

y) A repository for important documents as well as treasure, cf. 6:1.

z) Cf. 1:1f. for a record of this decree.

which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be returned and put in their place in the temple in Jerusalem, the house of God.^f

⁶"Now, therefore, Tatnai, governor west of the River,^a Shethar-bozenai and your companions, the Apharsachites who live west of the River, keep away; ⁷let the work on this house of God alone and allow the governor and elders of the Jews to build this house of God in its place. ⁸Moreover, I hereby order how you shall give assistance to the Jews for the building of this house of God: That out of the king's tribute-money from west of the River the cost is to be paid to these men without delay so that they be not hindered. ⁹Also whatever the priests in Jerusalem say they need for burnt-offerings to the God of heaven, such as young oxen, rams, lambs, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, let it be given to them daily without fail, ¹⁰so that they may offer sacrifices well-pleasing to the God of heaven and pray for the welfare of the king and his sons. ¹¹Furthermore, I issue this order that, if anyone changes this command, let him be lifted up and impaled^b upon a beam torn from his own house, and let his house be made a heap of refuse. ¹²May the God, who caused His name to dwell there, overthrow every king or people who seeks to change this command so as to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have made this decree; let it be carried out in full."

520-516 B.C.

¹³Then Tatnai, the governor west of the River,^c Shethar-bozenai and their companions, because of this which Darius the king had sent, did accordingly with all diligence.^d ¹⁴The elders of the Jews continued to build, being helped greatly by the preaching of Haggai, the prophet, and of Zechariah the son of Iddo. They built and also finished it in accordance with the

command of the God of Israel and according to the decrees of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes,^e kings of Persia. ¹⁶The house was completed on the third day of the month Adar in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.^f

¹⁶Then the children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the others who had returned from the captivity, observed with joy the dedication of this house of God, ¹⁷offering up at the dedication of this house of God 100 oxen, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and, as a sin-offering for all Israel, 12 male goats, one for each tribe of Israel.

¹⁸Also the priests were arranged in their divisions and the Levites in their courses^g for the service of God in Jerusalem as prescribed in the book of Moses.^h

516 B.C.

¹⁹These who had returned from captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month;ⁱ

²⁰the priests and the Levites having purified themselves together, so that all were clean. They killed the Passover for all the children of the captivity, for their brothers, the priests, and for themselves. ²¹Those who ate included the children of Israel who returned from captivity and also all who had separated themselves unto them from the sin of the nations of the country to follow after Jehovah, the God of Israel. ²²With joy they kept this feast of unleavened bread for the seven days, for the LORD had caused them to rejoice, having inclined the heart of the king of Assyria^j in their favor so that he assisted them in the work on the house of the God of Israel.

458 B.C.

7 ^{LATER^k, DURING THE REIGN OF} Artaxerxes, king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah,^l son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, ²son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, ³son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, ⁴son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi, son of

a) Euphrates. b) A common, though severe, form of punishment.

c) Euphrates, again. d) These leaders may not themselves have felt hostile to the Jews, but had acted for the Samaritans. e) Anticipation reference to Artaxerxes Longimanus, 465-425 B.C. f) March, 516 B.C. g) Cf. Num. 3 and 8 and I Chron. 23 and 24.

h) Aramaic portion, which began at 4:8, closes here at 6:18.

i) April. j) Darius, who was king of Assyria in that he ruled over what had been Assyrian territory. k) Fifty-eight years later, from 516-458 B.C.

l) Son here means descendant, for Seraiah died 130 years prior, cf. II Kings 25:18-21.

Bukki, ⁶son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazer, son of Aaron the chief priest,^m went up from Babylon. ⁶He was a scribe, well versed in the law of Moses which the LORD, the God of Israel, had given. Also the king gave him all that he requested, according to the favor of the LORD his God upon him.

⁷Others who went with him to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, were priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple attendants, and some of the children of Israel. ⁸He arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the king's seventh year. ⁹He had begun the trek from Babylon on the first day of the first month so that he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month,ⁿ in accordance with the good favor of the LORD his God, upon him. ¹⁰For Ezra had disciplined himself to study the Law of the LORD, to practice it, and to teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel.

¹¹This is a copy of the letter which King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra, priest and scribe, well versed in matters of the commandments of the LORD and His statutes to Israel:^o ¹²"Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra, priest and scribe of the law of the God of heaven, and so forth.^p ¹³I make a decree that anyone of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my realm, who freely offers to go to Jerusalem with you, may go. ¹⁴You are being sent by the king and his seven counselors^q to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in accordance with the law of your God which is in your hand; ¹⁵and to convey the silver and the gold which the king and his counselors have freely given to the God of Israel who dwells in Jerusalem, ¹⁶in addition to all the silver and gold that you may be able to collect anywhere in the province of Babylon, and the freewill offerings of your people and priests, voluntarily

given, for the house of their God in Jerusalem. ¹⁷You must be sure to use this money to buy oxen, rams, and lambs with their meat-offerings and drink-offerings,^r that they may be offered upon the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem; ¹⁸and with whatever is left of this silver and gold you may do as you and your brothers believe is in accordance with the will of your God. ¹⁹The vessels^s that have been given to you for the service of the house of your God you are to deliver in the presence of the God of Jerusalem. ²⁰Also you may supply out of the king's treasure-house^t whatever else you find necessary and have occasion to provide for the house of your God. ²¹In accordance, I, Artaxerxes the king, do issue this order to all the treasurers west of the River^u: that, whatever Ezra, priest and scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall ask of you, you are assuredly to give, ²²up to 200,000 dollars^v of silver, 1000 bushels^w of wheat, 900 gallons^x of wine, 900 gallons of oil, and as much salt as necessary. ²³Whatever is required by the God of heaven for the house of the God of heaven is to be completely provided, for we do not want His indignation to fall upon the realm of the king and his sons. ²⁴Furthermore, we inform you that the priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, temple attendants, and servants of this house of God shall not have to pay taxes of any kind. ²⁵And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom which your God has given you, appoint judges and other officials to govern all the people west of the River, those who are familiar with the laws of your God, and instruct all who do not know them.^y ²⁶Whoever disobeys the law of your God or of the king is surely to be punished by such means as death, banishment, confiscation of goods, or imprisonment."

²⁷Blessed be the LORD, the God of

m) Abbreviated list showing Ezra's descent from Aaron; for other names to insert, see I Chron. 6:3-15; 9:10,11.

n) Departed in April, arrived in August, 458 B.C. o) Verses 12-26 are in Aramaic.

p) Writer thus indicates an intended omission. q) Cf. Esther 1:14.

r) Cf. Num. 15:1-16. s) Probably the same as in 8:25-27. t) Cf. 6:8. u) Euphrates.

v) One silver talent worth about \$2000; 100 talents here about \$200,000.

w) Hebrew, one hundred cors; one cor is about ten bushels.

x) Hebrew, one hundred baths; one bath is about nine gallons.

y) Refers primarily to Israelites unlearned in the law.

z) Ezra's consequent praise to God. The Hebrew is resumed here, cf. v. 12.

our fathers, who has put the thought into the heart of the king to beautify the house of the LORD in Jerusalem²⁸ and who has given me favor with the king, his counselors, and all his mighty princes. Hence I took courage in view of the blessing of the LORD my God upon me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to make the return with me.

8 THESE ARE THE HEADS OF THEIR fathers' houses, along with their genealogies, who made the trip with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes: ²A descendant of Phinehas,^a Gershom; a descendant of Ithamar, Daniel; a descendant of David, Hattush, a son of Shecanish; ³a descendant of Parosh, Zechariah, accompanied by 150 men of that family;^b ⁴a descendant of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai, the son of Zerariah, accompanied by 200 men; ⁵a descendant of Shecaniah the son of Jahaziel, accompanied by 300 men; ⁶a descendant of Adin, Ebed the son of Jonathan, accompanied by 50 men; ⁷a descendant of Elam, Jeshaiiah the son of Athaliah, accompanied by 70 men; ⁸a descendant of Shephatiah, Zebadiah the son of Michael, accompanied by 80 men; ⁹a descendant of Joab, Obadiah the son of Jehiel, accompanied by 218 men; ¹⁰a descendant of Shelomith^c the son of Josiphiah, accompanied by 160 men; ¹¹a descendant of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai, accompanied by 28 men; ¹²a descendant of Azgad, Johanan the son of Hakkatan, accompanied by 110 men; ¹³descendants of Adonikam were Eliph-elet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah accompanied by 60 men; ¹⁴and descendants of Bigvai were Uthai and Zabbud accompanied by 70 men.

¹⁵I assembled all these at the river that flows past Ahava^d where we remained three days. I made a survey of the people and of the priests, but found no Levites among those who had gathered. ¹⁶Consequently, I called Eliezer,

Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, all of whom were leaders, and Joiarib and Elnathan, who were teachers, ¹⁷and sent them all to Iddo, head man at the place Casiphia, telling them to ask Iddo and his brothers, the temple attendants, also at the place Casiphia, to bring to us those who could serve in the house of our God. ¹⁸And, according to God's blessing upon us, they did bring to us Ish-sekel,^e a descendant of Mahli, the son of Levi who was a son of Israel, and Sherebiah with eighteen of his sons and brothers; ¹⁹also Hashabiah and Jeshaiah, a descendant of Merari, his brothers and their sons making twenty more. ²⁰Of the temple attendants, whom David and the princes had provided as servants to the Levites, 220 were brought, all listed by name.

²¹Following this I ordered a fast there at the Ahava River that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask of Him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and our possessions. ²²For I was ashamed to ask for troops and horsemen from the king to protect us from enemies along the way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God protects all who seek Him and that His power and indignation are against all who forsake Him. ²³Consequently, we fasted and prayed to our God regarding this matter and He heard us.

²⁴Then I chose twelve of the leaders among the priests along with Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brothers,^f ²⁵and weighed out to them the offering for the house of our God: namely the silver, gold, and vessels which the king, his counselors, and his princes, in addition to the Israelites living there, had given. ²⁶The value of the silver was 1,300,000 dollars,^g of the silver vessels 200,000 dollars, of the gold 3,000,000 dollars,^h ²⁷and of 20 gold bowls 5000 dollars.ⁱ Also there

a) First three names, not giving accompanying numbers, are distinct for being of priestly or royal descent. b) Women and children additional in each case, cf. ch. 2.

c) Another reading, "a descendant of Bani, Shelomith, the . . ."

d) Same name used for both city and river. e) Or "a man of understanding."

f) Altogether twelve priests and twelve Levites.

g) One silver talent worth about \$2000; 650 talents, total is about \$1,300,000.

h) One gold talent worth about \$30,000; 100 talents, total is about \$3,000,000.

i) One daric worth about five dollars; total here is about \$5,000.

were two vessels of fine, bright brass, precious as gold. ²⁸Then I said to them, "You are holy before the LORD, these vessels are holy, and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your fathers: ²⁹watch and guard them until you weigh them before the leaders of the priests, Levites and heads of father's houses in Israel at Jerusalem in the chambers of the house of the LORD." ³⁰Then the priests and Levites received the weight of the silver, the gold, and the vessels to bring them to the house of our God in Jerusalem.

³¹After this we departed from the Ahava River on the twelfth day of the first month^j on our journey to Jerusalem, with the protection of our God upon us, delivering us from enemies lying in wait along the way. ³²When we arrived in Jerusalem, we remained for three days, ³³and then, on the fourth day, the silver, gold, and vessels were weighed in the house of our God under supervision of Meremoth, son of Uriah the priest accompanied by Eleazer son of Phinehas, and the Levites, Jozabad son of Jeshua, and Noadiah son of Binnui. ³⁴All was numbered and weighed and the weight recorded at that time.^k ³⁵Then those who had just returned from exile, being descendants of those taken captive, offered up in burnt-offerings to the God of Israel twelve oxen for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and, as a sin-offering twelve male goats, all an offering to the LORD. ³⁶Then they delivered the written order^l of the king to the king's presidents and governors west of the River^m with the result that they helped the people in connection with the house of God.

9 AFTER THESE MATTERS WERE COMPLETED,ⁿ the leaders came to me and told me that the people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, had not separated themselves from the

people of the land, but were conducting themselves after the wicked practices of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites; ²for they had taken their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons^o resulting in an intermingling between the holy offspring and the people of the land, the leaders and rulers being the first offenders in the sin. ³When I heard this, I tore my garment^p and covering robe, pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat down, confounded. ⁴Soon all who revered the word of the God of Israel concerning the sin of the returned exiles, joined themselves to me; and I continued to sit, confounded, until the evening sacrifice. ⁵Then, at the evening sacrifice, I arose from my humiliation and, with my garment and covering robe torn, fell upon my knees, spread out my hands to the LORD my God and said:

⁶"O my God, I am ashamed, greatly ashamed to raise my face to Thee, my God, because our^q sin is increased over our head and our guilt is great, reaching to heaven. ⁷Since the days of our fathers until now, our guilt has been great for which we, our kings, and our priests have experienced defeat by kings of various countries, by the sword, by captivity, and by plunder to our disgrace, even as it is this day.^r ⁸Now for a short time the LORD our God has been merciful in permitting a remnant to return from captivity that we might have a nail^s in His Holy Place, that our eyes might be enlightened by God, and that our life might be renewed a little in our bondage.^t ⁹For we are bondmen, but in bondage God has not forsaken us but rather has extended mercy to us in the presence of the Persian kings in that we have been granted the opportunity to erect the house of our God, to set up the ruins once again, and to have pro-

j) Cf. 7:9, evidently twelve days needed for preparations.

k) God's servants must keep accurate records of finances. 1) Cf. 7:11-26. m) Euphrates.

n) About four months intervened, cf. 10:8,9.

o) Forbidden, cf. Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3. p) The outer garment over which was worn the robe.

q) Ezra includes himself even though having had no part.

r) Though in Jerusalem again, they were still under Persia. s) Part in and benefit from.

t) Notice how petition and testimony interchange in this prayer.

tection in Judah and Jerusalem. ¹⁰But now, our God, what can we say in view of this, when we have forsaken Thy commandments ¹¹which Thou didst command through Thy servants, the prophets, when they said: "The land which you are about to possess" is unclean due to the wicked practices of the peoples of the land, as they have filled it from one end to the other with their abominations. ¹²Therefore, let there be no intermarrying between your daughters and their sons or their daughters and your sons, and never further their peace or their prosperity, "that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance for your children forever." ¹³Now after all that has come upon us for our wicked deeds and our great guilt, especially when Thou, our God, hast punished us less than our sin deserved, and hast given us this escaped remnant, ¹⁴shall we break Thy commandments again by intermarrying with the people of these abominations? Wouldst Thou not be angry with us till Thou wouldst consume us completely, with none escaping? ¹⁵O LORD, God of Israel, Thou art righteous, for we remain today merely an escaped remnant.^x See, we are before Thee in our guilt realizing that no one can stand before Thee in view of this."

10 AS EZRA PRAYED AND MADE CONFESSION, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a large crowd of Israelites, men, women, and children, gathered themselves to him; for the people wept bitterly.^y ²Then Shecaniah, son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, said to Ezra: "We have sinned against our God in that we have married foreign women from neighboring nations; but there is still hope for Israel in regard to this matter. ³Let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives with their

children according to the counsel of the LORD and those who fear the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the Law. ⁴Rise up, have courage, and act, for it is your responsibility, and we will support you."

⁵Then Ezra did arise and he required the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel to swear to do this thing, and they swore.^z ⁶After this Ezra left the house of God and went to the room^a of Jehohanan^b son of Eliashib, but, having arrived, he would eat no bread nor drink any water, for he mourned over the sin of the returned exiles. ⁷Then an announcement was sent throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the children of the captivity that they should assemble themselves in Jerusalem, ⁸and that any who did not come in three days, by order of the officials and the elders would forfeit^c all his possessions and be banned from the congregation of the captivity.

⁹Accordingly, within three days all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem, it being the twentieth day of the ninth month, and all the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of the matter and because of the rain.^d ¹⁰Then Ezra the priest stood up and spoke to them: "You have sinned in that you have married foreign women, thus adding to the guilt of Israel. ¹¹Now render honor to the LORD, the God of your fathers, by doing what He wills: namely, the separation of yourselves from the people of the land by putting away the foreign women." ¹²Then all those assembled replied with a loud voice: "We must do as you say. ¹³However, inasmuch as the people are many, also that we are not able to remain outside due to the rainy season and that the work will take more than a day or two, since the sin in this matter is so great, ¹⁴we suggest

u) A general quotation similar to Deut. 7:1-3.

v) Setting of this quotation is prior to occupation under Joshua. w) Cf. Deut. 23:6.

x) Their very fewness indicated that God had maintained His righteousness and justice, in that He had punished them. y) True repentance is often given such visible manifestation.

z) Ezra's prayer and urging receives a ready response.

a) Such rooms at the temple served as storerooms and meeting places for the priests, cf. I Kings 6:5; I Chron. 23:28. b) Possibly Jehohanan of Neh. 12:23, though very young here.

c) Literally, "devote his property," i.e., the proceeds from it would be given to the temple.

d) The ninth month, December, was a cold, rainy period of the year.

that our leaders stand for the whole assembly,^e and that all from the cities who have married foreign women, along with the elders and judges from these cities,^f come to them at an appointed time until the fierce anger of our God be turned from us regarding this matter." ¹⁵Only Jonathan son of Asahel, and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, opposed this course of action, though they were encouraged by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite.

¹⁶Therefore, the children of the captivity carried out the plan. Ezra, the priest, and the family heads, all by name according to the house of their fathers, segregated themselves and began the work on the first day of the tenth month; ¹⁷and on the first day of the first month they finished with all the men who had married foreign women.^g

¹⁸From the sons of the priests, the following were found to have married foreign women: Of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers, Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah ¹⁹who pledged themselves to put away their wives and offered a ram of the flock for their guilt; ²⁰of the descendants of Immer; Hanani and Zebadiah; ²¹of the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uz-ziah; ²²of the descendants of Pashhur: Elionai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa.

²³From the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

²⁴From the singers: Eliashib. From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

²⁵And from Israel: Of the sons of Parosh: Remiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah; ²⁶of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah; ²⁷of the sons of Zattu: Elieonai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza; ²⁸of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai; ²⁹of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth; ³⁰of the sons of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh; ³¹of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, ³²Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah; ³³of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattaah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei; ³⁴of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, ³⁵Benaiah, Bedeiah, Che-luhi, ³⁶Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, ³⁷Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasu, ³⁸Bani, Binnui, Shimei, ³⁹Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, ⁴⁰Machnadebai, Shashai, Shairai, ⁴¹Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, ⁴²Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph; ⁴³of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. ⁴⁴All these had married foreign women, and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

e) These alone remain for the purpose of judging the rest.

f) These elders and judges would furnish necessary explanations and evidence.

g) The work took exactly three months: January, February and March.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

December, 445 B.C.

1 I WAS IN SHUSHAN, THE PALACE,^a in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year,^b when Hanani, one of my brothers,^c came to me, accompanied by a few men from Judah, and I asked them concerning the escaped Jews, who were left from the captivity and concerning Jerusalem. ³They answered me that the remnant in the province^d who remained from the captivity were being severely afflicted and held in reproach, the wall of Jerusalem having been broken down and the gates destroyed by fire.^e

⁴When I heard this report, I sat down and wept and I mourned for days, fasting and praying to the God of heaven. ⁵I said, "I beseech Thee, O LORD, God of heaven, great and awful God who keeps His covenant and shows lovingkindness to those who love Him and obey His commandments, ⁶let Thy ear be attentive and Thy eyes be open to the prayer of Thy servant which I offer to Thee now, day and night, concerning the children of Israel, Thy servants. I confess the sin of the children of Israel, which we, even I and my father's house, have committed against Thee. ⁷We have acted very wickedly toward Thee, not obeying the commandments, statutes, and judgments which Thou didst give to

Moses Thy servant. ⁸But remember now Thy word which Thou hast commanded to Moses, Thy servant, saying, 'If you sin, I will disperse you among the nations, ⁹but if you return to Me and live according to My commandments, I will regather you, even from the farthest extremities under heaven if necessary, to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.' ¹⁰Now these are Thy servants and Thy people which Thou hast redeemed by Thy great power and by Thy strong hand. ¹¹I beseech Thee, O LORD, let Thy ear be attentive to the prayer both of Thy servant and of Thy servants who take pleasure in revering Thy name; prosper Thy servant today by granting him favor before this man." ¹²For I was cupbearer^f to the king.

March-April, 444 B. C.

2 IN THE MONTH NISAN OF KING Artaxerxes' twentieth year, the king being at wine, as I brought the wine to him, never having been sad in his presence before, ²the king said to me. "Why is your face sad? You do not seem to be ill, so this can only mean that you have sorrow of heart." Then I felt very frightened,^h ³but I answered the king: "May the king live forever! Have I not good reason for my sad appearance, when the city where my

a) Shushan or Susa, former capital of Elam, became capital of Persia.

b) Twentieth year of Artaxerxes (465-424 B.C.); month, December. c) Cf. 7:2.

d) Province of Judah, cf. Ezra 2:1; 5:8.

e) It remains unsubstantiated that a more recent destruction is referred to here than that of Nebuchadrezzar in 586 B.C.

f) King Artaxerxes.

g) The cupbearer, having to guard against any poisoning of the king, was considered of high office.

h) One duty of the cupbearer was to always look pleasant.

ancestors are buried lies waste and her gates are destroyed by fire?" ⁴Then the king said, "What are you asking for?" I told the king, with first a prayer to God in heaven, ⁵"If it should please the king, and if your servant finds favor in your presence, I would like to be sent to the Jews, to the city where my ancestors are buried, that I may rebuild it." ⁶The king then inquired of me — the queen sitting beside him — "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" After which, when I had indicated to him a time, he gave me permission to go. ⁷Then I further asked of the king, if it should please him, to give me letters addressed to the governors west of the River,¹ that they should let me pass through their countries unhindered as far as Judah, ⁸and a letter to Asaph, the king's forester,¹ that he should supply me with trees to make lumber for the gates of the fortress^k near the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house which I would occupy. Then, according to God's hand of blessing upon me, not only did the king so grant me, ⁹but in addition he sent with me officers of the army and cavalry to accompany me as I came to the governors west of the River,¹ to whom I gave the letters. ¹⁰But Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, a servant, were much displeased when they heard that someone had come to promote the welfare of the children of Israel.

Summer, 444 B. C.

¹¹After arriving in Jerusalem and being there for three days,^m ¹²I went out in the night accompanied by only a few men; for I had not told anyone as yet what my God had inclined my heart to do in Jerusalem. I took no animals with me except the one on which I rode. ¹³I went out while it was night, passed through the Valley Gateⁿ and headed towards the Dragon Well,^o then went on to the Dung Gate, viewing the walls of Jerusalem which

lay in their broken condition and the gates which had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴Going on, I passed the Fountain Gate and came to the King's Pool, but then there was not room enough for the animal I was riding to pass.^p ¹⁵So, it still being night, I took a course leading up the valley,^q continuing to survey the walls. Then I turned back, re-entered the Valley Gate, and came again to my starting point.

¹⁶The rulers did not know where I had been or what I had done, for I had not as yet told anything to the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the rulers, or those who did the work. ¹⁷But I said to them, "You are aware of the distressing circumstances in which we find ourselves, how Jerusalem lies waste and her gates are destroyed by fire. Therefore, come, let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no longer a reproach." ¹⁸Further, I related to them how God's hand of blessing had been upon me, particularly in the privileges which the king had given me. Then they responded, "Let us rise up and build." So they prepared themselves for the good work.

¹⁹But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, a servant, and Geshem the Arabian heard what was planned, they jeered and made light of us, saying, "What do you think you are going to do? Would you rebel against the king?" ²⁰To which I gave answer, "We will begin and we will build, for the God of heaven, whose servants we are, will enable us to accomplish our aim; but you shall have no portion, right, or memorial in Jerusalem."

3 THEN ELIASHIB, THE HIGH PRIEST, and his brothers, the priests, rose up, built the Sheep Gate,^r dedicated it, and hung its doors, after which they dedicated the wall to the Tower of Hammeah and then to the Tower of Hananel. ²Next to them the men of

i) Euphrates. j) A valuable wooded area over which the king had placed a guard.

k) An imposing structure north of the temple for defending it. l) Euphrates, again.

m) Notice a similar period in Ezra's case; cf. Ezra 8:32.

n) Nehemiah proceeds around the city counter-clockwise. o) Or, "Jackal's Well."

p) Evidently the destruction was worse along the east side.

q) The Kidron Valley; he is here outside the wall.

r) The Sheep Gate was located on the northeast, near the temple. The enumeration of the workers begins here and works counter-clockwise around the city.

Jericho built and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

³The Fish Gate was constructed by the sons of Hassenaah who laid its beams and set up its doors with its locks and bars. ⁴Next to them repaired Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz. Next to him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, son of Meshazabel. Next to him repaired Zadok the son of Baana. ⁵And next to him repaired the Tekoites, though without the help of their nobles, who would not condescend to serve their LORD in that fashion.

⁶Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate,^a laying its beams and setting up its doors with its locks and bars. ⁷Next to them Melatiah, the Gibeonite, and Jadon, the Meronothite, men of Gibeon and Mizpah repaired as far as the official seat of the governor west of the River.^b ⁸Next to them repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths. Next to him repaired Hananiah, one of the apothecaries. Then they omitted Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.^c ⁹Next repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, ruler of a half district of Jerusalem. ¹⁰Next to him repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, opposite his own house. Next to him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabneiah. ¹¹Next to him repaired Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab who also repaired the Tower of Furnaces. ¹²Next to them repaired Shallum the son of Hallohesh, along with his daughters, who ruled a half district of Jerusalem.

¹³Hanun and Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate, building it and setting up its doors with its locks and bars; also they repaired 1500 feet of the wall to the Dung Gate. ¹⁴Malchijah the son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Dung Gate, building it and setting up its doors with its locks and bars.

¹⁵Shallum the son of Colhozeh, ruler

of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate, building and roofing it and setting up its doors with its locks and bars; also he repaired the wall by the Pool of Shelah^d to the king's garden and as far as the stairs that descend from the city of David. ¹⁶Next to him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, ruler of a half district of Beth-zur, to a place opposite the sepulchres of David, to the pool that was made, and to the house of the heroes. ¹⁷Next to him repaired Levites under Rehum the son of Bani. Next to them repaired Hashabish, ruler of a half district of Keilah.^e ¹⁸Next to him repaired their brothers led by Bavvai the son of Henadad, ruler of the other half district of Keilah. ¹⁹The adjoining portion, which was near the ascent to the armory at the angle in the wall was repaired by Ezer the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah. ²⁰The next portion, from the angle in the wall to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest was diligently repaired by Baruch the son of Zabbai. ²¹The next portion was repaired by Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz.^f ²²Next repaired the priests, men of the Plain.^g ²³Next to them repaired Benjamin and Hasshub opposite their house. Next to them repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, opposite his house. ²⁴The adjoining portion was repaired by Binnui the son of Henadad, from the house of Azariah to the angle in the wall and to the corner. ²⁵Next to him repaired Palal the son of Uzai, opposite from the angle in the wall and the high tower which stands out from the king's house by the court of the prison. Next to him repaired Pedaiah the son of Parosh. ²⁶The temple attendants lived in Ophel as far as a place opposite the Water Gate toward the east and the tower that stands out. ²⁷The adjoining portion from the high tower that stands out as far as Ophel was repaired by the Tekoites.^h

²⁸Above the Horse Gate did the

s) Literally, "Gate of the Old," perhaps meaning either gate of the old city or gate of the old wall.

t) Euphrates. u) The wall here may have remained intact, not needing repair.

v) Often called pool of Siloam. w) David delivered Keilah from Philistines, while a fugitive from Saul, 1 Sam. 23:1-13. Evidently helpers came from other cities for the building of the wall.

x) This man had two portions to repair; cf. v. 4.

y) Plain of the Jordan Valley; cf. 12:28; Gen. 13:10.

z) Tekoa was the city of Amos, ten miles south of Jerusalem.

priests repair, each opposite his own house. ²⁹Next to them repaired Zadok the son of Immer opposite his own house. Next to him repaired Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, keeper of the East Gate. ³⁰The adjoining portion was repaired by Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and by Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph. Next to him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, opposite his own house. ³¹Next to him repaired Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths,^a as far as the house of the temple attendants and of the merchants, opposite the Gate of Hammiphkad, and as far as the ascent^b of the corner. ³²And between the ascent of the corner and the Sheep Gate did the goldsmiths and the merchants repair.

4 WHEN SANBALLAT HEARD THAT WE were building the wall, he was furious and insulted and mocked the Jews ²before his companions and the army of Samaria, saying, "What would these decrepit Jews do? Would they expect to build this by themselves? Would they sacrifice? Do they think this is a one-day's job? Do they hope to use over again the stones from the rubbish heaps that were burned?" ³And Tobiah the Ammonite, who was nearby, added, "Even if they build their stone wall, it will tumble down if a fox should climb upon it."^c

⁴"Hear,^d O our God, because we are despised. Return their contempt upon their own heads and deliver them to be plundered in a land of captivity. ⁵Do not cover their villainy nor blot out their sin from before Thee, for they have provoked Thee in the presence of the builders."^e ⁶So we built the wall to half its height around the entire city, for the people had a will to work.^f

⁷But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites^g heard that the walls began to be repaired, with all the broken

places filled in, they were very angry, ⁸and they agreed together to make war on Jerusalem and to create disturbance in it. ⁹However, we prayed to our God, and stationed a guard day and night as a protection against them. ¹⁰Then Judah^h reported that, due to the weariness of the workers and the large amount of rubbish needing to be moved, they were not able to continue building the wall. ¹¹At the same time, the enemy was planning that we should not know of nor see them until they were upon us, killing us, and causing the work to cease. ¹²Also during this time, the Jews who lived near them kept coming to us and saying ten times, "Wherever you turn they will assail you."ⁱ ¹³Then I placed the people by families, having their swords, spears, and bows behind the wall at its lowest, most open places.^j ¹⁴After which, having approved the stationing, I arose and encouraged the nobles, the rulers and the rest of the people, saying, "Do not fear them; remember the LORD is great and dreadful; so fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your homes."

¹⁵The result was that when our enemies heard that their plan, which God had thus frustrated, was known to us, we were able to return in total force to our work upon the wall. ¹⁶However, from that day on, only half of my servants^k worked on the wall while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows and the coats of mail. The rulers took up positions in support of all the people of Judah. ¹⁷As for the builders of the wall, those who carried the materials did their work of carrying, using only one hand, while with the other they held a weapon; ¹⁸and those who did the building proper worked with their swords strapped to their sides. The trumpeter remained close to me.

¹⁹Then I gave this order to the

a) Or "son of the goldsmiths." b) Or, "upper chamber."

c) Ridicule need not hurt, if the source is considered.

d) Nehemiah's prayer as a result of the enemy opposition.

e) They had made light of God in the presence of the builders.

f) Opposition is defeated when we are willing to work.

g) The most complete list given of the enemy's forces. h) Judean people at large.

i) Or, "From all places you must return to us," meaning that they wanted their own townspeople to return from Jerusalem. j) The lowest places required the most careful guarding.

k) Refers to his own private servants.

nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people; "The work is great and extensive so that we are separated far from one another on the wall; ²⁰therefore, wherever you hear the trumpet, assemble yourselves there to us. Our God will fight for us!" ²¹So we labored at the task, with half of them bearing spears,¹ from break of morning until the stars appeared. ²²Also I gave direction at that time to the people that every man with his servant should lodge in Jerusalem and so be with us as a guard at night as well as a workman during the day. ²³And neither I, nor my brothers, nor my servants, nor men of the guard which followed me took off our clothes, and each held his weapon in hand.

5 THEN THE PEOPLE AND THEIR wives began to complain strongly against their own Judean countrymen.^m ²Some said, "We, our sons and our daughters are many, and we must be given grain if we are to eat and live." ³Others said, "We have been mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses and now we must be given grain for our hunger." ⁴Still others said, "We have had to borrow money in order to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards, ⁵and now, although our flesh is the same as that of our countrymen and our children as theirs, yet we are forced to sell our sons and our daughters into slavery, with some of our daughters having already been thus sold, and we are helpless to better ourselves, for our fields and vineyards belong to others."

⁶When I heard their complaints along with these facts, I was very angry, ⁷and, having reflected upon the matter, I brought the charge directly to the nobles and rulers, saying, "You are exacting interest from your fellow-countrymen."ⁿ Then I appointed a large council on their account, ⁸to whom I said, "We have redeemed our

Judean brothers, who were sold to the gentiles, as far as we have been able;^o should you now be engaged in selling your brothers, and would you have them bought even by our own people?" To this they were silent, finding nothing to answer, ⁹and so I continued, "What you have been doing is not good. Ought you not to conduct yourselves in reverence for our God, lest reproach come from our enemy nations? ¹⁰It is true that even my own brothers and servants have loaned out money and grain, but now let everyone of us forsake this practice. ¹¹Restore today, I earnestly ask of you, their fields, their vineyards, their oliveyards and their houses, as well as the hundredth^p part of the money, the grain, the new wine and the oil which you have exacted from them." ¹²They replied, "We will restore to them and seek nothing more from them; so will we do even as you have asked." Then I called the priests that they might be put under oath to carry out what they had promised. ¹³In addition I shook out my lap, saying, "So shall God shake out every man from his house and his possessions who does not fulfil his promise, even thus shall he be shaken out and emptied." After this the council responded with, "Amen," and they gave praise to the LORD. Then the people put into practice what they had promised.^q

¹⁴Moreover, from the day of my appointment as governor in the land of Judah, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes to his thirty-second year, twelve years in all, I and my brothers did not draw upon the governor's food allowance, ¹⁵even though the governors before me had burdened the people in taking from them bread and wine besides forty shekels of silver, with even their servants oppressing the people. However, out of reverence for God, I did not do so, ¹⁶and neither did I buy up land.^r Instead, I pressed for-

l) Seems to refer again to his private servants.

m) These complaints are lodged while the walls are being built.

n) Lending money at interest to other Israelites was forbidden, Deut. 23:19,20.

o) Apparently Nehemiah and others had bought up Jews being sold in slavery in Persia. Selling of Israelites forbidden, Lev. 25:42.

p) Interest reckoned by month, making 12 per cent yearly.

q) Promises made should always be kept.

r) In his position, Nehemiah might easily have bought mortgaged land cheaply.

ward the work on the wall and so did all my servants busy themselves. ¹⁷Further, some 150 men, Jews and rulers besides guests from surrounding nations, ate at my table, ¹⁸so that it was necessary to prepare for a single day an ox and six choice sheep in addition to fowl and, once in ten days, a quantity of wine of all kinds. Yet for all this I did not require the governor's food allowance since the burden was already heavy upon the people.⁸ ¹⁹O my God, remember me benevolently for everything I have done for this people.

6 NOW WHEN SANBALLAT, TOBIAH, Geshem the Arabian and the rest of our enemies heard that I had completed the wall so there was no breach left in it, though at that time I had not yet hung the doors in the gates, ²Sanballat and Geshem sent word to me to come and meet with them in one of the villages in the plain of Ono. However, they planned to harm me. ³Realizing this, I sent a message to them, giving answer, "I am occupied with an important task so that I am unable to come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" ⁴However, they continued to send the same request to me four different times, to which I replied in the same way each time. ⁵Finally, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his servant to me, bearing an open letter^t ⁶in which was written, "It is reported among the nations, with Gashmu in particular asserting it, that you and the Jews have built the wall because you plan to rebel, and that you intend to make yourself king; ⁷also that you have appointed prophets to spread about in Jerusalem that you should be king of Judah. Soon these reports will be made known to the king; therefore, come and we will counsel together." ⁸But I sent a reply to him that these assertions which he had made were not true, being only fabrications out of

his own heart. ⁹For they all thought they could frighten us so that our hands would cease from pursuing the work. Therefore, may God strengthen my hands!

¹⁰Some time later I went to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was shut in.^u He said, "Let us seclude ourselves in the house of God within the temple and close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you—at night they are coming to kill you."¹¹ But I answered him, "Should a man in my position^v flee? Moreover, can one such as I^w enter into the temple and live? I will not go in."¹² And then I realized that God had not sent him, but that Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him to speak these words to me; ¹³the intention being to cause me to follow this counsel out of fear, thus committing sin, which then would be for them an opportunity to bring an accusation against me. ¹⁴My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat according to these doings and Noadiah, the prophetess and the other prophets who have tried to frighten me.

September, 444 B. C.

¹⁵On the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul,^x the wall was finished, having taken a total of fifty-two days. ¹⁶And when all our enemies heard of it and realized that all the surrounding nations had been made to respect us, they came down considerably in their own estimation and began to understand that this work had been accomplished through our God. ¹⁷Moreover, during those days many letters had been exchanged between Tobiah and influential men of Judah. ¹⁸For many in Judah had pledged themselves to aid him, since he was a son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah, and also his son Jenohana had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiaiah. ¹⁹These had been continually telling me that his actions were good, while at the same time passing on to him

s) Nehemiah was an excellent example for the people to follow.

t) An unsealed letter so that anyone could read it, as the enemy wanted.

u) Perhaps due to some defilement or sickness. v) As governor.

w) Nehemiah, not being a Levite, did not have a right to enter the holy place; cf. Num. 18:7.

x) September.

whatever I said, in keeping with which Tobiah had sent his letters to make me afraid.

7 AFTER THE WALL WAS FINISHED and I had hung the doors, in addition to appointing the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites, ²I placed in charge over Jerusalem Hanani, my brother,³ and Hananiah, commandant of the fortress,² the latter likewise being a faithful person and revering God more than many others. ³I gave directions to them that the gates of Jerusalem should not be opened until long after sunrise and that they should be closed and locked again while the guard was still on duty; also that guards should be selected from the inhabitants of Jerusalem for specified points, with all others guarding their own houses. ⁴The city was large and widely spread out with the people of a comparatively small number and few houses having been built.

⁵Then my God inclined my heart to assemble the leading men of the city along with the people in order to register them. At that time I found a book recording the genealogies of those who had come at the first,^a in which was written: ⁶These are the sons of the province^c who came out of the captivity which Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, had imposed upon them and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city. ⁷They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah,^d Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel: ⁸The sons of Parosh, 2172; ⁹the sons of Shephatiah, 372; ¹⁰the sons of Arah, 652; ¹¹the sons of Pahath-moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2818; ¹²the sons of Elam, 1254; ¹³the sons of Zattu, 845; ¹⁴the sons of Zaccai, 760; ¹⁵the sons of Binnui, 648; ¹⁶the sons of Bebai, 628; ¹⁷the sons of Azgad, 2322; ¹⁸the sons of Adonikam, 667; ¹⁹the sons of Bigvai, 2067; ²⁰the sons of Adin, 655; ²¹the sons of Ater of

Hezekiah, 98; ²²the sons of Hashum, 328; ²³the sons of Bezai, 324; ²⁴the sons of Hariph, 122; ²⁵the sons of Gibeon, 95; ²⁶the men of Bethlehem and Netophah, 188; ²⁷the men of Anathoth, 128; ²⁸the men of Bethazmavath, 42; ²⁹the men of Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, 743; ³⁰the men of Ramah and Geba, 621; ³¹the men of Michmas, 122; ³²the men of Bethel and Ai, 123; ³³the men of the other Nebo, 52; ³⁴the sons of the other Elam, 1254; ³⁵the sons of Harim, 320; ³⁶the sons of Jericho, 345; ³⁷the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 721; ³⁸and the sons of Senaah, 3930.

³⁹The priests: The sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973; ⁴⁰the sons of Immer, 1052; ⁴¹the sons of Pashhur, 1247; ⁴²and the sons of Harim, 1017.

⁴³The Levites: The sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel of the sons of Hodevah, 74. ⁴⁴The singers were the sons of Asaph, 148. ⁴⁵The gatekeepers were the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai, in all 138.

⁴⁶The temple attendants: The sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁷the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁸the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmal, ⁴⁹the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, ⁵⁰the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, ⁵¹the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, ⁵²the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephis-hesim, ⁵³the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵⁴the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵⁵the sons of Bar-kos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Tamah, ⁵⁶the sons of Neziah, and the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁷The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sorai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida, ⁵⁸the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, ⁵⁹the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth of Haz-

y) Cf. 1:2. z) Cf. 2:8. a) Under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. b) Same list in Ezra 2. c) Jews. d) Not the author of this book.

zebaim, and the sons of Amon. ⁶⁰All of the temple attendants and the sons of Solomon's servants were 392.

⁶¹Those who also went out from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon and Immer, but who could not show their ancestral houses nor their race to prove that they were of Israel: ⁶²The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda, 642. ⁶³Those of the priests were the sons of Hobaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, and the sons of Barzillai, who married one of the daughters of Barzillai^e the Gileadite and then took her family name. ⁶⁴These sought their names among those recorded in the register, but could not find them and so they were considered polluted and put out from the priesthood. ⁶⁵Moreover, the governor^f ordered them to refrain from eating of the most holy things until a priest should stand up with Urim and Thummim.^g

⁶⁶The total number of the group was 42,360 ⁶⁷besides 7337 servants, both men and women, and 245 singers, both men and women. ⁶⁸They had 736 horses, 245 mules, ⁶⁹435 camels, and 6720 donkeys.

⁷⁰Some of the heads of father's houses gave contributions for the work. Also the governor^h gave to the treasury 5000 dollars of gold, 50 basins, and 530 priest's garments. ⁷¹Other leading men together gave to the treasury of the work 100,000 dollars of gold and 77,000 dollars of silver. ⁷²The total given by the rest of the people was 100,000 dollars of gold, 70,000 dollars of silver, and 67 priest's garments.

⁷³Thus the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the common people, and the temple attendants, even all Israel, dwelt in their cities.

October, 444 B.C.

8 NOW WHEN THE SEVENTH MONTH was come, the children of Israel being in their cities, all the people gathered as one man in the squareⁱ by the Water Gate and asked Ezra the

scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses which the LORD had given Israel.^j ²So Ezra the priest brought the law to the assembly in which were both men and women — all who could understand what they heard. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³He read from it in the square by the Water Gate from early morning until the noon hour to the assembled men and women, all who could understand, and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the Law. ⁴Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform which had been made for the purpose and beside him on his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah, and on his left Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshulam. ⁵Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, he standing higher than they, and when he opened it, all the people stood up.^k ⁶Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, to which all the people responded, "Amen, Amen," as they lifted up their hands, bowed their heads, and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁷Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiiah and other Levites helped the people to understand the Law, the people remaining in their places. ⁸They read out of the Law of God distinctly, and they explained the meaning so that they understood the reading.^l

⁹Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who helped the people to understand, said to all the people, "This is a holy day to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping as they listened to the words of the law.^m ¹⁰Further he said to them, "Go, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and give a part to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this is a holy day to our LORD.ⁿ Do not grieve, for

^e) Cf. II Sam. 17:27; 19:31 f; I Kings 2:7.

^f) Hebrew "Tirshatha," referring to Zerubbabel.

^g) Again referring to Zerubbabel. ⁱ) Literally

^j) There is hope when people ask to hear the Word of God.

^k) Evidently in respect for the Law. ^l) The God-appointed task of every minister of the Word.

^m) True reading of God's Word effects response in the heart.

ⁿ) The blessings of God's Word should transform our lives.

^g) To determine the will of God.

^h) "broad place."

the joy of the LORD is your strength."¹¹ Thus the Levites were able to quiet all the people, saying, "Cease weeping, for the day is holy; do not grieve."

¹² Then all the people departed to eat and drink and send portions, to enjoy a real celebration because they had understood what had been explained to them.^o

¹³ On the second day, the heads of fathers' houses of all the people, along with the priests and Levites, met again with Ezra the scribe to learn more about the words of the Law.¹⁴ And they found written in the Law,^p which the LORD had commanded through the ministry of Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in tents during the feast of the seventh month,¹⁵ and that ample announcement should be made in all the cities, especially in Jerusalem, for the people to go out to the hills and bring olive branches, wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of thick-leaved trees to make tents in accordance with what was written.

¹⁶ So the people went out, brought them in and made tents for themselves, some on their own roof, others in their own court, or else in the court of the house of God, or in the square by the Water Gate, or in the square by the Gate of Ephraim.¹⁷ Everyone who had returned from the captivity made tents and dwelt in them, something which the children of Israel had not done since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until this day, and all were very joyful.¹⁸ And he^r continued to read in the book of the law of God day by day from the first day to the last, the feast being held for seven days with the closing festival coming on the eighth day according to the custom.

9 NOW ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY of this month the children of Israel came together with fasting in sackcloth and with earth upon their heads.² And having separated themselves from all

foreigners, the Israelites stood and confessed their own sins and those of their fathers.³ They stood in their places for a fourth part of the day, while the book of the Law of the LORD their God was being read and for another fourth part of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God.⁴ Upon the platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebanish, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Chenani, all Levites, who spoke out in a loud voice to the LORD their God.

⁵ Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah said, "Stand up and bless the LORD your God who is from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be Thy glorious name and exalted above all blessing and praise.⁶ Thou^t alone art the LORD. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is thereon, the sea and all that is therein. Thou dost give life to all and before Thee the host of heaven worships.⁷ Thou art Jehovah, the God who chose Abram, brought him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and changed his name to Abraham.⁸ Thou didst find his heart to be faithful before Thee, and Thou didst make a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites and Thou didst fulfil Thy promise for Thou art righteous."^u

⁹ "Thou didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and didst hear their cry at the Red Sea.¹⁰ Thou didst perform signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants as well as against all the people of the land, because Thou didst know that they acted insolently against our fathers; so Thou didst cause respect for Thy name, as it is this day.¹¹ Thou didst divide the sea before them so that they went through the midst of the sea upon dry land, and Thou didst cast their pur-

^o) It is the privilege and the function of the Christian to be joyful.

^p) Cf. Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:39-43; Num. 29:12-38; Deut. 16:13,15.

^q) Obedience to God is the secret of genuine gladness. ^r) Ezra.

^s) God's Word brings conviction of sin. ^t) Ezra alone probably voices the remainder of the prayer.

^u) Recounting God's blessings is a means of praising Him.

suers into the depths as a stone into mighty waters.^v ¹²Thou didst lead them in the day by a pillar of cloud and in the night by a pillar of fire to provide light for the way in which they should go. ¹³Thou didst come down upon Mount Sinai and, speaking with them from heaven, didst give to them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, ¹⁴and didst make known to them regarding Thy holy Sabbath, commanding them in precepts, statutes and laws by the ministry of Moses Thy servant. ¹⁵Bread from heaven Thou didst give them for their hunger,^w and water from the rock Thou didst bring forth to them for their thirst.^x Thou didst tell them to go in and possess the land which Thou hadst sworn to give them.

¹⁶But they, even our fathers, acted in a proud way, stiffening their necks, and did not listen to Thy commandments. ¹⁷They refused to obey, not being mindful of the wonders which Thou hadst performed among them; they stiffened their necks and appointed a leader to take them back to their slavery in Egypt.^y But Thou art a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in kindness, and Thou didst not forsake them. ¹⁸Even when they had made for themselves a molten calf and said, 'This is your God which has brought you out of Egypt,' and so behaved outrageously, ¹⁹Thou in Thine abundant mercy didst not forsake them in the wilderness, but didst continue to provide for them the pillar of cloud by day to lead them in the way and the pillar of fire by night to illumine for them the path by which they should go. ²⁰Thou didst give Thy good Spirit to instruct them; Thou didst not withhold Thy manna from their mouth and Thou didst provide water for their thirst. ²¹For forty years Thou didst sustain them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothing did not wear out and their feet did not swell.^z

²²"Thou gavest them kingdoms and peoples and didst allot to them every corner; they even possessed the land of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and that of Og, king of Bashan.^a ²³Thou didst multiply their children like the stars of heaven and didst bring them into the land concerning which Thou hadst promised their fathers that they would enter and possess it.^b ²⁴So the children did enter and possess the land as Thou didst subdue before them its inhabitants, the Canaanites, and didst deliver to them their kings and peoples for doing with them as they chose. ²⁵They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they possessed houses filled with good things, hewn-out cisterns, vineyards, olive orchards, and fruit trees in abundance; so they ate and were filled, and, growing fat, they enjoyed life fully by Thy great goodness.^c

²⁶Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against Thee, casting Thy Law behind their back. They killed Thy prophets who warned them that they should return to Thee, and committed other acts of great provocation. ²⁷Consequently, Thou didst deliver them into the hands of their enemies who made them suffer; but when in their suffering they cried to Thee, Thou didst hear from heaven and out of Thine abundant mercy didst give them saviors to save them from their enemies. ²⁸After a time of rest, they again committed sin before Thee and Thou didst again deliver them into the hand of their enemies who again held control over them. Yet, when they once more cried to Thee, Thou in Thy mercy, didst hear from heaven and didst deliver them, even after many times.^d ²⁹Thou didst continue to warn them that they should return to Thy Law; but they, in their pride, refused to obey Thy commandments, persisting in the breaking of Thine ordinances, which if a man keeps he shall live.^e They presented a resisting shoulder and a hardened neck in their refusal to listen. ³⁰For many

v) Refers to the Egyptian army, Ex. 14:23-28. w) The manna, Ex. 16:15.

x) Water from the rock, Ex. 17:5,6. y) In spite of the great suffering they had experienced there.

z) A remarkable and needful provision of God! a) This land was east of the Jordan.

b) The land west of the Jordan. c) They enjoyed the blessing, but forgot that God had given it.

d) This cycle was often repeated in the days of the Judges.

e) Cf. Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11; Luke 10:28.

years Thou didst bear with them, warning them by Thy Spirit through the prophets; yet they would not listen. For that reason Thou didst give them into the hand of neighboring peoples.^f

³¹Nevertheless, in Thine abundant mercy Thou didst not forsake them altogether, for Thou art a God of grace and mercy.

³²"And now, our God, the great, mighty and terrible God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness, let not all the adversity seem small to Thee which has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all Thy people from the days of the Assyrian kings until now. ³³Though indeed Thou hast been just in all that has come upon us, for Thou hast dealt righteously, but we have acted wickedly. ³⁴Our kings, our princes,^g our priests, and our fathers did not keep Thy Law nor heed Thy commandments, nor Thy warnings which Thou didst extend to them.

³⁵They did not serve Thee in respect to their kingdom toward which Thou didst show abundant favor, nor in respect to their large and fertile land which Thou didst give them. They did not turn from their wicked practices.

³⁶Consequently, we are in bondage today, even in the land which Thou gavest to our fathers to eat its fruit and its good things; we are slaves in it.^h

³⁷Its rich yield goes to the kings which Thou hast placed over us because of our sin, who exercise authority even over our bodies and our cattle as they please, so that we are in great distress.

³⁸In view of all this we do make a sure covenant in writing, and our princes, our Levites, and our priests set their seal upon it."

10 THOSE WHO SET THEIR SEAL were: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah; Zedekiah, ²Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, ³Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, ⁴Hattush, She-

baniah, Malluch, ⁵Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, ⁶Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, ⁷Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

⁸Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah; these were the priests.

⁹The Levites were: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; ¹⁰and their brothers, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, ¹¹Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, ¹²Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, ¹³Hodiah, Bani, and Beninur.

¹⁴The leaders of the people were: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, ¹⁵Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, ¹⁶Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, ¹⁷Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, ¹⁸Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, ¹⁹Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, ²⁰Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, ²¹Meshezabel, Zadok, Zaddua, ²²Pelathiah, Hanan, Anaiah, ²³Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, ²⁴Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, ²⁵Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, ²⁶Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, ²⁷Maluch, Harim, and Baanah.

²⁸The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers,ⁱ the temple attendants, and all who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all who had knowledge and understanding, ²⁹joined with their brothers, the leaders, in entering into an oath involving penalty, swearing to walk in God's Law, which was given through Moses the servant of God, to observe and carry out all the commandments, judgments, and statutes of Jehovah our^j LORD. ³⁰We promised that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land nor take their daughters for our sons; ³¹that if the peoples of the land would bring in wares or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we would not buy from them on the Sabbath or other holy day; and^k that in the seventh year we would forego the crops and the exacting of any debt.^k

³²We also imposed upon ourselves

f) Refers to the captivities to Assyria and Babylonia.

g) The head of a tribe or of a clan, as well as a governor or a king's son was titled a prince. The essential meaning is leader.

h) The Jews were under the sovereignty of Persia.

i) Singing played a large part in temple worship.

j) Nehemiah begins to use the first person, continuing to vs. 39.

k) Sabbatic year observance; Ex. 23:10,11.

as a law that we would give a dollar annually¹ for the service of the house of our God: ³³for the showbread, the continual meal-offering, the continual burnt-offering, the Sabbaths, the new moons, the established feasts, the holy things, the sin-offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. ³⁴Likewise we cast lots among the priests, the Levites and the people for determining the order in which our fathers' houses, at regular times, year by year, should supply wood for the offerings, bringing it into the house of our God for burning upon the altar of the LORD our God as it is written in the Law. ³⁵We further pledged that we would bring the first-fruits of our land and the first-fruits of all fruit from all our trees annually to the house of the LORD; ³⁶also to bring the first-born of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God, according as it is written in the Law; ³⁷besides to bring the best of the coarse meal,^m of the heave-offerings,ⁿ of the fruit of every tree, of the new wine, and of the oil to the priests in the chambers of the house of our God; and to bring to the Levites the tithes of our ground; for the Levites are they who collect tithes in all our country towns. ³⁸Accompanying the Levites when they collect their tithe shall be a priest, a son of Aaron; for the Levites shall in turn bring a tenth of their tithe to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.^o ³⁹For it was to these chambers that both the children of Israel and the Levites were to bring all heave-offerings of grain, new wine and oil, for there were the sacred vessels, the ministering priests, the gatekeepers, and the singers; for we would not neglect the house of our God.

11 NOW THE LEADERS OF THE PEOPLE lived in Jerusalem and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one

out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, leaving the other nine in the other towns.^p ²The people also blessed all those who volunteered to make their home in Jerusalem.^q

Fall, 444 B.C.

³These are the heads of the province who lived in Jerusalem; while in the other towns of Judah each lived on his own property in his own city Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple attendants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants. ⁴In Jerusalem lived some of the descendants of Judah and some of the descendants of Benjamin. Of the tribe of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, of the sons of Perez; ⁵and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, son of Colhozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, son of the Shilonite. ⁶All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 valiant men.

⁷These are of the tribe of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Jeshaiiah. ⁸After him Gabbai-Sallai with 928. ⁹Over them as chief was Joel the son of Zichri, with Judah the son of Hassenuah being the second in command over the city.

¹⁰Of the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,^r ¹¹Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, who was ruler over the house of God, ¹²and their brothers who did the work of the house, 822; also Adaiah the son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, ¹³and his brothers who were heads of father's houses, 242; also Amashsai the son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer, ¹⁴and their brothers, who were mighty men of valor, 128. Their overseer was Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim.^s

1) One shekel worth about sixty-six cents, now equivalent to much more than a dollar, cf. Ex. 30:11-16, one half shekel imposed. m) Or "dough." n) Or "contributions."

o) Certain rooms of the temple were set aside for such storing purposes.

p) Evidently only a few desired to live in the city itself, cf. 7:4.

q) These volunteers are in addition to the rulers and the one in ten of vs. 1.

r) Or "Jedaiah, Joiarib, Jachin"; cf. I Chron. 9:10. s) Or "the son of the great men."

¹⁵Of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Bunni; ¹⁶Shabbethai and Jozabad, leaders among the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God; ¹⁷Mattaniah the son of Mica, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, who was the leader to begin the thanksgiving with prayer; Bakbukiah, the second among his brothers; and Abda the son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸All the Levites in the holy city were 284.

¹⁹The gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers who kept watch at the gates were 172. ²⁰The rest of the priests, the Levites, and the common people of Israel lived in other cities of Judah, each in his own inheritance. ²¹However, the temple attendants dwelt on Ophel^t with Ziha and Gishpa their overseers.

²²The overseer of the work of the house of God among the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, of the sons of Asaph, the singers. ²³For there was a commandment from the king^u concerning them and a settled provision for the singers as every day required. ²⁴As counsel regarding the affairs of the people before the king was Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah, son of Judah.

²⁵In respect to the towns with their surrounding territories, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and her environs, in Dibon and her environs, in Jekabzeel and her environs, ²⁶in Jeshua, in Moladah, in Beth-pelet, ²⁷in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and her environs, ²⁸in Ziklag, in Meconah and her environs, ²⁹in En-remmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth, ³⁰in both Zanoah and Adullam and their environs, in Lachish and her environs, and in Azekah and her environs. So they occupied the land from Beer-sheba to the valley of Hinnom. ³¹The people of Benjamin occupied from Geba onward: Michmash, Aija, Bethel and her

environs, ³²Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, ³³Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, ³⁴Hadid, Zebaim, Neballat, ³⁵Lod, and Ono the valley of craftsmen.^v ³⁶Also to Benjamin were attached certain courses of Levites formerly of Judah.

12 THESE ARE THE PRIESTS AND the Levites who returned with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,^w ²Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, ³Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, ⁴Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, ⁵Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁶Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁷Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah. These were the leaders among the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua.

⁸The Levites were: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah who with his brothers was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving; ⁹also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, who stood opposite to them in their places of service.

¹⁰Now Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim the father of Eliashib, Eliashib the father of Joiada, ¹¹Joiada the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan the father of Jaddua.

¹²In the days of Joiakim, the priests, who were the heads of fathers' houses, were: ¹Of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; ¹³of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; of ¹⁴Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; ¹⁵of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; ¹⁶of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; ¹⁷of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; ¹⁸of Bilgah, Shamua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; ¹⁹of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; ²⁰of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; ²¹of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

²²As for the Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua,^y a record was kept of the heads of fathers' houses; also this was true for the priests during the reign of Darius the Persian.^z ²³Until the days of Johanan:

t) An eastern hill of Jerusalem south of the temple. u) Persian King, Artaxerxes.

v) Hebrew "Ge-haharashim"; cf. I Chron. 4:14. w) Not Ezra the scribe.

x) The first name each time gives the head of a priestly house in Jeshua's day, the second in the day of Jeshua's son, Joiakim.

y) Four successive high priests. z) Darius Nothus, 424-404 B.C.

the son of Eliashib, the record of the heads of fathers' houses among the descendants of Levi was kept in the book of the chronicles. ²⁴Among the heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, who, along with their brothers, stood opposite one another to render praise and thanksgiving according to the commandment of David the man of God. ²⁵Gatekeepers at the gates of the storehouses were Mattaniah, Bakkukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub. ²⁶These men^a were active in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scribe.

²⁷At the time of the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, Levites were summoned from their respective places to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, thanksgiving, singing, and the playing of cymbals, harps, and lyres. ²⁸Then the descendants of the singers gathered themselves from the territory close by Jerusalem, from the villages of the Netophathites, ²⁹from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built their own villages around Jerusalem. ³⁰The priests and the Levites purified^b themselves, after which they purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

³¹Then I^c had the princes of Judah climb the wall and I appointed two large groups who gave thanks and went in procession; one group going to the right on the wall towards the Dung Gate. ³²Following this group went Hoshaiah and half of the princes of Judah; ³³also Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah. ³⁵Included too were certain of the priest's sons carrying trumpets: Zechariah the son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph; ³⁶and his brothers, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani with the musical in-

struments of David the man of God. At the head of this section was Ezra the scribe. ³⁷At the Fountain Gate they went straight ahead and climbed the stairs of the city of David at the ascent of the wall by the house of David and came to the Water Gate on the east.

³⁸The second group, who had given thanks, went to the left, followed by me and the other half of the people,^d upon the wall above the Tower of Furnaces to the Broad Wall ³⁹and thence above the Gate of Ephraim passing successively the Old Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, the Tower of Hammeah, the Sheep Gate, and coming to a halt at the Gate of the Guard. ⁴⁰So the two groups who had given thanks stood in the house of God along with myself and half of the rulers ⁴¹in addition to these priests: Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, all with trumpets; ⁴²also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers contributed their music under the direction of Jezrahiah. ⁴³Also great sacrifices were offered on that day as the people rejoiced, for God caused them to rejoice greatly, even the women and the children, so that the sound of this rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard far away.

⁴⁴On that day appointments were made of those who were to be over the chambers in which were kept the stores, the heave-offerings,^e the first-fruits, and the tithes, and to gather into them, according to the fields about a city, the portions as prescribed in the law for the priests and the Levites; for Judah was deeply appreciative of the ministering work of the priests and Levites. ⁴⁵Because they performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as also did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the commandment of David and Solomon his son. ⁴⁶For in the former days of David, Asaph^f was the chief of the singers, and of the songs of praise, and of

a) Reference is to those mentioned in vss. 12-21 and 24,25.

b) By means of sacrifices, cf. II Chron. 29:20-24. c) Nehemiah uses the first person through vs. 43.

d) An impressive sight, two columns of people led by Ezra and Nehemiah respectively!

e) Or "contributions"; cf. 10:37.

f) Or "in the days of David and Asaph, there was a chief . . . etc."

thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷In both the time of Zerubbabel and that of Nehemiah, all the people of Israel gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers, and they set apart what was for the Levites, and the Levites in turn set apart what was for the sons of Aaron.^g

432 B. C.

13 ALSO ON THAT DAY, THE BOOK of Moses was read in the hearing of the people and in it was found written^h that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, ²because they had not met the children of Israel with bread and water, but rather had hired Balaam against them to curse them, though, indeed, God had turned the curse into a blessing. ³Consequently, when the people heard the Law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent.

⁴Now before this,ⁱ Eliashib the priest, who had been appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being connected with Tobiah,^j had made for Tobiah a large chamber where previously had been stored the meal-offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, new wine, and the oil, which, by commandment, were to be given to the Levites, the singers, and the gatekeepers, and the heave-offerings for the priests. ⁶When this happened I was not in Jerusalem for in the thirty-second year^k of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, I had returned to the king. However, after some time upon making request to the king, ⁷I was permitted to come again to Jerusalem at which time I learned of the sinful service which Eliashib had done for Tobiah in making a chamber for him in the courts of the house of God. ⁸It grieved me sorely so that I put all the personal items of Tobiah out of the chamber. ⁹Then I gave the order and they cleansed the chambers, after which I returned there the articles of the house of God, with the meal-offerings and the frankincense.

¹⁰Also I discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given them so that they and the singers, who were supposed to do the work, had resorted to their own fields. ¹¹Therefore I remonstrated with the rulers and said, "Why is the house of God thus abandoned?"^l Then I gathered them together and assigned them to their positions. ¹²This done, all Judah brought their tithes of the grain, the new wine, and the oil into the storehouses. ¹³And I appointed as managers over the storehouses Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as their assistant, Hanan the son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah, for they were considered trustworthy, it being their responsibility to distribute to their brothers.^m ¹⁴Remember me, my God, concerning this, and do not expunge the benevolent service I have rendered on behalf of the house of my God and its observances.

¹⁵In those days I saw that certain persons were treading winepresses on the Sabbath day, besides bringing heaps of grain, wine, grapes, figs and other produce loaded upon donkeys into Jerusalem on the Sabbath. These I rebuked on the day in which they sold the food. ¹⁶Also merchants of Tyre were staying there, having brought in fish and other wares and were selling them on the Sabbath in Jerusalem to the people of Judah.ⁿ ¹⁷Then I reproved the leaders of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil which you are committing in defiling the Sabbath day? ¹⁸Is this not the same as what your fathers did, for which cause our God brought upon us and upon our city the punishment?^o You are now adding more wrath upon Israel in defiling the Sabbath."

¹⁹Then, as it began to get dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I gave the order and the gates were closed; I furthermore indicatedⁱ that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. Also I stationed

g) Cf. 10:38 and Num. 18:26. h) Cf. Deut. 23:36.

i) Reference is to Nehemiah's return from Artaxerxes' court, vs. 6,7, rather than to the preceding events. j) Or "related to Tobiah." k) 433 B.C., cf. 5:14.

l) God's servants are to be supported in God's appointed way.

m) Finances in God's work are to be handled carefully.

n) Notice the comparatively recent promise of the people, 10:31. o) Refers to the captivity.

some of my servants at the gates to see that no burdens were brought in on the Sabbath day. ²⁰As a result, the merchants and sellers of the various types of wares lodged outside of Jerusalem once or twice.^p ²¹But I warned them, saying to them, "Why are you remaining here outside the wall? If you do so again I shall arrest you." From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath. ²²Then I gave command to the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates that the Sabbath might be kept holy. Remember me, my God, also concerning this and have compassion on me according to the abundance of Thy lovingkindness.

²³In those days I also observed the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, ²⁴so that their children spoke half in the Ashdod tongue, not being able to speak the Jew's language well, but the language of their respective nationality.^q ²⁵Then I contended with them, cursing them, striking some of them, and pulling out their hair, and I caused them to take an oath in the name of God, saying,

"You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take from their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. ²⁶Was it not in this same way that Solomon king of Israel sinned? Among the many nations there was not a king like him and he was beloved of his God^r so that God made him king over all Israel, and yet even he was caused to sin by foreign wives. ²⁷Must we hear about you that you commit this great wickedness of marrying foreign women and are unfaithful to God?"

²⁸Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was the son-in-law^s of Sanballat the Haronite; him I chased from me. ²⁹Remember them, my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

³⁰Thus I cleansed them from all foreigners, and established the duties of the priests and of the Levites, each according to his own task; ³¹and I provided for the supplying of wood at the appointed times of sacrifice, and of the first-fruits. Remember me, my God, benevolently.

p) They were hopeful that Nehemiah's reform would not be carried out.

q) Notice the comparatively recent promise and action of the people, 10:30; 13:3.

r) God's promise of wisdom, riches, and honor to Solomon so indicates; cf. 1 Kings 3:5-14.

s) The rival temple and priesthood on Mt. Gerizim is said to have been set up by this man; cf. John 4:20.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

482 B.C.

1 IN THE DAYS OF AHASUERUS^a (THE Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces), ²in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in the Shushan palace, ³in the third year of his reign,^b he gave a feast to all his princes and his courtiers; and before the army officers of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of the provinces, ⁴he displayed the wealth of his regal glory and the costly glamour of his majesty for many days, for 180 days.

⁵With this period ended, the king feasted all the people of the Shushan stronghold, high and low, for seven days in the court of the palace garden. ⁶White and blue tapestries were fastened with purple cords of fine linen to silver rings on marble pillars. Gold and silver couches were placed on a pavement of alabaster, white marble, mother-of-pearl, and black marble. ⁷Drinks were served in different styles of golden cups, with wine in abundance, in keeping with the king's generosity. ⁸The drinking was done according to the rule, no compulsion. For the king had given orders to all the waiters that they should allow each guest to have his own way.

⁹Queen Vashti gave a banquet, too, for the women of King Ahasuerus'

royal palace. ¹⁰On the seventh day, when the king was in a happy mood from the wine, he ordered Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who waited most intimately on King Ahasuerus, ¹¹to bring Queen Vashti, with her royal crown, into the king's presence, so as to display her beauty to the people and to the princes; for she was lovely to look upon. ¹²But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's orders which the eunuchs conveyed to her; for this the king grew furious, and his anger burned hotly. ¹³The king said to the wise men,^c who understood the customs of their period—for the king habitually so laid his affairs before all who knew law and justice ¹⁴and were close to him, Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who were on familiar footing with the king and enjoyed first place in the realm—¹⁵"How should Queen Vashti be handled legally, since she has failed to carry out the king's orders, sent her through the eunuchs?"

¹⁶Addressing the king and the princes, Memucan gave answer, "Not only toward the king has Queen Vashti^d misbehaved, but toward all the

a) A name of several Persian kings.

b) Xerxes, the name used in Grecian history for this Ahasuerus, ascended the Media-Persian throne in 486 B.C. In 485 he subdued Egypt; but in 480 he sailed with a fleet of twelve hundred sails against Greece, crossed the Hellespont on a bridge of boats, with over a million men, meeting no resistance till Leonidas with his Spartans met him at the Thermopylae Pass. Betrayed, the Spartan king fell with his men; but the small Grecian fleet defeated the Persian Armada and Xerxes fled.

c) Those men formed what we now term a cabinet. Pharaoh had a similar group about him when Moses interviewed him.

d) That Vashti showed her queenly qualities did not occur to them, least of all to Ahasuerus.

princes and all the peoples that dwell in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus; ¹⁷because this conduct of the queen will be broadcast to all the women, so that they will look down on their husbands, saying, 'King Ahasuerus gave orders to bring Queen Vashti before him, and she would not come.' ¹⁸This very day the princesses of Persia and Media who learn of the queen's behavior will so respond to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and bad temper. ¹⁹If it pleases your majesty, may a royal edict be issued and let it be written into the laws of Persia and Media, so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti must no more appear in the presence of King Ahasuerus and that your majesty will transfer her position as queen to another better than she. ²⁰When the edict which your majesty issues is heard throughout your realm, great as it is, then all the women, high and low, will respect their husbands."

²¹The king and the princes favored the proposition, and the king acted in agreement with Memucan's counsel. ²²He sent letters to all the royal provinces, to each province in its own script, to every people in their own tongue, that each man should be master in his house and should speak in line with his people's ways.^a

2 AFTER THESE EVENTS, THE ANGER of King Ahasuerus calmed down, and his thoughts reverted to Vashti, what she had done and what had been decided against her. ²The king's valets then suggested to him, "Have a search made for young girls for your majesty, beautiful virgins; ³let your majesty appoint deputies in all the provinces of his realm, who shall gather into the women's quarters of the Shushan palace all the young, beautiful maidens, under supervision of Hege, the king's eunuch in charge of the women, where the beautifying cosmetics will be made available for them. ⁴Then let the young lady whom your majesty considers

most lovely become queen in the place of Vashti." The suggestion appealed to the king, and he acted accordingly.

⁵There lived in the Shushan stronghold a Jew named Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite.^c ⁶He was among those whom Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, had deported from Jerusalem with Jeconiah,^e king of Judah. ⁷He was foster father^b to Hadassah,ⁱ that is Esther,^j his uncle's daughter; because she had neither father nor mother living. She was a girl of lovely form and features whom, at the death of her father and mother, Mordecai had adopted as his own daughter. ⁸So, when the king's orders and summons were published, and many girls were brought together in the Shushan palace under Hege's supervision, Esther, too, was received into the royal dwelling in charge of Hege the superintendent of women.

⁹The young lady impressed him well; she won his good will, so that he readily supplied the cosmetics and whatever was helpful; he also furnished her with seven choice maids from the palace, letting her with her maids have the finest apartment in the harem. ¹⁰Esther had not mentioned her nationality and family background, for Mordecai had instructed her not to make them known. ¹¹But every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the women's quarters to find out how Esther was faring and what was happening to her.

¹²When for each girl the turn came to go to King Ahasuerus, after she had for twelve months undergone the prescribed treatment for women — for the preparatory period was proportioned this way: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with balms and perfumes for beautifying the women — ¹³thus prepared, the girl came to the king. Anything she wanted to take along from the harem to the royal palace was given her. ¹⁴She entered in the evening and came back in the

e) With authority as was customary.

f) A descendant of King Saul's family.

g) That is, Jehoiachin, taken to Babylon in 598.

h) Mordecai was Esther's first cousin, but much older. i) Hebrew name for myrtle.

j) Persian Sitareh — star.

morning to a second harem, under supervision of the king's eunuch Shaash-gaz, the overseer of the concubines. She must not visit the king again, unless the king took a liking to her and called for her by name.

¹⁵When the turn came for Esther, the daughter of Abihail, uncle to Mordecai who had adopted her, to go to the king, she requested nothing but what Hege, the king's eunuch in charge of the women, suggested, and Esther won the hearts of all who saw her. ¹⁶When in the tenth month, the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of the reign of King Ahasuerus,¹ Esther was taken to his royal palace, ¹⁷the king felt more love for Esther than for all the women.^m She gained more attachment and kindness from him than did all the girls, so that he placed the royal crown on her head and made her queen in the place of Vashti. ¹⁸The king then gave a great banquet in Esther's honor to his princes and servants. He also exempted the provinces from tribute and awarded donations with regal liberality.

¹⁹While for the second time a bevy of virgins was being levied, Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate. ²⁰Esther, as Mordecai had cautioned her, had revealed neither her kinship nor her nationality, for Esther continued to conduct herself in agreement with Mordecai's instructions, just as when she was being reared by him. ²¹In those days, as Mordecai was sitting in the royal gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's door-keeping eunuchs felt thoroughly resentful and plotted to get rid of King Ahasuerus;ⁿ ²²but Mordecai heard of it and told Queen Esther, who in his name informed the king. ²³The matter was investigated and found correct; so both were hanged on a tree, and the incident was recorded in the chronicles, with the king looking on.

3 FOLLOWING THESE EVENTS KING Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite. He advanced him and seated him higher than all his fellow princes. ²Then all the king's courtiers, who were in the royal gate, bowed low and knelt to Haman; for such were the king's orders respecting him; but Mordecai neither bowed deeply nor knelt to him.^o ³So the king's courtiers who were at the royal gate, said to Mordecai, "Why do you act contrary to the king's orders?" ⁴And when day after day they spoke to him and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's behavior would stand; for he had let them know that he was a Jew. ⁵When Haman saw that Mordecai neither bowed nor knelt, he swelled up with anger, ⁶but he considered it beneath him to apprehend Mordecai singly,^p for they had told him of Mordecai's nationality, and he intended to destroy all the Jews, Mordecai's people, in all the realm of Ahasuerus.

⁷In the first month, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus,^q they cast the lot (pur), before Haman, and so each day from month to month until the twelfth month, named Adar. ⁸Then Haman told King Ahasuerus, "There is a race scattered and dispersed among all the peoples in the provinces of your realm, whose laws differ from those of all other nations, and they do not observe the king's laws, so that it is not expedient for your majesty to tolerate them. ⁹If it is agreeable to your majesty, let an ordinance be written to destroy them, and I will pay twenty million silver dollars into the hands of those in charge of the royal treasury."^r ¹⁰The king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jew-hater, ¹¹and the king said to Haman, "The money is allowed you

1) This would be 479 B.C., a year after his ignominious defeat by the Greeks.

m) Of pure love the licentious monarch would hardly be capable.

n) Two eunuchs succeeded in assassinating him in 465 B.C.

o) Kneeling implied worship; which could be rendered by a faithful Jew to God only.

p) Biography here repeats itself. Haman, a descendant of Agag, the Amalekite king, whom King Saul failed to execute, I Sam. 15: 9-33, intends to have Mordecai, a descendant of Kish, Saul's father, executed. q) 474 B.C.

r) To cover expenses of the bloody program, including encouraging bribes.

and so are the people; do with them as you please."

¹²On the thirteenth day of the first month, the royal scribes were summoned and, in full agreement with Haman's orders, a letter was addressed to the king's deputies, to the provincial governors, and to the princes of all the peoples, to every province according to its style of writing and to each people in their language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.^s ¹³The letters were sent by swift post to all the royal provinces to wipe out, to kill, and to destroy all the Jews, young and old, children and women, in one day, the thirteenth of the twelfth month, the month Adar, and to take their property for plunder. ¹⁴A copy of the edict must be proclaimed as law in every province and made known to all the peoples, so they might be ready against that day. ¹⁵Speedily the swift posts set out at the king's orders, and the edict was given out at the Shushan stronghold. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was in confusion.^t

4 WHEN MORDECAI ASCERTAINED everything that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes, put on sackcloth with ashes,^u walked out to the center of the city, lamenting loudly and bitterly. ²He even came to the front of the royal gate, for none in mourning costume was permitted to enter the king's gate.^v ³And in each province, wherever the king's command and edict arrived, there was deep mourning among the Jews, fasting, weeping, and lamentation, many making their couch in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴When Queen Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply shocked. She sent clothes to dress Mordecai and to displace his sackcloth; but he would not accept them. ⁵Then Esther summoned Hat-

ach, one of the king's eunuchs, whom he had assigned to wait on her, and she charged him to find out from Mordecai the what and the wherefore of it. ⁶So Hatach went to Mordecai at the city square, facing the royal gate, ⁷and Mordecai told him everything that had occurred; also the exact amount of money that Haman had pledged to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸He handed him a copy of the written edict too, that had been issued from Shushan to annihilate them, to show it to Esther, so that she might understand the situation, and to charge her to call on the king, to beg for his mercy and to plead for her people face to face with him. ⁹So Hatach went in and conveyed Mordecai's message to Esther.

¹⁰Esther then charged Hatach to tell Mordecai, ¹¹"All the king's courtiers and all the residents in the provinces know that for every person, man or woman, who enters the king's inner court uninvited, there is one penalty, execution. Only the person to whom the king extends the golden scepter survives. But for thirty days now I have not been called in to the king."^w

¹²When they conveyed this message from Esther to Mordecai, ¹³Mordecai gave instructions to answer Esther, "Do not imagine that because you are inside the royal palace, you alone of all the Jews will escape; ¹⁴for if you at this time keep still, deliverance and rescue for the Jews will originate from some other quarter, while you and your family shall be destroyed.^x And who knows but you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" ¹⁵Then Esther told them to give Mordecai this answer, ¹⁶"Go and gather all the Shushan Jews that are available and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I, too, and my maids will similarly fast. Then, in spite of the injunction, I will go to the king; and if I perish, I perish." ¹⁷Mor-

s) An edict, thus identified and confirmed, could never be revoked.

t) Not merely the Jews, but the natives among whom the Jews had earned considerable respect.

u) Coarse cloth, usually of goats' hair. The Hebrew word is *sak* and it was worn in the form of a sack with openings for neck and arms and a slit in front.

v) Nothing suggesting distress must come within range of royalty's vision.

w) The king had done remarkably well to retain the same queen for such a period; but of late his interests had been elsewhere in his harem.

x) Mordecai's reply contained a threat or warning, in case Esther failed to cooperate.

decai then went out and carried out all of Esther's instructions.

5 ON THE THIRD DAY ESTHER, dressed in royal splendor, took her stand in the inner court of the king's palace facing the royal hall, while the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room opposite the hall entrance. ²When the king noticed Esther standing in the court, she won his favor,^y and the king extended toward her the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew closer and touched the tip of the scepter. ³The king then asked her, "What is on your mind, Queen Esther? What is your wish? It will be granted you if it were half the kingdom." ⁴Esther said, "If it please your majesty, then let the king and Haman attend the banquet that I have prepared for the king." ⁵"Get Haman at once," said the king, "so that we may comply with Esther's wish." So he came with Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

⁶As they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition? It will be granted you. And what is your request? It will be met, if it were half the kingdom." ⁷Esther responded, "My request, my wish is, ⁸if I have won your majesty's favor and if the king takes pleasure in granting my request, then will your majesty with Haman attend the banquet I shall prepare for him tomorrow, and I will do as the king suggests."

⁹That day Haman left in a happy mood, in high spirits; but when Haman noticed Mordecai in the royal gate, who neither rose nor changed position for him, Haman's temper grew hot against Mordecai; ¹⁰however, Haman controlled himself and went home. He invited his friends and his wife Zeresh to visit with him, ¹¹and Haman regaled them with the abundance of his wealth, the number of his sons, and the honor which the king had bestowed on him with his promotion above the king's princes and courtiers. ¹²Haman added,

"What is more, today Queen Esther invited me alone beside the king to the banquet she had prepared, and for tomorrow, too, she has asked me to come with the king. ¹³Yet, all this remains unsatisfactory to me, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew seated in the royal gate."^z

¹⁴Zeresh, his wife, and all his friends told him, "Have a gallows erected 75 feet high, and tell the king the first thing in the morning that Mordecai should be hanged on it; then you can happily accompany the king to the banquet." The idea appealed to Haman, and he ordered a gallows to be constructed.

6 ON THAT NIGHT SLEEP VANISHED from the king;^a so he ordered the record book of memorable events to be brought out, which was read to the king. ²When they found written what Mordecai had reported about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's door-keeping eunuchs, how they had plotted to assassinate King Ahasuerus, ³the king asked, "What honor or distinction has been rendered Mordecai for this?" The courtiers who waited on him, replied, "Not a thing has been done for him." ⁴The king said, "Who is there at court?"

Just then Haman had entered the outer court to tell the king he should hang Mordecai on the gallows which he himself had erected for him. ⁵So the king's eunuchs told him, "Look, Haman is standing in the front court." The king said, "Let him come in." ⁶When Haman had entered, the king asked him, "What should be done to the man whom the king is glad to honor?" Haman said to himself, "To whom would the king be glad to render honor more than to me?" ⁷He therefore answered the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor, ⁸let them fetch a royal cloak which the king himself has worn, and a horse on which the king rides, its head adorned with a royal crown. ⁹Let that cloak and that

y) The queen had preserved her good looks, and there is no mention of offspring.

z) For the proud there is always a fly in the ointment.

a) God's name is not mentioned in the whole Book of Esther, but His hand is perfectly evident in the events.

horse be entrusted to one of your majesty's most noble princes; let him dress the man whom your majesty is glad to honor and have him ride that horse through the city square and proclaim before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king is delighted to honor!"

¹⁰The king said to Haman, "Hurry! Get that robe and that horse as you suggested, and do so to Mordecai the Jew who sits at the royal gate. Let nothing be omitted of all you have said."^b ¹¹Haman then secured the robe and the horse, dressed Mordecai and had him ride through the city square, while he shouted before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king is delighted to honor." ¹²Mordecai went back to the royal gate, but Haman went home, lamenting and with his face veiled. ¹³And when Haman had rehearsed to Zeresh, his wife, and to all his friends all that had happened to him, his wise men^c and Zeresh, his wife, said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the Jewish race, then you are powerless against him; instead of facing him you will be downed completely."^d ¹⁴While they were still conversing with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and conducted Haman quickly to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 THE KING AND HAMAN WENT TO Queen Esther's banquet, ²and again on the second day, while they were drinking wine, the king asked Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It will be granted you. What is your request? If it were half the kingdom, it shall be executed."

³Queen Esther replied, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, then may my life be granted me at my petition and my people at my request; ⁴because we have been sold, I and my people, to be de-

stroyed, to be killed, to be obliterated. Had we merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept still; although the enemy cannot compensate for the damage this will work to the king."^e

⁶King Ahasuerus spoke up. He said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is the person who dared contemplate such a thing?" ⁶Esther replied, "An oppressor, an enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was in terror at the looks of the king and the queen. ⁷Angrily the king arose from his wine and walked into the palace garden; but Haman remained standing to plead with Queen Esther for his life; because he saw that utter ruin had been decided against him by the king.

⁸When the king came back from the palace garden to the banqueting hall, Haman had dropped down on the couch on which Esther was reclining, and the king remarked, "Violating the queen before me in my house!"^f No sooner had the word left the king's lips than they covered Haman's face. ⁹Harbonah, one of the eunuchs in waiting on the king, observed, "Then there are the gallows, 75 feet high, standing at Haman's house, which he erected for Mordecai, who spoke on behalf of the king."^g

"Hang him on it," said the king. ¹⁰So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had set up for Mordecai. And the king's anger calmed down.

8 ON THAT SAME DAY KING AHASUERUS transferred to Queen Esther the belongings of Haman, the Jew-hater, and Mordecai became the king's right-hand man; for Esther had made known how they were related. ²The king took off his signet ring, which he had taken back from Haman and gave it to Mordecai; while Esther appointed Mordecai in charge of the Haman affairs.^h

b) The king was no "babe in malice"; he almost surely suspected Haman's self-confidence.

c) Most likely the men who had cast the lot for him.

d) The exiled Jews had taken their discipline and were showing character. They had turned to God and thus grew abler than most natives.

e) She seems to have known of the twenty million silver dollars Haman had offered for the royal treasury. f) The king had not felt flattered with Haman's company at the banquet; he would have preferred to go alone.

g) Haman had made many enemies by his haughty demeanor after his promotion.

h) Mordecai became Prime Minister, and the wealth Haman had accumulated while in politics became Esther's.

⁸Once more Esther addressed the king, fell at his feet and with tears begged of him to frustrate the wicked plot of Haman the Agagite and the scheme he had framed against the Jews. ⁴The king held out the golden scepter to Esther, so that Esther arose, stood before the king, ⁵and said, "If it pleases your majesty and I am in your good graces, if it seems right in the king's judgment and I am pleasing him,¹ then let a dispatch be issued to reverse the letters with the scheme that Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite concocted, written to destroy all the Jews in your majesty's provinces. ⁶For how could I look on, while disaster strikes my people, and how, Oh, how, could I bear the ruin of my race!"

⁷King Ahasuerus then told Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Look! I have handed Haman's belongings over to Esther, and him they have hanged on the gallows; because he would lay hand on the Jews. ⁸Now you yourselves write for the Jews as you think best, in the king's name and seal it with the royal signet ring; for a document that is written in the king's name is sealed with the royal signet ring no one may reverse."²

⁹The royal scribes, therefore, were immediately summoned, that twenty-third day of the third month, the month Sivan. As Mordecai ordered, so the dispatch was written to the Jews, to the deputies, to the governors and to the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, to each province in its own script, to each people in their own language, and to the Jews, too, in their own writing and tongue. ¹⁰They wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with his signet ring and sent the letters by swift posts riding on royal horses and mules, raised from young mares, ¹¹to the effect that the king gave the Jews in all cities permission to unite for the defense of

their lives; also to destroy, kill, and exterminate all forces of peoples and provinces that armed against them, including women and children,³ and to take over their property, ¹²all on an appointed day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month Adar.¹ ¹³A copy of this letter, which in all the provinces must be executed as law, must be brought to the knowledge of all the peoples, and the Jews must be ready against that day to get the better of their enemies. ¹⁴So the swift posts, riding royal horses, sped forth, hastened by the king's command, when the mandate had been proclaimed from the Shushan palace.

¹⁵Mordecai went out from the king's presence wearing royal robes, blue and white, a large golden diadem, and a purple robe of fine linen. The city of Shushan shouted and was glad; ¹⁶for the Jews there was illumination and happiness, enjoyment and honor. ¹⁷Similarly in province after province and in every city wherever the king's mandate and decree penetrated, the Jews had joy and gladness, feast and frolic. And many among the people of the land called themselves Jews, because fear of the Jews had overtaken them.

9 SO ON THE THIRTEENTH OF ADAR, which is the twelfth month, when the king's mandate and decree were to be enforced, the day on which the Jew-haters expected to overpower them, it turned about to be a day in which the Jews themselves gained the upper hand over their adversaries. ²The Jews united in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to seize^m those who planned their ruin, and none could withstand them, because the dread of them had possessed all the peoples. ³Besides, all the princes of the provinces, also the viceroys, the governors, and the officers of the king sup-

i) A balanced sentence such as orientals love to construct.

j) Haman's letter, sealed by the king's signet ring, could not be countermanded, but the Jews could be allowed to defend themselves, while royal appointees looked on with favor.

k) Unless women and children had been hurtfully hostile to the Jews, this looks like revenge rather than justice. But our century, too, has witnessed dangerously fanatic moods toward women and children.

l) The date set by Haman; hence the need of haste to make prevention sure. The month Adar corresponds to our February.

m) Literally — to lay hands on, which probably means, they killed them, as v. 5 confirms.

ported the Jews, because they stood in fear of Mordecai; ⁴for Mordecai was prominent in the royal palace, and his reputation spread through all the provinces; for this man Mordecai grew steadily more powerful.

⁵So it was that the Jews put all their enemies to the sword with slaughter and destruction; they had their own way with their opponents. ⁶In the Shushan stronghold, ^a the Jews slew and exterminated five hundred men. ⁷They also executed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha, ¹⁰the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the Jew-hater. They slew them but did not touch the loot. ¹¹When on that day the number of the slain in Shushan was reported to the king, ¹²the king said to Queen Esther, "In the Shushan stronghold the Jews have slain and exterminated five hundred men, aside from Haman's ten sons. What must they have done in the other provinces of the king! What is your request? It will be granted you. What is your further wish? It will be conceded."^o

¹³Esther replied, "If it is agreeable to your majesty, then allow the Jews in Shushan tomorrow to act according to today's edict, and have Haman's ten sons hanged on the gallows." ¹⁴The king so ordered it to be done; an edict was proclaimed in Shushan, and Haman's ten sons were hanged. ¹⁵The Jews also mustered in Shushan on the fourteenth day of the month Adar and slew in Shushan three hundred men,^p but they did not touch the loot. ¹⁶The other Jews, in the king's provinces got together on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, defended their lives, and secured rest from their adversaries. They killed seventy-five thousand of their enemies, but the loot they did not touch. ¹⁷On the fourteenth day they rested, making it a day of feast and frolic.

¹⁸The Shushan Jews, however, mustered on the fourteenth day, as well as on the thirteenth of the month, and rested on the fifteenth day, which they made a day of feast and frolic. ¹⁹For this reason the rural Jews, who do not live in walled cities, memorialize the fourteenth of the month Adar for a day of feast and frolic, a day on which they send each other presents.^q

²⁰Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters to all the Jews in every province of King Ahasuerus near and far, ²¹obliging them to observe annually both the fourteenth and the fifteenth day of the month Adar, ²²which were the dates on which the Jews enjoyed relief from their enemies, and it was the month which for them was turned from sorrow into joy, from mourning into festivity, to make these dates days of feast and frolic on which presents should be sent; also donations made to the poor.

²³The Jews accepted for an annual observance what they had begun and what Mordecai had prescribed; ²⁴because Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the Jew-hater, had planned to destroy all the Jews; so he had cast the pur, that is, the lot, to annihilate, to exterminate them. ²⁵But when the matter came before the king, he ordered in writing that the wicked plot which he had schemed against the Jews should turn upon his head, and that he and his sons be hanged on the gallows. ²⁶These days, therefore, they called Purim, from the word Pur.^r Due to the message of the letter^s and what they had personally seen and experienced, ²⁷the Jews ordained and assumed as an institution for themselves, for their descendants and for all who joined them, that they would without omission celebrate these two days annually, according to the written orders and at the appointed time. ²⁸These days must be memorialized and celebrated in every generation, in each fam-

n) Shushan, as capital with strong defenses, is here noted as a stronghold.

o) "To the half of my kingdom" is not added; the king had gone about as far as he deemed wise.

p) This may have been necessary for Jewish security, though from this distance it appears needlessly bloody.

q) Those who fought on the thirteenth and rested on the fourteenth. Ultimately all faithful Jews observed both the fourteenth and the fifteenth for the Feast of Purim.

r) Lot—for the lot cast by Haman; the "im" of Purim forms the plural, as cherubim is the plural of cherub.

s) Especially Mordecai's letter, designating the Feast of Purim.

ily, in every province and town, so that these Purim days may not lapse among the Jews, nor their remembrance be eliminated from their descendants.

²⁹Queen Esther daughter of Abihail, jointly with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to make the second document about the Feast of Purim as strong as possible.¹ ³⁰Besides, letters were sent to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of Ahasuerus' realm, as messages of good will and fidelity, ³¹to observe these days of Purim at their appointed time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had appointed them and as they agreed on for themselves and for their offspring, regarding times of fasting and of lamentations. ³²Esther's

mandate confirmed these directions for Purim, and they were compiled in a book.

10 KING AHASUERUS ALSO LAID tribute on the mainland and on the islands of the sea. ²All his powerful and mighty doings and a detailed report on the greatness to which the king raised Mordecai, are these not written in the books of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? ³For Mordecai the Jew ranked second to King Ahasuerus; he was held in honor among the Jews and appreciated by all his countrymen, because he sought the welfare of his people and spoke for the good of his entire race.

t) To add a fourth annual feast to the three that had been instituted by Moses, definitely at God's command, required strong backing; but Mordecai, with Esther's aid, got it done. However, it never became a compulsory feast as were the other three.

THE BOOK OF

JOB

1 THERE WAS A MAN IN THE LAND of Uz,^a whose name was Job, a man of integrity, and upright,^b one who revered God and turned away from evil. ²There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³He owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-donkeys and many servants; so that this man was greater than all those of the East.

⁴His sons were accustomed to hold a feast in the house of each in turn, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵Each time when the days of their feasting were completed, Job would summon and dedicate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings for each of them in turn; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and renounced^c God in their hearts." This Job did every time.

⁶A day came when the sons of God^d presented themselves before the LORD, and Satan^e too came among them.

⁷Then the LORD said to Satan, Whence have you come? Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming about on the earth and walking up and down on it."

⁸The LORD said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, that there

is none like him on the earth, a man of integrity and upright, a man who reveres God and turns away from evil?

⁹Then Satan answered the LORD, "Is it for nothing that Job reveres God? ¹⁰Hast Thou not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has on every side? Thou hast blessed the labor of his hands, and his holdings have increased in the land. ¹¹However, put forth Thy hand, and lay it on everything he has, and he will deny Thee to Thy face!" ¹²The LORD answered Satan, Take note! All that he has is in your power; only do not lay hands on his person. Then Satan withdrew from the presence of the LORD.

¹³Now the day came when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; ¹⁴and a messenger came to Job to announce, "The oxen were plowing, and the donkeys were grazing near them, ¹⁵when the Sabeans attacked and captured them; yes, they slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶He was still speaking when another came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁷He

a) Uz was located probably between the Euphrates and Damascus, exposed to the distant Sabeans and the Chaldeans.

b) Ezekiel mentions Job as a man of unusual piety, Ezek. 14: 14, 20. The book is anonymous. c) Barak in Hebrew is the common verb meaning to "bless," but also "blaspheme," cf. 1 Kings 21:10, 13; here it implies less than blaspheming, but rather "renouncing" God, "bidding Him farewell."

d) The angels, as is clearer in ch. 38: 7, where the sons of God shout for joy at the founding of the earth.

e) Satan means adversary; it would be correct to use the term, the Satan. But whatever his name and his attitude, he is subject to God and comes to report on his doings.

was still speaking when another came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, made a raid on the camels and captured them, slaying the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you."¹⁸ He was still speaking when another came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house,¹⁹ when suddenly a mighty wind came from across the desert, struck the four corners of the house, and it collapsed upon the young people and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

²⁰Then Job arose, rent his robe, shaved his head, fell upon the ground, and worshiped,²¹ saying, "Naked I came forth from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return; the LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."²² In all this Job neither sinned nor charged God of doing wrong.^f

2 ANOTHER DAY WHEN THE SONS OF God came to stand and present themselves before the LORD, Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.² The LORD said to Satan, Whence have you come? And Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming about on the earth, and walking up and down on it."³ Then the LORD said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a man of integrity and uprightness, who reveres God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast to his integrity, though you did incite Me against him to consume him without cause.

⁴Then Satan answered the LORD: "Skin for skin! Everything a man has he will give for his life.⁵ Now but put forth Thy hand and touch his flesh and bone, and he will curse Thee to Thy face!"

⁶The LORD said to Satan, He is in your hand; only spare his life.^g

⁷Satan withdrew from the presence

of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome boils^h from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.⁸ So he took broken pottery with which to scrape himself and sat down in the ashes.⁹ Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Bid God farewell and die."¹⁰ But he replied to her, "You talk as one of the foolish women would talk. Are we to receive only what is good from God, and are we to receive no misfortune?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Now¹¹ when Job's three friendsⁱ heard of all this misfortune which had befallen him, they came each from his place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met by appointment and came to sympathize with him and to comfort him.¹² But when they caught sight of him from a distance, and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept; they rent every one his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven.¹³ Then they sat down with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, no one speaking a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3 AFTER THIS, JOB OPENED HIS mouth and cursed the day of his birth.^j ²Job said, ³"May the day perish on which I was born and the night that said, 'A man-child is conceived.'^k ⁴Let that day be darkness; may God above not inquire after it, and may no light shine upon it. ⁵Let darkness and the shadow of death own it. May black clouds settle upon it; may the eclipse of the sun terrify it. ⁶As for that night, let utter gloom seize it; let it no longer be among the days of the year; let it not be counted in the number of the month. ⁷Yes, let that night be barren, and no joyful sound be heard in it. ⁸Let those curse it who curse the day, who are skilled in rousing up Leviathan.^k ⁹Let the stars of the dawn^l be dark; let the morning wait in vain for

f) Discipline before blessing is one of the great lessons of the book. Afflictions may stimulate worship. To relate all of life to God is the secret of successful living.

g) All calamity is under God's control. h) Probably pus-filled boils were his malignant skin troubles.

i) Eliphaz is thought to have been an Edomite; Bildad an Aramean, that is, Syrian; and Zophar an Arabian. j) Jeremiah expressed his feelings in similar language, cf. Jer. 20:14-18.

k) The ancients regarded Leviathan as the dragon, which in eclipses swallowed the sun.

l) Venus and Mercury.

the light; may that day never see the eyelids of the morning;^m ¹⁰because it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb nor hide trouble from my eyes.

¹¹"Why did I not die at birth and expire when I came forth from the womb? ¹²Why did the knees receive me,ⁿ or why the breasts that I should nurse? ¹³For I would now be lying down and be quiet. ¹⁴I would be sleeping and have rest along with kings and counselors of the earth, who rebuilt ruins^o for themselves; ¹⁵or with princes who had gold and filled their houses with silver. ¹⁶Or, why was I not a miscarriage that is put away, as infants that never saw the light? ¹⁷There the wicked cease from troubling and there the weary are at rest. ¹⁸There the prisoners too are all at ease; they do not hear their taskmaster's voice. ¹⁹Small and great are there alike and the slave is freed from his master.

²⁰"Why is light given to the wretched and life to the bitter of soul, ²¹who long for death, but it does not come; who dig for it more than for hidden treasures; ²²who would jubilate, if they could find the grave?^p ²³Why does He give the light to a man whose way is hidden and whom God has completely hedged in? ²⁴Instead of food are my sighs, and my groanings pour out like water. ²⁵For what I feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has struck me. ²⁶I am not at ease, nor am I quiet. I get no rest, but trouble arises."

4 THEN ELIPHAZ THE TEMANITE ANSWERED:^q ²"If one should venture a word with you, would it distress you? Yet who can refrain from speaking? ³Truly you have admonished many and drooping hands you have strengthened. ⁴Your words have often upheld the stumbling, and you have

made feeble knees firm. ⁵But now, when affliction comes upon yourself, you lose heart; it touches you, and you grow dismayed. ⁶Is not your reverence for God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?

⁷"Recall now, what innocent person ever perished? Where have the upright been eliminated? ⁸As I have observed,^r those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same. ⁹By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of His nostrils they are consumed. ¹⁰The roar of the lion, the voice of the swarthy lion, and the teeth of the young lion, are broken; the ¹¹strong lion perishes for lack of prey, and the whelps of the lioness scatter.

¹²"A word was brought to me stealthily; my ear caught only a whisper of it ¹³amid thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men. ¹⁴Terror fell upon me and trembling, causing my bones to shake greatly; ¹⁵a spirit glided past my face; the hair of my body stood up. ¹⁶I^s stood still, but I could not distinguish its appearance. There stood a form before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice: ¹⁷"Can man be righteous before God? Can a mortal be pure before his Maker?^t ¹⁸Even in His servants He has no confidence, and His angels He charges with error. ¹⁹How much more those who live in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust and who are crushed as easily as moths! ²⁰Between morning and evening they are smitten; without anyone paying attention, they perish forever. ²¹Is not their pre-eminence taken away with them? They die and that without wisdom.

5 "CALL NOW; IS THERE ANYONE WHO will answer you? To which of the holy ones will you turn? ²Vexation^u

m) The first crimson streaks that herald the sun.

n) The midwife's knees, the mother being seated on a stool before her.

o) Possibly Egypt's pyramids.

p) Job's feelings are vehement: God's apparent desertion of him, his wife's counsel to renounce God, and the silence of his three friends all combine to drive him to the verge of despair.

q) Eliphaz, probably the oldest of the three, speaks first, out of oriental courtesy, emphasizing the purity of God.

r) Eliphaz fails to see that Job's trouble needs no irritant. He warns but does not comfort.

s) The vision.

t) Mere men may think themselves perfect, but God knows otherwise!

u) The reproach of "vexation" hurt Job's feelings; he alludes to it in the first sentence of his reply, ch. 6:2.

slays the fool, and jealousy kills the simple. ³I myself have seen the fool taking root, and I cursed his habitation. ⁴His sons are far from safety and are crushed in the gate,^v with none to rescue them. ⁵The hungry eat his harvest, taking it even from among the thorns, the thirsty pant after his wealth. ⁶Surely, calamity does not spring from the dust, nor does trouble sprout out of the ground; ⁷for man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.

⁸"But as for me, I would seek God, and I would commit my cause to God, ⁹who does great and unsearchable things, marvelous works without number: ¹⁰He gives rain upon the earth and pours water upon the fields. ¹¹He lifts the lowly up high, and He raises the sufferers to positions of safety. ¹²He thwarts the schemes of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success. ¹³He snares the wise in their own craftiness,^w and the plottings of the wily are frustrated. ¹⁴Even in the daytime they meet with darkness; at noon they grope as in the night. ¹⁵But He saves the fatherless from the sword of their mouth, and the needy from the clutch of the mighty. ¹⁶So the lowly gain hope, and injustice shuts her mouth.

¹⁷"Blessed indeed, is the man whom God disciplines; therefore do not spurn the chastening of the Almighty.^x ¹⁸For it is He who wounds, but He binds up, He smites but His hands bring healing. ¹⁹In six troubles He will deliver you, and in seven no harm shall touch you. ²⁰In famine He will redeem you from death, and in war from the power of the sword. ²¹You will be hid from the scourge of the tongue, and you will not be afraid of devastation when it comes. ²²At destruction and at famine you will laugh and of the wild beasts you need not

be afraid; ²³for you will be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field will be in harmony with you.^y ²⁴You will know that your tent is secure, and when you inspect your pasture, you will miss nothing. ²⁵You will know too that your offspring will be numerous and your descendants as the grass of the earth. ²⁶You will go down to your grave in fullness of years, as a sheaf of grain is harvested in its season. ²⁷This is what we have searched out. It is true. Listen to it, and take it personally to heart."

6 THEN JOB REPLIED: ²"OH, THAT MY vexation^z were carefully weighed and that all my disasters were laid in the balance. ³For it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore have my words seemed rash. ⁴The arrows of the Almighty^a are buried in me; my spirit drinks in their poison; the torments of God are arrayed against me. ⁵Does a wild donkey bray when he has green grass, or does an ox low over its fodder? ⁶Can that which is insipid be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the white of an egg? ⁷What my soul^b refuses to touch, things that are loathsome to me, such is my food.

⁸"Oh, that my request might be fulfilled, that God might grant what I hope for; ⁹that it would please God to crush me, that He would reach out His hand and cut me off! ¹⁰This would still be comfort to me; yes, I would leap for joy in unsparing pain, for I have not denied the commands of the Holy One.^c ¹¹What strength have I left to hold out, and what will result if I remain patient? ¹²Have I the strength of a rock, or is my body of bronze? ¹³Am I not completely helpless, and is not recovery driven from me?

v) Gateways in eastern cities were and are public centers for administering justice.

w) The first half of v. 13 is the only citation from the book of Job in the N.T., I Cor. 3:19.

x) God is here assumed to have a purpose in the afflictions of Job, as Elihu later points out repeatedly, cf. Job 33:17, 30; 36:10, 15, 16.

y) When at peace with God, man will live in peace with God's creatures.

z) Eliphaz had rebuked Job for his vexation. Job now wishes that his vexation might be weighed over against his pain; it would not seem excessive.

a) To Job, God is the "Almighty" who in His anger is afflicting him.

b) To the Hebrews, the soul was the seat of desire, especially of appetite.

c) Job faces death without fear; he knows that God sends afflictions as well as blessings, 2:10.

¹⁴"Whoever holds back kindness from a fainting friend, abandons his reverence for the Almighty. ¹⁵My brothers are as unreliable as a brook, as the bed of torrents that rush on, ¹⁶turbid with dirty ice and with snow melting in them. ¹⁷When they diminish, they disappear, and when it is hot, they dry up from their place. ¹⁸From them the caravans divert their route; they enter wastes and are lost. ¹⁹The caravans of Tema^d look for them; those of Sheba wait in hope. ²⁰They are disappointed because they had hoped so confidently; they came nearer and found themselves deceived. ²¹Such you have now become to me; you notice my dismay, and you, too, are afraid.^e ²²Have I ever said, 'Make me a gift,' and, 'From your abundance offer a bribe for me,' and, ²³'Save me from the hand of the oppressor,' and, 'Ransom me from brigands'?

²⁴"Instruct me, and I shall be still; cause me to see where I have erred. ²⁵How forceful are upright words! But what does your reproving reprove? ²⁶Do you intend to censure a man's words, when the utterances of a desperate man are as wind? ²⁷You would cast lots over an orphan and strike a bargain over a friend. ²⁸But now, please look at me; surely I would not lie to your face. ²⁹Reflect, I beg of you, and let there be no injustice; yes, reflect again, for I am still in the right. ³⁰Is there iniquity on my tongue? Cannot my taste discern what is perverse?

7 "DOES NOT MAN HAVE TO STRUGGLE hard on earth, and are not his days like those of a hired man? ²Like a slave who sighs for the shadow, and like a day laborer who longs for his wages, ³so I am allotted months of misery, and nights of trouble are apportioned to me. ⁴When I lie down I say, 'When can I get up?' But the

night is long, and I am occupied with tossing until the day stirs. ⁵My body is covered with worms and dirt; my skin hardens and then breaks out afresh. ⁶My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and they come to a hopeless end.^f

⁷"Remember that my life is but a breath; my eye shall never again see anything good. ⁸He who sees me now will not look at me again; Thy eyes will be turned to me and I am no more. ⁹As a cloud dissolves and disappears, so he who descends to the underworld^g will come up no more; ¹⁰he shall not return to his house, nor will his dwelling see him again.

¹¹"So then, I will not now restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.^h ¹²Am I the sea or a dragon, that Thou settest a guard over me?ⁱ ¹³When I say, 'My bed will console me, my couch will help me bear my grievance,' ¹⁴then Thou dost frighten me with dreams and disquiet me with visions, ¹⁵so that I would choose strangling and prefer death to my torments. ¹⁶I am tired of it; I would not live always. Leave me alone, for my days are fleeting. ¹⁷What is man, that Thou shouldst magnify him and be so concerned about him, ¹⁸visiting him every morning and testing him every moment? ¹⁹Wilt Thou never look away from me, or leave me alone till I swallow my spittle?^j ²⁰If I have sinned, what harm have I done Thee, O Thou watcher of men? Why hast Thou made me Thy target so that I have become a burden to Thee? ²¹Why then dost Thou not pardon my transgression and remove my iniquity? For shortly I shall lie down in the dust, and when Thou seekest me, I shall be no more."

8 THEN BILDAD THE SHUHITE^k ANSWERED: ²"How long will you keep

d) Tema was in N. W. Arabia; Sheba in S. W. Arabia.

e) Job's friends see his calamity, but, feeling that he must be a great sinner, they find it hard to sympathize with him.

f) The hopeless brevity of life overwhelms Job.

g) Sheol, the future abode of all persons, good and bad alike.

h) Job here regards God as his hard Master.

i) Prisoners have been driven mad by the unceasing watchfulness of their guards.

j) An unpleasant phrase often heard among the Arabs.

k) Bildad spoke from tradition; he knew some of Job's circumstances and tried to explain the relation of omnipotence to righteousness.

on talking this way, your words being like a strong wind? ³Does God twist justice? Would the Almighty pervert righteousness? ⁴If your children sinned against Him, then He recompensed them according to their transgression. ⁵So, if you will diligently seek God and implore mercy from the Almighty, ⁶then if you are pure and upright,¹ He will surely bestir Himself for you and restore your rightful dwelling. ⁷Although your beginning may seem small, He will make your later years very great. ⁸For inquire regarding previous generations, and give heed to the findings of the fathers.^m ⁹We are only of yesterday and know nothing; our days on earth are like a shadow. ¹⁰Will they not instruct and speak words to you out of their hearts?

¹¹"Does the papyrus grow where there is no marsh, or can reed grass flourish where there is no water? ¹²Although still green and not cut down, it withers more quickly than any other herb. ¹³So are the ways of all who forget God; the hope of a godless man perishes; ¹⁴his confidence is like a gossamer thread, his trust no stronger than a spider's web. ¹⁵On his house he leans, but it does not remain standing; he holds fast to it, but it gives way. ¹⁶(He is as) a plant thriving in the sun, with shoots spreading over the garden, ¹⁷its roots intertwined over the stone pile and working their way between the stones. ¹⁸But when pulled out from his place, it disowns him, saying, 'I never saw you!' ¹⁹See, such is the joy of its way, and out of the dust others shall sprout up.

²⁰"Be assured, God will not cast off an uprightⁿ man; nor will He take the hands of evildoers. ²¹He will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with joyful shouting. ²²Your foes shall be clothed with shame and the tent of the wicked man shall be no more."

9 BUT JOB ANSWERED: ²"OH YES! I know it is true; but how can a mortal be in the right before God? ³If one wished to dispute with Him, he could not answer Him once in a thousand. ⁴Wise in heart and mighty in strength, who could resist Him without harm? ⁵He it is who removes mountains and they do not know it when He overturns them in His indignation; ⁶He shakes the earth out of its place, so that her pillars^o shake; ⁷He orders the sun, and it does not rise; He locks up the stars; ⁸He stretches out the heavens and stalks abroad over the heights of the sea; ⁹He made Kesil and Kimah, the Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.^p ¹⁰He does great things beyond understanding and marvelous things without number. ¹¹Lo, He passes by me, and I do not see Him; He moves by and I do not perceive Him. ¹²Behold, when He snatches away, who can restrain Him? Who will say to Him, 'What art Thou doing?'

¹³"God lets His indignation have full sway; beneath Him Rahab's^q helpers tremble. ¹⁴How much less ably could I answer Him or choose my words over against Him? ¹⁵Though I were right, I could not dispute with Him; to Him, my Judge, I could only plead for mercy! ¹⁶If I called to Him and He answered me, I could not believe that He was listening to my voice.

¹⁷"He who breaks me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause, ¹⁸He would not let me catch my breath, but would surfeit me with bitterness. ¹⁹If it is a question of strength, He possesses it; if it is a matter of justice, who would challenge Him? ²⁰Though I were innocent, my own mouth would condemn me; though I were upright, it would show me perverse. ²¹I am upright;^r but I do not consider myself. I do not value my life. ²²It is all the same; therefore I say, He destroys the upright and the

1) Bildad's reasoning that calamity is proof of guilt and that a sinner is destroyed by the sin he commits, is not the whole truth, cf. John 9:2,3.

m) Not all that is true is new; the oldest doctrines were once new; essential truth is eternal.

n) Though Job's friends charged him with disloyalty to God, yet they granted all through the speeches that he was pious at heart. o) cf. I Sam. 2:8; Job 26:11.

p) "Kesil," "giant," or "fool"; "Kimah"—"heap," a name for the seven sister-stars of the Pleiades. The chambers of the South" refer to the great sky spaces of the southern hemisphere.

q) Rahab was the monster of the sea, the personification of pride and of the sea itself; cf. Job 26:12. r) Job is so described in ch. 1:1; that is "upright," in his attitude toward God.

wicked alike.^s ²³When a scourge slays suddenly, He mocks at the despair of the innocent. ²⁴The earth He has handed over to the wicked; He veils the faces of corrupt judges; if it is not He, who then is it?

²⁵"My days are passing swifter than a runner; they speed on, without seeing any good. ²⁶They flit by like papyrus boats, like eagles swooping on their prey. ²⁷When I say, 'I will forget my grievance; I will change my downcast face and look cheerful,' ²⁸then I fear lest more sorrows may befall me, for I know that Thou dost not regard me guiltless. ²⁹As I am bound to be declared guilty, why should I weary myself in vain? ³⁰Were I to wash myself with snow and clean my hands with lye, ³¹yet Thou wouldst plunge me into a slough, and my own clothes would abhor me. ³²For God is not a mere man, as I am, that I could answer Him, that we should meet in court for trial; ³³neither is there any umpire between us, who might lay his hand upon us both. ³⁴Oh, that He would take His rod away from me and that His terror would no longer threaten me. ³⁵Then I would speak without fear of Him, for personally I have no guilty qualms.

10 "MY SOUL IS SADDENED WITH life; I will explain my complaint without reserve and reveal the bitterness of my soul. ²I would say to God, 'Do not treat me as guilty, without formulating Thy charge against me. ³Does it benefit Thee to oppress, thus to reject the work of Thine own hands, and to shine on the plottings of the wicked? ⁴Hast Thou human eyes? Canst Thou not see more than man? ⁵Are Thy days as the days of a human being, Thy years as those of a man, ⁶that Thou seekest for my guilt and searchest for my sin? ⁷Thou knowest that I am not guilty, and that no one can deliver from Thy hand. ⁸Thy hands completely framed me and fashioned

me, and now wilt Thou destroy me? ⁹Remember that Thou madest me of clay; wilt Thou now turn me back into dust? ¹⁰Didst Thou not pour me out like milk, and curdle me like cheese? ¹¹With skin and flesh Thou didst clothe me, and with bones and sinews Thou didst knit me together. ¹²Thou didst bestow upon me life and compassion; and Thy care has preserved my spirit. ¹³Yet all this Thou hast hidden in Thy heart; I know this was Thy purpose. ¹⁴When I sin, Thou dost observe me and wilt not absolve me from my iniquity. ¹⁵If I am guilty, woe betide me; if righteous, I cannot lift up my head, being filled with disgrace and seeing my misery. ¹⁶If I lifted myself up, Thou wouldst hunt me like a lion and show Thyself once more mighty against me. ¹⁷Thou wouldst renew Thy proofs against me, increase Thine anger toward me, and bring fresh hosts against me.

¹⁸"Why didst Thou bring me forth from the womb? Would that I had died before any eye had seen me! ¹⁹Then I would have been as though I had never existed; borne from the womb directly to the tomb! ²⁰Are not my remaining days few? Leave me alone, so I may have a little comfort, ²¹before I go whence I shall not return, ²²to the land of darkness and blackness; to the land of thick darkness, where there is no light, only chaos, and the light as gloom."

11 THEN ANSWERED ZOPHAR^u THE Naamathite: ²"Should a deluge of words remain unanswered? Must a glib talker be right? In view of your boastings should people remain silent? ³Should you be permitted to scoff without being made ashamed? ⁴You have said, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight.' ⁵But, oh! that God would speak and open His lips to you; ⁶that He would show you the secrets of wisdom, doubling your power of in-

s) God does not discriminate between the good and the wicked in times of calamity.

t) Job's soul, in this retort to Bildad, oscillates between his memory of blessed fellowship with God and a feeling of God's injustice toward him now. He had trusted God, but now feels as one betrayed. Later Job sees more clearly and repents of his accusations.

u) Eliphaz had emphasized the *piety*, chs. 4-5; Bildad, the *justice*, ch. 8; and now Zophar, the *wisdom* of God, ch. 11.

sight! You would then see that God holds against you less than your iniquities deserve.

⁷"Can you fathom God's secrets? Can you compass the limits of the Almighty's being? ⁸It is higher than heaven; what can you do? And deeper than Sheol; what can you know? ⁹Longer in measure than the earth and broader than the sea. ¹⁰When He rushes in and arrests a person, calling the wicked to judgment, who can hinder Him? ¹¹For He recognizes worthless men, and He sees wickedness without searching for it. ¹²But a stupid man may inherit understanding when a wild donkey's colt is born a human being.

¹³"If, however, you will prepare your heart and reach out your hands toward Him; ¹⁴if you will banish sin far from your life, and allow no wrong to dwell in your tents, ¹⁵then you will be able to lift your face without shame, to be steadfast and fearless. ¹⁶You will forget trouble, remembering it as a flood which has passed away. ¹⁷Your life will arise more radiant than noonday, and your shadows like the morning dawn. ¹⁸You will feel confident, because you have hope; you will look around and lie down without fear. ¹⁹You will sleep and no one will alarm you, and many will appeal to you for favor. ²⁰But the eyes of the wicked shall fail; they will see no way of escape; their only hope remaining is to breathe their last."

12 BUT JOB REPLIED: ²"NO DOUBT you are the people, and wisdom will die with you." ³I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you. Who does not know all you say? ⁴I am a laughingstock to my friends; I, whom God heard when I called to Him, a just and upright man, am a laughingstock. ⁵Those who prosper and live in ease have contempt for those in misfortune, which awaits those whose feet are ready to slip. ⁶The tents of robbers do prosper; those who provoke God may live securely, their

wants being supplied by God's hand.

⁷"For, ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ⁸or speak to the earth, and it will instruct you; even the fish of the sea will inform you! ⁹For who among these does not see that the hand of the LORD is bringing this about? ¹⁰Under His control is the life of all that lives, the spirit of every mortal. ¹¹Does not the ear test the words just as the palate tastes food? ¹²With the aged there is wisdom, and days prolonged bring insight. ¹³With Him are wisdom and might; He has counsel and understanding. ¹⁴Observe, when He pulls down, it can not be built again, and when He imprisons one, there is no release. ¹⁵Behold, He withholds the waters, and they dry up; again He sends them out, and they overwhelm the earth. ¹⁶With Him are wisdom and might; the misled and the misleader are His. ¹⁷He leads counselors away barefoot, and judges He makes fools. ¹⁸He loosens the bonds (made by) kings and binds a waistcloth about their loins. ¹⁹He sends priests away barefoot and overthrows those well established. ²⁰Those trusted He deprives of speech, and He takes away the discernment of the elders. ²¹He pours contempt on princes and loosens the belt of the strong." ²²He uncovers the deep things out of darkness and brings to light black gloom. ²³He makes the nations great, and He turns them down. He spreads their peoples abroad, and He moves them out. ²⁴He takes away the intelligence of the chiefs of the earth's people and makes them wander in a jungle. ²⁵There they grope around in unlit darkness; He makes them wander about like a drunken man.

13 "LOOK! MY EYE HAS SEEN IT ALL, my ear has heard and has grasped it. ²What you know, I know too; I am not inferior to you. ³Yet, I would speak to the Almighty; I wish to argue my case with God. ⁴As for

v) Job allows that in their own opinion they are wise. Zophar had strongly hinted that Job was stupid, 11:12.

w) Mary's Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55, seems to reflect some of these sentences.

you, you are forgers of lies; you are all quack doctors.^x ⁶Oh! that you would altogether hold your peace; that would be your wisdom! ⁶Hear my defense, and listen to the pleadings of my lips. ⁷Will you speak unfairly on behalf of God and talk deceitfully for Him? ⁸Will you choose His side, posing as special pleaders for God? ⁹Will it be well when He examines you, or can you deceive Him as one deceives a man? ¹⁰He will severely discipline you if you secretly practice partiality. ¹¹Should not His majesty make you afraid, and should not your awe for Him come upon you? ¹²Your precepts are proverbs of ashes; your shields are shields of clay.

¹³"Be silent before me, that I may speak; let happen to me what may.² ¹⁴I will take my flesh in my teeth and hazard my life in my hand. ¹⁵Although He slay me, yet I keep hoping.^a Yes, I will maintain my ways before Him. ¹⁶This will be in my favor, for no godless man shall stand in His presence. ¹⁷Listen attentively to what I say, and let my plea enter your ears. ¹⁸As I have prepared my defense, I am sure that I shall be vindicated. ¹⁹Who will refute me? If now I kept silent I would expire.

²⁰"Spare me two things, then I will not hide myself from Thee. ²¹Remove Thy hand from me, and cease overwhelming me by Thy terror! ²²Then call Thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and do Thou answer me. ²³How many are my transgressions and my sins? Help me to know my offenses and my sin. ²⁴Why dost Thou hide Thy face and consider me Thy enemy? ²⁵Wilt Thou frighten a drifting leaf? Wilt Thou chase dry stubble? ²⁶For Thou writest bitter charges against me and makest me inherit the sins of my

youth.^b ²⁷Thou puttest my feet in the stocks^c and markest all my paths, setting bounds to my footsteps. ²⁸I am like the severed root of a tree which soon decays, like a moth-eaten garment.

14 "MAN, BORN OF WOMAN, IS OF few days and full of trouble.^d ²He unfolds like a flower and fades; he is fleeting like a shadow and does not remain. ³Yet upon such a one Thou dost open Thy eyes, and Thou dost bring me into judgment with Thee. ⁴Oh, that there were one pure among the impure! But there is none. ⁵If man's days are determined and the number of his months is in Thy mind, if Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass, ⁶then look away from him, and let him rest, so that, like a hired man, he may enjoy his day.

⁷"For there is hope for a tree, if it is felled, that it will sprout again and that its shoots will flourish.^e ⁸Though its roots age in the earth and its stump dies in the ground, ⁹at the scent of water it will bud and branch out like a young plant. ¹⁰But when a man dies, he is laid prostrate; he expires, and where is he? ¹¹As waters evaporate from a lake, as a river drains and dries up, ¹²so man lies down, not to rise again till the heavens be no more; he will not awaken or be roused out of his sleep. ¹³Oh, that Thou wouldst hide me in Sheol^f and conceal me until Thy wrath has quieted; that Thou wouldst set me a time and then think of me again.

¹⁴"When a person dies, shall he live again? All the days of my service I would wait till my release should come.^g ¹⁵Thou wouldst call, and I would answer Thee; Thou wouldst yearn after Thy handiwork! ¹⁶But now that Thou art watching my every step and art

x) Pseudo-physicians! Plasterers of falsehood!

y) Flattery is like perfume, it may be smelled, but should not be swallowed.

z) Job is indifferent to any punishment his rashness might provoke. John Knox wrote round his study ceiling: "Conscience bids me speak the truth, therefore, the truth I speak; impugn it whoso list!" a) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," [A. V.], is the godly and Christian attitude.

b) Judicial sentences were written and recorded. Cf. Isa. 10:1.

c) Heavy blocks of wood, so fastened to the legs of captives, that they could not move around.

d) Even as a patriarch, Job regards himself as short-lived and doomed to sorrow. Cf. Gen. 47:9.

e) What is granted to a tree should not be denied to a man. Science admits, man may live anew; philosophy hopes he may; ethics says he ought to; Christ says he shall; He brought life and immortality to light. f) To the Hebrews, death was not the end of personal existence.

g) "If a man may live again," Job seems to say, "I can bear my affliction longer."

recording my every sin, ¹⁷I would that my transgressions were sealed up in a sack, and that Thou wouldst cover my iniquity. ¹⁸As mountains disintegrate and crumble away, as rocks are moved out of their place, ¹⁹as waters wear smooth great stones^h and as torrents wash the soil of earth away, so Thou destroyest the hope of man. ²⁰Thou overpowerest him, and he departs forever. Thou changest his looks and sendest him away. ²¹His sons achieve honor, but he is unaware of it; or they are humbled, but he does not notice. ²²He senses only the pains of his own body, and his soul bemoans himself."ⁱ

15 THEN ELIPHAZ^j THE TEMANITE replied: ²"Should a wise man answer with bombast and fill his chest with a hot, dry wind, ³arguing with pointless talk in speeches that do no good? ⁴You destroy reverence, and you hinder prayer before God. ⁵For your guilt prompts your mouth what to say, and you choose the language of the shrewd. ⁶Not I, but your own mouth convicts you, and your own lips witness against you. ⁷Are you the first person ever born?^k Were you brought forth before the hills? ⁸Did you listen in on the council of God? Do you have a monopoly on wisdom? ⁹What do you know of which we are ignorant? What insight have you that we lack? ¹⁰Among us too are the grey-headed and the aged, counting more years than your father. ¹¹Are God's consolations too trivial for you, or the word that treats you gently? ¹²Why let your passions carry you away and why allow your eyes to flash, ¹³that you turn your spirit against God and allow such words to issue from your mouth? ¹⁴What is mortal man, that he could be pure; or one born of a woman, that he could be righteous? ¹⁵Behold, God puts no trust in His holy ones, and even the heav-

ens are not pure in His eyes; ¹⁶how much less one who is loathsome and foul, a man who drinks wickedness like water!"^l

¹⁷"Listen, let me instruct you; what I have seen I will relate; ¹⁸what the wise men tell from their fathers, concealing nothing, ¹⁹to whom alone the land was awarded and no stranger intruded among them. ²⁰A wicked man is tormented with anxiety all his life, the tyrant during the years granted him.^m ²¹Threatening terrors keep ringing in his ears; even in times of peace he trembles, lest the destroyer come upon him; ²²He is hopeless about coming back out of darkness, being destined for the sword. ²³He wanders about for food. Where is it? He feels that the day of darkness is upon him; ²⁴trouble and worry threaten him; they overwhelm him as a king ready for assault. ²⁵Because he struck out his hand against God and defied the Almighty, ²⁶assaulting Him with stubborn neck, with the thick-bossed shield. ²⁷He has covered his face with fatness, adding layers of fat on his loins. ²⁸He has lived in ruined cities, in houses unfit for human habitation, which are fated soon to be ruins. ²⁹He will not stay rich; his wealth will not hold out, nor will his possessions spread out on earth. ³⁰He does not get away from darkness; the flame shall shrivel his roots, and his blossom will be blown away by the wind. ³¹Let him not trust in futility, for futility will be his reward. ³²He will be ended before his time and his palm branch will not be green. ³³He will drop off like a vine that sheds its green grapes; as an olive tree that casts off its blossoms.ⁿ ³⁴For the gathering of the godless remains sterile, and fire destroys the tents of bribery. ³⁵They conceive mischief and produce unfairness; their hearts bring forth deception."^o

h) "Water dripping day by day wears the hardest stone away!"

i) Job's friends have pointed him to the purity, justice and wisdom of God; but Job denies the application of their facts to his case.

j) The friends speak in the same order; first Eliphaz, on "the fate of the wicked man."

k) In India they have a saying, "Oh, he is the first man; no wonder he is so wise!"

l) Eliphaz, in his first speech, ch. 4:17-19, had voiced sentiments similar to those here in vv. 14-16.

m) In the Law, long life is promised those who honor their parents, Ex. 20:12.

n) The olive tree is prodigal of its blossoms, not more than one in a hundred coming to maturity.

o) By Job's repeated complaints, Eliphaz has become convinced that challenging God's purity renders him a blasphemer.

16 THEN JOB ANSWERED: ²"I HAVE often heard such things; you are all miserable comforters. ³Will your empty words have no end?^p What incites you to answer? ⁴I, too, could speak as you speak. If you were in my place, I could compose words against you and shake my head at you. ⁵I might encourage you with my mouth and bring you comfort with my lips.

⁶"If I speak, my sorrow is not lessened, and if I do not speak, does it leave me? ⁷Surely He has deprived me of strength; He has disbanded my whole family. ⁸He has made me wrinkle; my malady testifies against me; it testifies to my face. ⁹His wrath tears me, and His anger pursues me; He gnashes on me with His teeth. My enemies look sharply at me; ¹⁰they gape at me with their mouth, and with insolence they smite my cheeks; they are all joined against me. ¹¹God is delivering me over to the villains and is casting me into the hands of the godless.^r ¹²I was living at ease, and He shattered me; He grabbed me by the neck and broke me down; He set me up for His target; ¹³His arrows encircled me. He cleaves my reins asunder and pours out my gall on the ground. ¹⁴He breaks me with breach upon breach and rushes upon me like a warrior. ¹⁵I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin and have laid my horn in the dust. ¹⁶My face is red from weeping,^s and blackness hangs over my eyelids, ¹⁷though my hands are guilty of no violence and my prayer is pure.

¹⁸"O earth, do not cover my blood; let my cry find no place to stop!^t ¹⁹Even now, my Witness is in heaven; my Advocate is on high. ²⁰While my friends are my scorners, my eyes turn weeping to God, ²¹that He might do a man justice between him and God and justice between a man and his

neighbor. ²²For in a few more years I shall walk the path along which I shall not return.

17 "MY LIFE IS RUINED; MY DAYS are extinguished; the grave is yawning for me! ²Surely mockers surround me; my eye gazes on their contention. ³Give me a pledge;^u be surety for me; who will strike hands with me? ⁴But their heart Thou hast closed to reason; therefore Thou wilt not let them triumph.

⁵"He who denounces his friends for a price, the eyes of his children shall see famine. ⁶But He has made me a proverb among the people; by them I am spit upon to the face. ⁷My eye has grown dim from sorrow, and all my members are like a shadow. ⁸Fair-minded men are appalled at this and the innocent are indignant at the wicked. ⁹Yet the righteous will maintain his way, and he who has clean hands will grow stronger.^v

¹⁰"But you, come on again, all of you, though I shall not find one wise man among you. ¹¹My days are passing; my purposes, my heart's desires are foiled. ¹²They would turn night into day, saying that light is near when there is darkness. ¹³But if I look to Sheol as my abode, if I have spread my couch in darkness, ¹⁴if I have said to the pit, 'You are my father,' and to the worms 'My mother and my sister,' ¹⁵where then is my hope, and my expectation, who can discover it? ¹⁶Will they descend with me into Sheol? Shall we go down together into the dust?^w"

18 THEN ANSWERED BILDAD THE Shuhite: ²"How long will you set snares with words? Do some clear thinking; then we will answer.^x ³Why are we accounted as cattle? Why are

p) In his reply to Eliphaz, Job denounces his friends and appeals to God as his only hope. To his own conviction of innocence, Job clings with tenacity.

q) Sorrow.

r) In the first cycle, Job had complained that God is against him; here he complains of the universal alienation of mankind. s) Excessive weeping.

t) To the Hebrews the blood of an innocent man, like Abel's, cried out from the ground, Gen. 4:10.

u) It is an ancient custom among orientals to bind a bargain with a material deposit, cf. Gen. 38:17; II Cor. 1:22; also by striking hands. Job was eager to have his innocence acknowledged before his death. v) Job's faith is slowly advancing toward a climax. Cf. 19:25.

w) It was thought that the soul upon death, supposed to go to Sheol, might tarry with the body in the grave three days.

x) Bildad answers Job in anger, beginning, as before, with the words, "How long?"

we stupid in your sight? ⁴You are tearing yourself in your rage. Shall the earth be depopulated for your sake and the rock be moved from its place? ⁵The light of the wicked shall be extinguished;^y the glow of his fire shall not be kept shining. ⁶The light in his tent darkens, and the wick above it is extinguished.^z ⁷His manly steps are shortened; his own design downs him. ⁸He gets into the net by his own feet, and he treads on a lattice-covered pit. ⁹A trap catches him by the heel, and a snare holds him fast. ¹⁰A noose is hidden in the ground for him, and a trap in the path. ¹¹Terrors threaten him from every direction, hounding him at his heels. ¹²Calamity is hungry for him, and ruin stands ready for his stumbling. ¹³By disease his skin is eaten up; the first-born of death^a eats away his limbs. ¹⁴He is dragged from the safety of his tent and is led to the king of terrors.^b ¹⁵Nothing his own remains in his tent; sulphur is scattered over his dwelling. ¹⁶His roots are dried up underneath him, and his branches above him wither. ¹⁷Remembrance of him perishes from the earth and his name does not linger in the street. ¹⁸He is driven from light into darkness and chased out of the habitable world. ¹⁹He leaves no offspring or descendant among his people, nor any survivor in his old home. ²⁰At his fate men of sunset years^c are appalled, and they of sunrise years^d are filled with horror. ²¹Surely such are the dwellings of the impious and such is the place of him who does not acknowledge God."

19 THEN JOB ANSWERED:^e ²"HOW long will you vex my soul and crush me with words? ³These ten times^f you have derided me, feeling no shame about wronging me. ⁴And if indeed I have erred, my error re-

mains with me. ⁵If you would assume a superior attitude toward me and reproach me for my misery, ⁶then know that God has misjudged me and has encircled me with His net. ⁷Note this: I cry out because of violence, yet I am not answered; I shriek for help, but I receive no justice.^g ⁸My path He has fenced in, so that I cannot advance, and upon my paths He spreads darkness. ⁹He has robbed me of my honor; He has removed the crown from my head. ¹⁰He has broken me down on every side, and I am finished; my hope He has uprooted like a tree. ¹¹He has kindled His indignation against me and considers me His enemy. ¹²Unitedly all His troops come on and build their road against me; they camp around my tent.^h

¹³"My brothers He has moved far from me, and my acquaintances are completely estranged from me. ¹⁴My relatives stay away, and my friends have forgotten me. ¹⁵Those living in my house, and my maids, regard me as a stranger; in their view I am become an alien.ⁱ ¹⁶I summon my servant, and he does not answer; humbly I must entreat him. ¹⁷My breath is obnoxious to my wife and my body loathsome to my brothers. ¹⁸Even young boys despise me; when I get up, they speak against me.^j ¹⁹All my intimate friends avoid me and those whom I specially loved are turned against me.^k ²⁰My bones cleave to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. ²¹Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has stricken me! ²²Why do you persecute me, as does God? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

²³"Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were inscribed in the book! ²⁴Oh, that with an iron pen they were engraved on a rock and sealed with

y) The Arabs have a proverb: "Fate has put out my light," meaning, my reputation as one living in prosperity has vanished.

z) Arab sheiks still keep the wick of an oil lamp burning from the top of their tent pole at night, to welcome strangers.

a) The first-born means the strongest, Gen. 49:3. The Arabs call diseases "the daughters of destiny." b) Death, Isa. 28:15. c) The aged. d) The young.

e) By Bildad's cruel innuendoes, accusing Job of deserving the loss of health and happiness, Job reaches the climax of his struggle. f) Repeatedly, Gen. 31:41.

g) According to Job, God has done what Bildad [8:3] and Elihu [34:12] regard as impossible: He has withheld justice. h) Job uses military figures, 10:17; 16:14.

i) Lonely Job craves sympathy. j) The attitude of the children discourages Job.

k) Not only God, but all his friends, too, have forsaken him, Job says.

lead forever!¹ ²⁶For I know that my Redeemer^m lives, and at last He will stand upon the earth; ²⁶and after my skin has thus been destroyed, then, out of my flesh I shall see God; ²⁷whom I myself shall see; whom my own eyes shall behold, and not another. "My reins fail within me" as I wait in hope! ²⁸How can you say, 'We will continue to persecute him,' thinking that the root of the matter^o has been found in me? ²⁹Fear the sword yourselves, for your attitude may bring the sword's sufferings upon you, that you may know there is a judgment."

20 THEN ZOPHAR THE NAAMATHITE replied: ²"My thoughts urge me to reply; I am stirred up. ³I have heard your presumptuous warning to censure you no more; but a spirit prompts me to inquire of you: ⁴Do you not know from of old, since the time man was put upon the earth, ⁵that the triumph of the wicked is brief,^p and the joys of the godless are but for a moment? ⁶Though his pride may mount up to the heavens and his head reach to the clouds, ⁷yet he perishes forever like his own dung;^q so that they who have seen him say, 'Where is he?' ⁸Like a dream he shall fly away and not be found; he disappears like a vision of the night. ⁹Eyes that once saw him, see him no more; nor does his home see him again. ¹⁰His children will curry the favor of the poor, and his own hands will give back his wealth. ¹¹While his bones still enjoy youthful vigor, they lie down with him in the dust. ¹²Though wickedness is sweet in his mouth, kept hidden under his tongue, ¹³and though he retains it, loath to let it go, holding it back with his palate, ¹⁴yet the food in his stomach turns to poison and becomes the gall of asps within him. ¹⁵He swallows down riches, but vomits them up again; God ejects them from his stomach. ¹⁶He

shall suck the poison of asps; the tongue of a viper shall slay him. ¹⁷He will not look with delight at the streams, the brooks flowing with honey and curds.

¹⁸"What he labored for and earned, he must give up; he cannot swallow it; what he acquired by trading will afford him no joy; ¹⁹because he has crushed and neglected the poor and has seized houses which he had never built. ²⁰Because his greed enjoyed no rest within him, he will not save anything that he desires. ²¹As nothing is left after he has eaten, his prosperity will not last. ²²With all his wealth, he finds himself weighed down by those in misery, and he is in straits. ²³When he is about to gorge himself, God lets His anger loose at him and rains it upon him as his food. ²⁴He may flee from an iron weapon, but the bronze bow shall pierce him through; ²⁵the arrow comes through at his back, its point having punctured his entrails; terrors close in upon him. ²⁶Utter darkness settles on his treasures. A fire not fanned^r consumes him and burns up all that is left in his tent. ²⁷The heavens reveal his iniquity, and the earth rises up against him. ²⁸All that was accumulated in his house is moved out in the day of His wrath. ²⁹This is the wicked man's lot from God and the legacy allotted him of God."^s

21 BUT JOB REPLIED: ²"LISTEN closely to what I say, for your thoughtful attention will bring me consolation. ³Allow me to have my say, and after I have spoken, go on mocking. ⁴As for me, is my complaint regarding my fellow men? Why then may I not be impatient? ⁵Look at me, and be astonished; lay your hand on your mouth. ⁶When I consider it, I am frightened; my body shudders! ⁷Why do the wicked live on, become old and

l) Job speaks with death in view, [14:14].

m) The word "go-el" in Hebrew [v. 25] signifies literally "nearest of kin" [Ruth 4:3], who may become redeemer, here with Messianic implications.

n) The "reins" or kidneys were the seat of intense feeling, possibly of hope. Job is ecstatic; his vision of God seems almost realized. o) Referring to Job's afflictions.

p) Zophar, the traditionalist, points to the brevity of a wicked man's prosperity.

q) Zophar is the crudest and coarsest of Job's friends; though a genius in justice, he could not think spiritually. r) By human hands.

s) Zophar's emphasis on the brevity of the wicked man's happiness awakens in Job the need of looking at all the facts; his experience teaches him there are many exceptions.

even increase in strength? ⁸They see their children settled and they observe their families. ⁹Their homes are free from terror, and God's rod never strikes them.¹ ¹⁰Their bulls breed unfaithfully; their cows calve and do not miscarry. ¹¹They let their children go out like a flock; their young ones hop around. ¹²They sing to the lyre and tambourine and make merry to the sound of the flute. ¹³They spend their days in prosperity, and in peace they go down to Sheol. ¹⁴Yet, they said to God, 'Depart from us; we do not care to know Thy ways. ¹⁵What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him, and what profit do we obtain if we appeal to Him?'^u ¹⁶Note this: Men are not the architects of their own fortune; the planning of the wicked is far from me.^v

¹⁷'How often the lamp of the wicked is put out! How often calamity overtakes them! God in His anger distributes sorrows on them. ¹⁸How often they are like the straw before the wind, like chaff which the whirlwind sweeps away! ¹⁹But 'God,' you say, 'stores up their iniquity for their children.' ²⁰Let their own eyes see their calamity, and let them drink of the indignation of the Almighty!^w ²¹For of what interest is his family to a man who is dead, when the number of his months is cut off? ²²Can anyone teach God knowledge? It is He who judges those on high. ²³One man dies in fulness of strength, completely at ease and satisfied; ²⁴his sides filled out with fat, and the marrow of his bones still fresh. ²⁵Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted any good. ²⁶They lie down alike in the dust, and worms cover them.^x

²⁷'I know, indeed, your deliberations and your schemes to do me

wrong. ²⁸For you say, 'Where is the prince's palace and where the tent in which the wicked dwelt?' ²⁹Have you never inquired of travelers? Is not their report trustworthy, ³⁰that the evil man is spared in the day of calamity and that in the day of wrath he is allowed to escape? ³¹Who rebukes a man to his face, or who repays him for his behavior? ³²When he is borne to the grave, a watch is kept over his tomb. ³³Softly the clods of the valley cover him, and all men follow him, while countless numbers are ahead of him. ³⁴How then do you expect to comfort me, seeing that falsehood lingers in your answers?'^y

22 THEN ANSWERED ELIPHAZ THE Temanite:^z ²"Can a man be of service to God? No, but surely he who is wise is helpful to himself. ³Is it of any advantage to the Almighty that you are righteous? Is it any profit to Him that you keep your ways perfect? ⁴Is it because of your piety that He rebukes you; that He passes judgment upon you? ⁵Is not your wickedness great? Are not your iniquities endless? ⁶For without reason you have required pawn of your brothers; you have stripped the naked of their clothes. ⁷You have not supplied water to the fainting to drink, and you have withheld food from the hungry. ⁸But the man of great influence obtained the land,^a and the eminent man got the dwelling. ⁹Widows you have sent away empty-handed, and the arms of the orphans have been broken. ¹⁰Therefore, snares are around you, and sudden panic confounds you. ¹¹Your light is blacked out so that you cannot see, and a deluge of water covers you.

¹²"Does not God dwell high in

t) That many, in spite of their wickedness, continue to prosper, seems to reflect on God's justice.

u) Job's wife had advised him to say "Good-by" to God, 2:9.

v) "God has helped them; even as He has afflicted me," Job implies.

w) Both Jeremiah, 31:29, 30 and Ezekiel, 18:2-4, taught that "every man shall die for his own sin." x) As a rule, honesty and diligence bring prosperity. God wants it so, to encourage good behavior. But when people grew convinced that misfortune must be due to bad behavior, God undertook to teach its falsity. Job, unaware of God's concession to Satan, became God's agent to correct the error. Job's friends argue: All wicked men end in ruin; Job has gone to ruin; Job is therefore a wicked man.

y) In the second cycle, ch. 15-21, Job's friends have implied that conscience, earth, and heaven all condemn him.

z) Eliphaz, the kindest of Job's friends, in this his last speech, also speaks of Job's unfairness against men.

a) Accusing Job of favoring the rich with his sales. These accusations are suppositions, not facts; the accuser could not have proved a single one.

heaven? Observe the farthest stars, how high they are! ¹³But you say, 'What does God know? Can He judge through the oppressive darkness?' ¹⁴Thick clouds veil Him, so that He cannot see; He walks on the arch of heaven. ¹⁵Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have walked, ¹⁶who were untimely snatched away, their foothold washed out by a deluge? ¹⁷They said to God, 'Leave us alone,' and 'What can the Almighty do for us?' ¹⁸Yet it was He who filled their houses with abundance. But the planning of the wicked is far from me.^b ¹⁹The righteous see it and are glad, and the innocent mock at them, ²⁰saying, 'Surely our enemies are eliminated, and what they had left the fire has destroyed.'

²¹'Acquaint now yourself with Him, and enjoy peace, by which great gain will come to you. ²²Accept the instruction from His mouth, and treasure His words in your mind. ²³If you will return to the Almighty you will be built up; if you will put away unfairness from your tents, ²⁴throw your precious treasure to the dust,^c regard your gold of Ophir as valueless as the stones of the brook, ²⁵and make the Almighty your gold nuggets and your silver ore, ²⁶then you will delight in the Almighty, and you will lift up your face to God. ²⁷You will pray to Him; He will hear you, and you will pay your vows to Him. ²⁸When you come to a decision, it will be established, and light will shine upon you all the way. ²⁹For God abases the high and mighty, but He exalts the humble man whom He will save. ³⁰He will even deliver one not guiltless; through the cleanness of your hands you will be delivered.'^d

23 THEN JOB ANSWERED: ²"TODAY again my complaint becomes re-

bellious. His hand is heavy upon me in my groaning.^e ³Oh, that I knew where I might find Him, that I might approach His tribunal, ⁴present my case before Him with my mouth full of proofs, ⁵learn what He would reply, and understand what He would say! ⁶Would He contend with me in the greatness of his power? No, but He would pay attention to me. ⁷Then an upright person could plead with Him and gain acquittal from my Judge for all time.

⁸'Behold, I go eastward, but He is not there; and westward, but I do not see Him; ⁹to the north where He works, but I cannot find Him; He covers Himself in the south so I do not observe Him.^f ¹⁰But He knows the way which I take, and when He has tested me I shall come forth as gold. ¹¹My feet have stayed steady in His path; I have kept His way and have never swerved aside. ¹²Nor have I strayed from the orders of His lips; rather I have treasured within me the words of His mouth.^g ¹³But He remains true to Himself, and who can turn Him? He does what He wants to do; ¹⁴He will carry out what He has planned for me, and of many such matters He is mindful.^h ¹⁵I am therefore awed at His presence; when I reflect on it, I tremble before Him. ¹⁶God has made my heart faint; the Almighty has dismayed me. ¹⁷I am hemmed in by the darkness; thick darkness covers my face.

24 "WHY DOES NOT THE ALMIGHTY set times?ⁱ Why do not they who know Him see His days?^j ²There are evil men who remove landmarks, rustle flocks, and pasture them. ³They drive away the orphan's donkey, and take the widow's cow in pawn. ⁴They push the needy off the road; the

b) Cf. 21:16, this last clause being exactly what Job had said; perhaps adding to Job's abhorrence of the ingratitude of wicked men.

c) In modern Lebanon, with no banks near to deposit their possessions, many natives bury them in some corner of their gardens.

d) Though critical of Job in this his last speech, Eliphaz concludes on a happy note of vicarious help to others.

e) Instead of replying to his senior friend's criticisms, Job turns to God, pleading his innocence and integrity.

f) God is all pervasive, yet intangible and invisible. God understands him, but he still fails to understand God. g) Job here declares he has done what Eliphaz had exhorted him to do [22:22].

h) Though Job is a righteous man, God, he believes, has prescribed suffering for him and pursues the same course He pursues wrongdoers. i) For judgment.

j) The days He holds court.

wretched of the earth all huddle out of sight. ⁵Like wild donkeys in the desert, they go out to work, looking for prey which the wilderness may yield as food for their children. ⁶They gather provender from the field and glean the wicked man's vineyard. ⁷They pass the night naked for lack of clothes, having no covering against the cold; ⁸drenched by the rains in the mountains and lacking shelter, they cling close to the shelter of overhanging rocks. ⁹Some wrest fatherless infants from their mothers' breasts and hold them as security for unpaid debts. ¹⁰Having no clothes they are made to go about naked; and though hungry themselves, they are forced to carry sheaves. ¹¹Between the rows of olive trees of the wicked they press oil and they are compelled to tread the wine presses, while dying of thirst.

¹²"From the city rise the groans of the dying, and the souls of the wounded cry for help; yet God does not hear their petitions."^k ¹³There are those who rebel against the light, who do not know His ways, and do not walk in His paths.^l ¹⁴The murderer rises promptly at daylight,^m that he may kill the poor and the helpless, and at night-fall he turns thief. ¹⁵The adulterer's eye awaits the twilight; he says, 'No eye will see me'; he then puts a veil over his face. ¹⁶In the dark they dig into houses;ⁿ by day they shut themselves up, not exposing their identity to the light. ¹⁷They choose midnight as their morning time; for they are intimate with the terrors of deep darkness! ¹⁸Swiftly they move as on a stream; their possessions are cursed here on earth; grape treaders turn no more to their vineyards. ¹⁹As drought and heat consume snow waters, so does Sheol absorb sinners. ²⁰Even mothers forget

their children; worms alone find satisfaction in them; they are not long remembered, wickedness having been broken like trees. ²¹They live off the barren and childless and fail to do good to the widow. ²²Yet He prolongs the lives of the mighty by His power and restores those who are despairing of life. ²³He gives them confidence; they are sustained, and His eyes are upon their ways. ²⁴They are exalted for a little while and then are gone; they wither and fade like the mallow leaf, and are cut off like the heads of grain. ²⁵If it is not so, who can prove me false and disqualify my statement?"^o

25 THEN ANSWERED BILDAD^p THE Shuhite: ²"Dominion and dreadfulness are with Him, who orders peace in His high heaven. ³Who is able to count His armies? Upon whom does His light not shine? ⁴How then can a human being be just in the presence of God? How can one born of woman be pure? ⁵Truly, even the moon does not shine clearly, and the stars are not pure in His sight; ⁶how much less mortal man, a maggot, and the son of man, a worm!"^q

26 BUT JOB ANSWERED:^r ²"How well you have aided the powerless and sustained the feeble arm! ³How well you have counseled him who has no wisdom, and how abundantly you have supplied him with sound insight! ⁴To whom are you in debted for such words, and by whose spirit were you inspired? ⁵The shades below quake, the waters and their inhabitants. ⁶Sheol lies exposed before Him, and Death has no cover. ⁷He stretches out the north^s over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing. ⁸He binds up the waters together in

k) This is Job's persistent complaint; he is discouraged; God's rule seems unfair.

l) The murderer, the adulterer, and the thief, violators of the sixth, seventh and eighth commandments. m) The Arab says: "When the sun rises it is time to get up; when it sets, it is time to retire."

n) Some Eastern houses were built of sun-dried mud bricks and their walls, though thick, could be bored through without difficulty.

o) Job challenges his friends to refute his statements that God is neither just nor righteous; but his claims, he soon confesses, need forgiveness.

p) Bildad is completely overwhelmed at Job's persistent claim of innocence and only repeats what Eliphaz had said [4:17-21; 15:14-16]. We readers must keep in mind that Job was ignorant of Satan's insinuations and God's permission to test Job, and so were his friends.

q) Cf. Isa. 41:14. r) Bildad had pointed to God's greatness in heaven above; Job describes Him as great here and in the underworld; cf. Ps. 139:8.

s) The vacant space under the northern vault of heaven, cf. Isa. 14-13, 14.

His dense clouds; yet the cloud is not torn under its weight. ⁹He veils the face of the moon by spreading His cloud over it. ¹⁰He draws a circle^t over the deep, a boundary between light and darkness. ¹¹The pillars of heaven^u sway, appalled at His rebuke. ¹²By His power the sea is stilled, and by His understanding He smites through proud Rahab.^v ¹³By His breath the skies are cleared; His hand pierces the rushing serpent. ¹⁴See! These are but the outreachings of His doings; how light a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can comprehend?"

27 THEN JOB RESUMED^w HIS DISCOURSE, saying: ²"As God lives, who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has embittered my soul, ³as long as I live and God's breath is in my nostrils, ⁴my lips will not speak an untruth, neither shall my tongue utter deceit. ⁵Be it far from me that I should acknowledge you to be right; till I die I will not sacrifice my integrity. ⁶I hold on to my integrity and will not let it go; my conscience^x does not accuse me, not one single day. ⁷May my enemy fare as the wicked, and may my opponent be as the perverse. ⁸For what is the hope of the godless when God cuts him off and requires his soul? ⁹Will God hear his cry, when trouble befalls him? ¹⁰Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?

¹¹"I will teach you concerning the hand of God; the Almighty's program I will not hide. ¹²Indeed, you yourselves have seen it; why then do you indulge in futility? ¹³This is the portion of the wicked person from God, the heritage which oppressors receive from the Almighty: ¹⁴As his children multiply, it is for the sword, and his offspring starve for lack of food. ¹⁵Those of them who survive, pestilence brings to the grave, and their widows do not

join in the lamentation. ¹⁶Though a man heap up silver as the dust and accumulates garments as plentiful as clay, ¹⁷he may store them up, but the righteous shall wear them, and the innocent will divide the silver. ¹⁸The house which he builds is as a spider's web and as the booth which a watchman builds.^y ¹⁹He lies down rich but cannot do so again; when he opens his eyes, all is gone! ²⁰Terrors^z overtake him like a flood; in the night a whirlwind carries him away. ²¹The east wind takes him up, and there he goes; a hot wind sweeps him out of his place; ²²it hurls at him without mercy;^a from its force he flees in haste. ²³Men clap their hands at him and hiss after him from his dwelling.^b

28 "SURELY THERE IS A MINE^c FOR silver and a place where they refine gold. ²Iron is taken out of the earth, and stone ore is smelted into copper. ³Men search the limits of dark places, venturing into their remotest bounds to obtain the ore. ⁴They drive deep shafts in valleys, in remote places seldom visited by anyone, and descend into them, hanging to ropes that swing back and forth. ⁵From the earth man obtains his daily bread; but underneath its surface there is blasting as with fire. ⁶Sapphires are discovered among its stones, and there is gold dust. ⁷The way to such treasures no bird of prey detects; no eagle's eye observes it; ⁸no beast of prey treads on it; no lion has set foot there. ⁹But man puts forth his hands on flinty rocks and overturns mountains by the roots; ¹⁰he drills channels in the rocks and lays bare precious gems. ¹¹He dams up streams of water and brings hidden things to light.

¹²"But where can wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding? ¹³Mortal man does not know its value; nor is it found in the land of the living. ¹⁴The abyss says, 'It is not

t) The line of the horizon. u) "The pillars of heaven" are nowhere else mentioned in the Bible.

v) Rahab, the water serpent, of the Leviathan type.

w) The third speaker, Zophar, fails to reply; so Job, in ch. 27 and 28, continues to protest his innocence. x) "Heart" here implies "conscience," a word made familiar by Paul, Acts 23:1; Rom. 2:15; 9:1. y) In a vineyard for a single season. z) Cf. Job 18:11-14; 20:24-28; 30:15.

a) His arrows, the lightning and other natural phenomena.

b) Hissing being a common oriental token of scorn and evil gladness; Edom was hissed, Jer. 49:17.

c) This is the only description of a mine in the Bible; cf. Deut. 8:9.

in me'; and the sea says, 'It is not with me.' ¹⁶Pure gold can not purchase it; neither can silver be weighed as its price. ¹⁶It can be valued neither in the gold of Ophir,^d nor in the precious onyx nor in the sapphire. ¹⁷Neither can gold or glass^e equal it, nor can jewels of refined gold be exchanged for it. ¹⁸Coral and crystal are not worthy of comparison. The acquisition of wisdom is above that of pearls; ¹⁹the topaz of Ethiopia does not equal it; no weight of pure gold can buy it.

²⁰"Whence then is wisdom derived, and where is the place of understanding? ²¹It is hidden from the eyes of all living creatures,^f concealed from the birds of the air. ²²Destruction and Death confess, 'Only with our ears have we heard a rumor of it.'

²³"God knows the way to it; He is aware of its abode. ²⁴For He beholds to the ends of the earth; He sees everything beneath the whole heavens. ²⁵When He imparted to the wind its strength and limited the sea by measure, ²⁶when He set a law for the rain and a path for the lightning strokes, ²⁷then He saw it and announced it. He placed it^g where it belongs and thoroughly observed it. ²⁸And to man He said, Behold, reverence for the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding."^h

29 JOB AGAIN TOOK UP HIS DISCOURSEⁱ and said: ²"Oh, that I were as in previous months, as in the days when God protected me; ³when He caused His lamp to shine above my head, and by His light I walked through darkness; ⁴when I was in my prime of life and the friendship of God lingered in my tent; ⁵while the Almighty was still with me and my children were around me; ⁶when my steps

were bathed in cream, and the near-by rock^j poured out brooks of oil; ⁷when I walked to the city gate and took my seat in the broad way.^k ⁸Young men seeing me stepped back; the aged got up and remained standing; ⁹princes stopped their conversation and put their hand on their mouth; ¹⁰nobles hushed and stood dumb, their tongue cleaving to the roof of their mouth. ¹¹The ear that heard me called me blessed, and the eye that saw me spoke well of me. ¹²For I delivered the wretched who appealed for help, the orphan and him who had no helper. ¹³Those who would have perished, blessed me, and I made the widow's heart sing with joy. ¹⁴Thus I put on righteousness and my fairness dressed me as robe and turban.^l

¹⁵"I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. ¹⁶I was a father to the poor, and I investigated the court cases of persons whom I did not know. ¹⁷I broke the grinder teeth of the unfair and forced them to drop their prey. ¹⁸I thought, 'I shall grow old among my offspring, having multiplied my days like the phoenix,^m ¹⁹my roots reaching to the water, with dew upon my branches all night, ²⁰fresh honors ever coming in upon me, and my bow as vigorous as ever in my hand.'

²¹"To me men listened in silence and waited till I had given my counsel. ²²After I had spoken, they never ventured to reply. ²³They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouths wide as for the latter rain.ⁿ ²⁴I used to smile upon those discouraged, and the light of my face strengthened them. ²⁵I chose their plans for them, sitting as chief among them, as a king with his army, as one who comforts those cast down in sorrow.

d) The gold of Ophir was the most highly prized; Ophir was far distant, probably southern Arabia.

e) Glass was regarded as exceptionally precious.

f) Cf. Eccl. 3:11. The author knows that man seeks wisdom, but will never find all of it.

g) Wisdom. h) Job has time for reflection before his confession, which follows.

i) In these three chapters Job no longer argues. In ch. 29, he reviews his years of prosperity. In ch. 30, he describes in contrast his present condition; and in ch. 31, he protests his innocence. Ch. 29 is said to be the middle chapter of the O.T.

j) Terraces between rock curbs, forming olive groves.

k) Oriental courts met in the gateways of their cities, a custom that has continued till modern times. l) "Justice clothed itself with me; it took possession of me."

m) The ancients imaged the phoenix, a miraculous bird, as living a thousand years.

n) Latter rains in March and April were needed to mature the vegetation which had been cultivated during the earlier months.

30 "BUT NOW THEY DERIDE ME, even those younger than I, whose fathers I would have disdained to hire as shepherds with my dogs to guard my flock. ²Of what profit to me, in any case, is the strength of their hands, men who have lost all their manly vigor? ³Exhausted with want and hunger, they gnaw the dry and barren ground; ⁴they pluck mallows and leaves from the bushes and eat as food the roots of the broom. ⁵They are driven from the community, and men shout against them as against thieves. ⁶They have to live in dreaded ravines, in holes of the earth, and in the clefts of the rocks. ⁷Between the bushes they howl, and under nettles they crouch together; ⁸sons of the worthless and infamous, they have been banished from the country.^o

⁹"Now I have become their scoff and a theme for their gossip. ¹⁰They despise me, they stand aloof from me; they do not hesitate even to spit in my face. ¹¹For, He having loosed my bowstring and having humbled me, they have cast off all restraint before me. ¹²To my right the rabble rise against me and push away my feet; they construct against me their destructive paths. ¹³They throw obstacles in my path to make me stumble, and no one deters them. ¹⁴Through a wide breach they assail me, rushing on me among the ruins. ¹⁵Terrors are poured down on me; my honor they treat with contempt, and my welfare vanishes like a cloud.

¹⁶"Now my soul sinks within me; days of affliction have gripped me. ¹⁷During the night my bones ache, so that I get no rest and piercing pains keep gnawing me. ¹⁸My clothes are in disorder as I wrestle with my torments, binding me about like my coat collar. ¹⁹He has thrown me in the mud, and I am become like dust and ashes. ²⁰I cry to Thee for help, but Thou dost

not answer me; I stand up, but Thou takest no notice of me. ²¹Thou hast turned harsh to me: with Thy mighty hand Thou dost oppose me.^p ²²Thou liftest me up on the wind, making me to ride on it, and I am blown away by a tempest. ²³I know indeed that Thou wilt convey me to death, to the assembly place appointed for all the living.

²⁴"Yet, will not a falling man stretch out his hand? In his calamity will he not cry out for help? ²⁵Have I not wept for him who went through a heavy day? Has not my soul grieved for the needy? ²⁶But as for me, when I looked for good, evil came; and when I expected light, darkness entered. ²⁷My inside boils and never comes to rest; only days of affliction have overtaken me.^q ²⁸In black I go about without sunshine; I stand up in the congregation and cry for help. ²⁹I am become a brother to jackals and a companion of ostriches. ³⁰My skin has grown black on me and is peeling off. My bones burn with fever. ³¹The music of my harp has turned to mourning, and the harmonies of my flute to bitter lamentation.

31 "IF MADE A COVENANT WITH MY eyes; how then could I ogle at a girl? ²For what could I expect from God as recompense; or what heritage from the Almighty on high? ³Should not calamity befall the wrongdoer and disaster the workers of iniquity? ⁴Does not He^r observe my path and count every step I take?

⁵"If I have walked with lies, or my foot has hastened to deceit, ⁶then let Him weigh in a just balance, and God will know my integrity! ⁷If my step has strayed out of the way, or my thoughts have followed my eyes, or a stain^u sticks to my hands, ⁸then let me sow, and let another eat, and let my grown crops be uprooted.

o) "The misbegotting having been misbegotten!"

p) Keeping me alive, in order to afflict me with new pain every day!

q) Job's disease was most painful and of long duration. Unaware of Satan's challenge and God's agreement to it, Job could not reason out why he must suffer so; neither could his friends judge correctly.

r) Ch. 31 is not a series of boastings, but a catalogue of serious assertions.

s) The pronoun "He" in v. 4 is emphatic.

t) Sixteen clauses are introduced by "If"; he repudiates, and rightly so, implications of dishonesty in any form. u) Of greed.

⁹"If my heart has been enticed by some woman; if I have lurked about my neighbor's door; ¹⁰then let my wife grind for another, and let others bend down over her. ¹¹For that would be a shameful sin, a crime to be punished by the judge; ¹²that would be a fire which would consume to destruction and would burn all that I possess. ¹³If I ignored the rights of my servant or of my maid, when they had a claim against me, ¹⁴what then could I do when God rises up, and when He comes to inquire, what shall I answer Him? ¹⁵Did not He who made me in the womb, make him, too? Did not One prepare both of us in the womb?

¹⁶"If I have denied the poor what he petitioned, or have caused the eyes of the widow to dim,^v ¹⁷or have eaten my morsel alone, without sharing it with the fatherless—¹⁸rather from his youth he grew up with me as with a father, and from her mother's womb I guided her—¹⁹if I have seen a homeless one perish for lack of clothing, naked and in need; ²⁰if his loins have not blessed me and if he was not warmed with a fleece of my sheep; ²¹if I have raised my hand with threatening voice against an orphan, when I saw a chance to obtain a decision in my favor in the gate;^w ²²then let my shoulder blade drop from my shoulder and my arm be broken from its socket. ²³For calamity from God and dread of His judgment have always restrained me, and I dared not face His majesty.

²⁴"If I have made gold my hope and have said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; ²⁵if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great and because my hand secured so much; ²⁶if I have looked at the sun when it shone, or the moon moving along in splendor ²⁷and by them have been secretly seduced, my hand kissing my mouth;^x ²⁸this also would have been a heinous enormity,

punishable by the judges, for I would then have been false to God above.

²⁹"If I have felt happy at the calamity of him who hated me, or exulted when misfortune hit him (³⁰I did neither commit the sin of cursing my enemy, nor pray God to cause him to die); ³¹if my tent fellows have not so witnessed, then never was a man whom I did not generously supply with meat; ³²nor did I ever allow a stranger to lodge in the street; I always opened my doors to wayfarers;

³³"If I have concealed my transgressions, as Adam's son, hiding my guilt in my bosom, ³⁴because I was afraid to face the crowd and was scared of the contempt of the tribes, staying at home and keeping quiet indoors — ³⁵Oh, that someone would hear me! Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me! Oh, that my adversary would write out his indictment!^y ³⁶I would surely carry it on my shoulder; I would wind it about my head as a crown. ³⁷I would count out to him the number of my steps,^z and as a prince I would approach him.

³⁸"For if my land has cried out against me and its furrows have wept together; ³⁹if I have eaten its fruits without payment, or caused the souls of its owners sorrows, ⁴⁰then let thistles grow instead of wheat and cockles^a instead of barley!"

The words of Job are ended.

32 SO THESE THREE MEN CEASED to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. ²Then the anger of Elihu^b the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled; against Job his anger blazed, because he justified himself rather than God; ³and against his three friends too, his anger blazed, because they had found no answer, and yet they had pronounced Job wrong.

⁴Now Elihu had delayed answering

v) From disappointed hope. w) Where court sat.

x) In order to throw a kiss to the sun, or moon. In such an act the hand was more active than the mouth. Sun-worship is forbidden in Deut. 17:2-7, and was punishable by death.

y) Job appeals to God to make known to him the sins which his friends laid to his charge.

z) Cf. v. 4; Job can give an account of his "steps," which were always on errands of duty and mercy! a) Cockles or any offensive weed.

b) Elihu, whose name signifies "My God is He," seems to have been a Syrian, that is, an Aramean.

Job because they were older than he; ⁶but when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of the three men, his anger flared up.^c ⁶And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered: "I am still young in years, and you are old; therefore I hesitated and dared not show you my views. ⁷I said, 'Let age speak, and added years announce wisdom.' ⁸But it is the spirit in man and the breath of the Almighty that gives him understanding. ⁹It is not the aged who are wise, nor the elders who understand what is justice; ¹⁰therefore, listen to me, and I too will show what I think.

¹¹"You see, I waited for your words with ears open for your reasoned remarks, as you examined what to say. ¹²I gave you my undivided attention; but, take note, not one of you confuted Job, or answered his reasonings. ¹³Do not say, 'We have found wisdom; God only, and not men, can put him down.' ¹⁴As he did not direct his words to me, I will not answer him with your speeches.

¹⁵"Dismayed they stand, having no further answer. Their verbosity has gone; they are silent. ¹⁶Shall I wait longer? Because they are stricken dumb, shall I too remain silent? ¹⁷No! I will give my answer, too; I will tell what I know. ¹⁸For I am full of words, and the spirit within me constrains me; ¹⁹my thoughts are like wine that has no vent; like new wineskins so filled they are about to burst! ²⁰I must speak to obtain relief, my lips open to reply. ²¹I will not be partial to any man, nor flatter anyone. ²²Indeed I can not flatter, lest my Maker should put an end to me.^d

33 "O JOB,^e HEAR MY SPEECH; LISTEN to all my words. ²See! I have opened my mouth, my tongue under my palate is talking, ³and what my lips know they speak sincerely.^f ⁴The

spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. ⁵Answer me, if you can. Draw up before me; marshal your words; take your stand. ⁶See! before God, I am like you; I too was formed out of clay. ⁷Let no fear of me terrify you; my hand on you will not be heavy.

⁸"Yet you have said in my hearing and I heard the sound of your words, ⁹I am pure and without transgression; I am innocent and without guilt.^g ¹⁰But He finds grounds of hostility against me and counts me as His enemy.^h ¹¹He puts my feet in the stocks and watches all my ways.ⁱ

¹²"But I must contradict you; in this claim you are not fair; for God is greater than mortal man. ¹³Why do you accuse Him of never answering your cries? ¹⁴For God speaks in different ways; if not heard in one way, then He chooses another; ¹⁵in dreams and visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, in hours of slumber on their beds; ¹⁶then He opens the ears of men and affirms the warnings directed to them, to ¹⁷withdraw man from his purpose and to make him give up his pride;^j ¹⁸to hold him back from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

¹⁹"He is also chastened by pain upon his bed; his bones torture him,^k ²⁰his stomach abhors food; his soul cares for no dainties. ²¹His flesh becomes so wasted that it cannot be seen, but his bones, not seen before, protrude into view. ²²He hovers long on the verge of the pit and draws nearer and nearer to the destroying agencies.^l ²³If there is for him an angel, an interpreter, one of the thousand, to declare to man what is right for him, ²⁴then He is gracious and says, 'Release him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom; ²⁵having repented, his flesh shall return fresh as in youth, let him return

c) He eventually persuades Job to change his attitude to God, to take down his fist of defiance, with which he had closed his concluding monologue.

d) Elihu intends to speak as an umpire, not as a partisan; Job had longed for an arbiter [Job 9:33, 34]. e) Elihu calls Job by name cf. 34:5, 7, 35f; 35:16; the friends never did.

f) Job had said, "How forcible are honest words!" ch. 6:25.

g) Cf. 10:7; 16:17; but also 9:20, 21. h) Cf. 13:24. i) Cf. 13:27.

j) Job's besetting sin was spiritual "pride"; cf. 35:12; 36:9. k) Rheumatism or arthritis?

l) Later the Jews interpreted passages like this, saying that when a wicked man dies, three bands of destroying angels meet him and counsel him which to choose: peace, pain or punishment.

to the days of youthful vigor.' ²⁶He prays to God, and He accepts him; he beholds God's face and is joyful; the man is restored to his normal living; ²⁷he tells others how God has saved him; he sings with joy and says, 'I sinned and twisted what was straight; but He requited me not according to my iniquity. ²⁸He has redeemed my life from going down into the pit, and my soul sees the light.'

²⁹"See! All these things God does, twice, yes, three times with man, ³⁰to turn back his soul from the pit, that he may see the light of life. ³¹Give heed, Job; listen to me; keep quiet, and I will say more. ³²If you have anything to say, answer me; speak, for I desire to justify you; ³³if not, then listen to me; keep still, and I will teach you wisdom."^m

34 ELIHU CONTINUED: ²"HEAR MY words, you wise men, and you who have knowledge, give ear to me; ³for the ear tests speech as the palate tastes food. ⁴Let us choose for ourselves what is right; let us determine among us what is good. ⁵For Job has claimed that he is innocent; that God has taken away his right; ⁶that, in spite of being right, he seems to be a liar; that his wound is incurable, though he is without transgression. ⁷What man is there like Job, who drinks down blasphemy like water; ⁸who keeps company with evildoers and walks with wicked men? ⁹For he has said, 'It profits a man nothing to be in fellowship with God!'

¹⁰"Therefore, listen to me, you men of discernment. Far be it from God that He should work ungodliness, and from the Almighty that He should do wrong. ¹¹For according to the deeds of a man will He requite him, and as by his behavior he deserves. ¹²Surely God will not do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert justice. ¹³Who deputed to Him authority over the earth, or who has established the whole world? ¹⁴If God were to withdraw His spirit and gather to Himself His spirit

and His breath, ¹⁵all flesh would expire together, and man would return to the dust.

¹⁶"If you have understanding, hear this, and listen to what I say: ¹⁷Can one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn the Righteous and Mighty ¹⁸who tells a king, 'You are worthless,' and nobles, 'You are ungodly?'ⁿ ¹⁹He is not partial to princes, nor does He favor the rich more than the poor; for they all are His handiwork. ²⁰Suddenly men die, high and low alike; at midnight the people are shaken and pass away; the mighty are removed by no human hand.^o

²¹"For His eyes are on the ways of a man, He takes note of all his steps. ²²There is no darkness or dense blackness where evildoers can hide themselves. ²³He sets a man no stated time when he should appear before God in judgment. ²⁴He shatters the mighty without a trial and puts others in their place. ²⁵Knowing well their works, He overthrows them in the night and crushes them. ²⁶He shatters the wicked and smites them down in the sight of others, ²⁷because they turned aside from following Him and showed no regard for any of His ways, ²⁸so that the lament of the lowly reached up to Him, and He heard the cry of the afflicted.^p ²⁹If He remains quiet, who can condemn Him? If He hides His face, who shall catch a glance of Him? He watches alike over nations and over individuals, ³⁰so that no godless man may reign and that there be no snares to the people. ³¹It is well to confess to God, 'I have felt discipline; now I will offend no more'; ³²and to ask God to explain to him what he has done amiss and cannot understand. ³³Then He will repay you as you deserve. Will you reject it? You yourself must choose, not I. Whatever you know, that declare. ³⁴Men of understanding will say to me, and any wise man listening to you will agree, ³⁶that Job does not speak intelligently, that his words are without discernment.

m) By "wisdom" Elihu means the disciplinary value of suffering and affliction.

n) Injustice and good government are incompatible.

o) God is no viceroy; as Creator He is supreme over all the world and accountable to no man.

p) Those who turn from God have no regard for human suffering, so that those suffering have no resort but God.

³⁶Would that Job were tried all the way, because he answers like wicked men; ³⁷he adds rebellion to his sin, yet keeps on clapping his hands in our presence, and at the same time he multiplies his verbal charges against God."^q

35 ELIHU ANSWERED FURTHER:

²⁴"Do you think it right to claim that you are more righteous than God? ²⁵And to ask, 'What profit is there in being good; in what respect have I gained advantage above sinners?' ²⁶I will answer you and also your friends with you. ²⁷Look up to the heavens and see; gaze at the clouds high above you! ²⁸If you have sinned, how does that affect Him, and if your transgressions are repeated, what have you done to Him? ²⁹If you are righteous, what gain is that to Him? Does He receive anything from your hand? ³⁰But your wickedness affects your own self and your righteousness a human being.

³¹"At often repeated oppressions men cry out; they shriek for help because of the violence of the mighty. ³²But no one says, 'Where is God, my Maker, who gives songs of joy in the night?' ³³He makes us more intelligent than the earth's animals and grants us greater wisdom than the birds of the air! ³⁴There they call, but He does not answer, because of the presumptions of evil men.^r ³⁵Surely God will not hear a baseless cry, nor will the Almighty acknowledge it. ³⁶How much less in your case, when you admit you do not see Him, and, though you wait for Him, your cause is not considered. ³⁷And now, because God has not visited you in His anger and does not attend to your transgression, ³⁸Job uselessly opens his mouth and indulges in unreasonable verbiage."

36 ELIHU^s SAID FURTHER: ²⁴"DEAR with me a little longer, and I will instruct you; for I have more to say on behalf of God. ²⁵I will fetch my knowledge^t from afar and justify my

Maker. ²⁶For truly my words are not false; He who is perfect in knowledge is with you.

²⁷"Behold! God is mighty, and yet He regards nothing as trivial. He is mighty in power of understanding. ²⁸He will not prolong the life of the wicked, but He will give the wronged one his right. ²⁹He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous, but places them forever with kings upon the throne, so they are exalted. ³⁰If they are bound in fetters, and caught in the cords of affliction, ³¹then He makes known to them their deeds and their transgressions, and shows them that they have inflated themselves. ³²He also opens their ears for admonition and bids them to renounce iniquity. ³³If they listen and obey Him, then they live out their days in prosperity and their years in joyousness; ³⁴but if they give no heed, then they perish by the sword, to die in ignorance. ³⁵But those pretending in heart harvest anger; they cry for no help when He has bound them. ³⁶They die in youth; their lives end in dissipation. ³⁷The afflicted He delivers through their miseries, and through their distress He opens their ears. ³⁸Yes, He would still allure you out of distress into a broad place, where there is no restraint and set upon your table the abundance of fatness.

³⁹"But you fully deserve the judgment that befalls the wicked; judgment and justice have caught up with you. ⁴⁰Beware lest wrath entice you to scorn; and do not let the heavy ransom of your personal losses turn you aside. ⁴¹Would your wealth have saved you without suffering, or would all your resources have given you back your strength? ⁴²Foster no longing for the night when people are overwhelmed where they are. ⁴³Beware! Do not turn to evil; for this you were tested by suffering! ⁴⁴Observe! God is exalted in His might; who is a teacher^u like Him? ⁴⁵Who would assign to Him

q) Elihu shares the attitude of Job's three friends, and he uses language exceeding in harshness almost anything they had said. r) Job's great sin; cf. 33:17, with note.

s) This chapter is Elihu's chief contribution. He was inspired with a solution of Job's dilemma and points out that affliction is not merely punitive, but also disciplinary. Job should regard it as the warning of love. t) The phrase "perfect in knowledge" is ascribed by Elihu to God.

u) Elihu speaks repeatedly of God as a teacher. Cf. 33:14ff.; 34:32; 35:11, through the operations of His providence.

His way, and who dares to say, 'Thou hast dealt unfairly?' ²⁴Remember to glorify His works, which have moved so many to sing. ²⁶All men look on it, but a mortal sees it only from afar.

²⁶"Behold! God is great, and we do not understand Him; the number of His years is incalculable. ²⁷For He draws up drops of water from the sea and distils them through vapor into rain, ²⁸which the clouds pour down, dropping in showers on man. ²⁹Who understands the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings from His pavilion? ³⁰See how He disperses lightning around Him and covers the tops of the mountains. ³¹By these He judges the peoples and gives them food in abundance. ³²He covers both hands with the lightning and commands it to strike the mark. ³³His thunder announces His presence; the cattle feel warned of the storm.

37 "AT THIS TOO MY HEART TREMBLES; it leaps out of its place. ²Listen to the rolling of His voice, the thunder that comes out of His mouth. ³He lets it loose under the whole heaven, and His lightning to the ends of the earth. ⁴After it His voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice, and He does not restrain them^v when His voice is heard. ⁵God thunders wondrously with His voice; He does great things we cannot understand. ⁶For He commands the snow, Fall on the earth; and to the lesser and the greater rains, Be strong! ⁷He seals the hands of all men,^w so that all men may recognize His doings. ⁸Then the wild beasts enter their lairs and rest in their dens. ⁹From the south comes the whirlwind and out of the north the cold. ¹⁰By the breath of God ice is formed, and the broad waters are congealed. ¹¹Yes, He loads the thick clouds with moisture, and from them He disperses the lightnings. ¹²Under

His control they circle about and do what He commands them throughout the whole inhabited world; ¹³whether sent on the earth for correction or as acts of mercy, He directs it to its goal.

¹⁴"O Job, stand still and listen and consider the wondrous works of God. ¹⁵Do you know how God controls these, causing the lightning to flash out of His clouds? ¹⁶Do you grasp how He balances the clouds? These are wonders of One who is perfect in knowledge.^x ¹⁷Do you have any idea why your clothes are hot when the earth is stilled, awaiting a hot wind? ¹⁸Can you, like Him, spread out the skies, solid as a molten mirror? ¹⁹Tell us what we should say to Him; for because we are in the dark we cannot state our case. ²⁰Should it be told Him that I would speak? If a man talks, will he be swallowed up?

²¹"Just now men do not see the light that is bright behind the clouds; the driving wind will clear it up. ²²From the north comes the golden splendor.^y God is clothed with majesty. ²³The Almighty we cannot understand. He excels in power and in fairness. He who is great in righteousness will not pervert justice. ²⁴Therefore men revere Him; but He will not respect anyone who is conceited."^z

38 THEN THE LORD ANSWERED JOB out of a whirlwind: ²Who is this that obscures purpose by thoughtless words?^a ³Gird up your loins like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.^b

⁴Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell me, if you have insight. ⁵Who determined its measurements? You surely know! Or who stretched the builder's line upon it? ⁶Upon what were its foundations sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷while the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? ⁸Who

v) The lightnings.

w) In Mt. Lebanon when deep snow falls, the peasants, having no winter shoes, are compelled to remain indoors until the snow melts away; they can do no work. x) Cf. 36:5.

y) The northern lights, aurora borealis.

z) Elihu does not challenge Job's integrity; his chief influence was to have Job take down his fist of defiance to God.

a) The Lord is here addressing Job, not Elihu, who had given Job a portrait of the grace of God, addressing his intellect. The Lord addresses his heart.

b) Job had long wished for a personal interview with God, cf. 9:35; 13:22.

fixed the boundaries of the sea, when it burst forth from the womb? ⁹When made I the clouds its clothes, and thick darkness its swaddling bands, ¹⁰prescribing for it bars and doors, ¹¹and saying, 'Thus far you may come but no farther; here shall your proud waves be stayed?

¹²Have you ever in your life commanded the morning or showed the dawn its place, ¹³so that it may get hold of the corners of the earth and shake the wicked out of them? ¹⁴It changes like clay into which a seal is pressed; it is colored like a robe. ¹⁵Light is withdrawn from the wicked, and the lofty arm is broken.

¹⁶Have you explored the fountains of the sea, or walked through the recesses of the deep? ¹⁷Have the gates of death been shown to you, and have you stood before the doors of deep darkness? ¹⁸Has your grasp taken in the breadth of the earth? ¹⁹Tell it, if you know all this. Where is the way to the home of light, and where is the abode of darkness, ²⁰that you may conduct it to its domain and know the path to its house? ²¹You must know, for you were born then; the number of your days being great!

²²Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, and have you seen the treasures of the hail, ²³which I have reserved for the time of distress and kept for the day of battle and war? ²⁴Where is the path to the place from which light is distributed, or the place from which the hot, dry wind issues over the earth?

²⁵Who has dug gullies for the torrents of rain, or a path for the thunderbolts, ²⁶causing it to rain on uninhabited land, and on deserts where no one lives, ²⁷to satisfy desert and desolation, so that the blade of grass springs up?

²⁸Has the rain a father? Who has given birth to the dewdrops? ²⁹From whose womb did the ice appear, and who has fathered the hoarfrost of

heaven? ³⁰The waters congeal and harden like rock, and the surface of the whole deep becomes frozen together.

³¹Can you bind the bonds of the Pleiades or loosen the girdle of Orion? ³²Do you lead forth the signs of the zodiac in their season, or guide the Bear with her cubs? ³³Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you establish their rule upon earth?

³⁴Can you raise your voice to the clouds, so that floods of water cover you? ³⁵Can you order the lightnings, so they go and say to you, "Here we are!" ³⁶Who has imparted wisdom in the inner self, or who has given the heart understanding? ³⁷Who can tell the number of the clouds or overturn the pitchers of the heavens, ³⁸causing the dust to form lumps and the clods to stick together like mud?

³⁹Will you hunt the prey for the lioness, to supply the hunger of her young, ⁴⁰when they crouch in their dens and lie in wait in the thicket? ⁴¹Who provides for the ravens when their young cry to God and wander about for food?

39 DO YOU KNOW WHEN THE mountain goats deliver, or have you watched the travail of the does? ²Can you number the months they fulfil, and do you know the time of their gestation? ³They bend, bring forth their young and are delivered of their offspring. ⁴Their young are strong; they grow up in the open field; they run off and do not go back to them.

⁵Who has set the wild donkey free? Who has let the wild donkey go abroad, ⁶whose range I have appointed in the desert and whose home is in the salt marshes? ⁷He scorns the noises of the city and disdains the shoutings of the driver. ⁸He explores the mountains for pasture, searching after every green thing. ⁹Is the wild ox^c willing to serve you? Does he spend the night

c) The earth.

d) The Pleiades were Seven Sisters, a conspicuous constellation of stars, thought to be fastened in their place. Orion, in mythology was one of the giants, who because of rebellion against the gods was lashed to the sky. e) Her satellites.

f) Wild goats and does are especially shy, as are also the chamois species.

g) The wild ox is often identified with the Assyrian *rimu* or wild bull, which was not immense in size, but terrible in the use of his horns. Assyrian kings are represented on the monuments as hunting them.

over your crib? ¹⁰Can you rope him to the furrows? Will he harrow the fields of the valley after you? ¹¹Would you trust him because his strength is great, or depend on him for what you have toiled for? ¹²Would you rely on him to bring your grain home and gather it onto your threshing floor?

¹³The wings of the ostrich beat forcibly, but they are not the pinions and plumage of kindness; ¹⁴she leaves her eggs in the warm sand to hatch, ¹⁵forgetting that a foot may crush them and wild beasts may trample upon them. ¹⁶She treats her young cruelly, as if they were not hers, quite unconcerned that her labor may have been in vain. ¹⁷For God has denied her wisdom and has imparted to her no intelligence. ¹⁸When she flaps her wings to flee, she mocks the horse and his rider.

¹⁹Do you give the war horse his strength? Do you clothe his neck with thunderclouds?^h ²⁰Do you make him leap like a locust? The snorting of his nostrils is terrifying. ²¹He paws in the valley and glories in his strength; he goes to meet the battle without fear. ²²He laughs at terror and is not dismayed; he turns not back from the sword. ²³Against him rattle the quiver, the flashing spear point, and the javelin. ²⁴Quivering and excited he eats up the ground, no longer willing to stand still, having heard the sound of the trumpet. ²⁵When the trumpet sounds he neighs joyously, scenting the battle from afar, the thunders of the captains and their war cries.

²⁶Does the hawk soar and spread his wings southward through your wisdom? ²⁷Does the eagle mount up at your command, make his nest on high, ²⁸settle on a rock, and perch on a craggy peak, his stronghold? ²⁹From thence he spies out prey; his eyes see it far away. ³⁰His nestlings gulp down blood, and where the slain are, there is he.

40 THE LORD FURTHER ANSWERED Job: ²Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He, who would reprove God, let him answer.

³Then Job answered the LORD: ⁴"See, I am of small account; what can I say? I lay my hand upon my mouth. ⁵Once I have spoken, but I will not repeat, yes, twice, but I will not do so again."ⁱ

⁶Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: ⁷Gird up now your loins like a man; I will question you, and you must inform Me. ⁸Will you discredit My justice? Will you condemn Me and claim that you are righteous? ⁹Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like His? ¹⁰Cover yourself now with honor and majesty;^j clothe yourself with dignity and splendor. ¹¹Pour out the rage of your wrath; look at everyone who is proud, and abase him. ¹²Look at everything that is haughty, and throw it down; crush the wicked where they stand. ¹³Bury them all in the dust together, and shut them all up in the nether region. ¹⁴Then will I also praise you, because your own right hand can save you.

¹⁵Look at the hippopotamus.^k I made him, as I made you; he eats grass like cattle. ¹⁶Look at the strength in his loins and his force in the muscles of his body. ¹⁷He stretches his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are knit together. ¹⁸His bones are like copper tubes, his limbs as iron bars. ¹⁹He is the foremost of the ways of God; let Him who made him bring his sword near. ²⁰For the mountains bring him their produce, where all the wild animals play. ²¹Beneath the lotus he lies down, covered out of sight with reeds. ²²The lotus trees screen him with their shade; the willows of the brooks hide him. ²³When the waters of the stream become turbulent, he is not troubled; though the Jordan should rush against his mouth, he remains

h) Dapples on the neck of a young, vigorous bay horse.

i) Job has been brought to silence, which is not enough. Job must repent!

j) The necessary attributes of a supreme ruler, who expects to abase the proud and overwhelm the wicked.

k) The hippopotamus, or river horse is now seldom seen north of the Second Cataract of the Nile; he is strictly herbivorous.

confident. ²⁴Can a man catch him off guard, or trap him with a snare about his nose?

41 CAN YOU DRAW OUT THE CROCODILE¹ with a hook or hold down his tongue with a cord? ²Can you put a rush line through his gills or pierce his jaw with a spur? ³Will he make repeated requests of you? Will he use friendly words in addressing you? ⁴Will he make a bargain with you, that you should take him as your servant for life? ⁵Will you play with him as with a bird or keep him as a plaything for your girls? ⁶Will fishermen traders bargain over him, apportioning him among the merchants? ⁷Can you fill his skin with barbed darts or his head with harpoons? ⁸Lay your hand upon him; then remember the conflict; you will not do it a second time! ⁹The man who hopes to master him will be disillusioned; at the sight of him a person is paralyzed! ¹⁰No one is foolhardy enough to stir him up; who then is he who can stand before Me? ¹¹From whom have I borrowed, that I should have to repay him? Every thing under the whole heaven is Mine.^m

¹²I will not be silent concerning his limbs, his mighty strength and his artistic proportions. ¹³Who has ever stripped off his thick coat of mail, or pierced his impenetrable scales? ¹⁴Who can open the doors of his mouth? Around his teeth there is terror. ¹⁵His back is shingled with scales, as closely fitted together as a tight seal. ¹⁶So near are his scales to one another that no air can get between them. ¹⁷They clasp one another, joined so closely they cannot be separated. ¹⁸His sneezings sparkle light; his eyes are like the rays of morning. ¹⁹Out of his jaws come burning torches, and sparks of fire shoot out. ²⁰From his nostrils vapor

issues as steam from a boiling pot over burning rushes. ²¹His breath sets coals on fire; a flame issues from his mouth.^a ²²Such strength dwells in his neck that panic moves before him. ²³The folds of his flesh close in on each other, firmly and immovably cast upon him. ²⁴His heart is as hard as a rock; solid as a nether millstone. ²⁵When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; beside themselves with panic. ²⁶To hit him with a sword is useless; so with a spear, a dart, or a javelin. ²⁷To him iron is as straw and copper as rotten wood. ²⁸Arrows do not rout him; slingstones he treats as stubble. ²⁹Clubs are counted by him as reeds, and he mocks the rattle of javelins. ³⁰His nether parts are like potsherds; they leave threshing-sledge grooves in the mire. ³¹He makes the deep to boil as a pot, the sea like a vessel of ointment. ³²Behind him he leaves a foaming wake; one wonders if the sea might be growing hoary! ³³On earth there is not his equal, a creature devoid of fear! ³⁴He looks down on all that is high; he is king over all the sons of pride.^o

42 THEN JOB ANSWERED THE LORD: ²"I know that Thou canst do all things, and that no plans of Thine can be foiled. ³'Who is he who veils counsel without knowledge?' I then have expressed what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me. ⁴Now therefore hear me, and I will speak. Shall I question Thee any more? Thou hast informed me. ⁵Heretofore I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now My eye sees Thee: ⁶wherefore, I retract and repent in dust and ashes."^p

⁷After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: My indignation is kin-

1) Egypt's crocodile, an animal of superior strength. The Egyptians deified it. Its home is in Upper Egypt and the Sudan, though Arabs and European travelers report that it has been seen in the Kishon River of Palestine. Mentioned, Ps. 104:26, as formed to play in the sea; as having its head broken and its carcass eaten at the Red Sea, Ps. 74:14; as the world-power dragon afflicting God's people, Isa. 27:1. m) God is speaking! He made the crocodile.

n) Oriental poetry is full of hyperbole.

o) "Pride" is one of the great concerns of the book; it is rebuked.

p) Thus Job has been moved to confess. By the Lord's speech, he is humbled and completely divested of his pride and his misunderstanding of God. Now Job can identify God of the present with God of the past. By His first speech [38:1-40:2], Job had been brought to silence [40:3-5], which was not enough. The LORD spoke further [40:6-41:34], and Job repents in dust and ashes [42:6].

dled against you and against your two friends; for you have not, as My servant Job, spoken the truth about Me. ⁸Now then, take seven bullocks and seven rams, go to My servant Job and offer them up, a burnt offering for yourselves; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his plea that I deal not with you according to your misdemeanor; for you have not spoken the truth about Me, as My servant Job has. ⁹So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD had ordered them; and the LORD had regard for Job.^q

¹⁰The LORD gave a turn to the fortune of Job when he interceded for his friends; and the LORD doubled all his previous possessions. ¹¹Then came to him all his brothers and sisters and all his former acquaintances

and ate bread with him in his house; they also bemoaned him and comforted him for all the affliction, which the LORD had brought upon him, and every one gave him a piece of money and a gold ring.

¹²Thus the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than the earlier; so that he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand she-donkeys. ¹³He had also seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴He called the first Jemimah; the second Keziah and the third Keren-happuch.^r ¹⁵In all the land there were no women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father had them inherit on a par with their brothers. ¹⁶After this Job lived 140 years and saw his sons and his sons' sons, four generations. ¹⁷Job died, an old man, after a full life.^s

q) In Job's experiences God taught humanity that material prosperity is no assurance of divine approval and that misfortune proves no divine displeasure. And since, for their remarks, Job's friends needed forgiveness, we Bible readers should carefully sift their words before accepting them as coming from God.

r) Significant names: "Dove," "Cinnamon," and "Horn of Eye-paint," respectively.

s) Job died satisfied. His many years suggest the period of Abraham. Four generations means not only grandchildren, but also great-grandchildren. His experiences taught that there is the good life, independent from earthly compensation, and that Satan's accusation of him was divinely shown to be false, a new vindication of divine justice in the presence of evil.

THE PSALMS^a

The Godly and the Ungodly^b

1 Oh, the joys of the man who walks
not after the advice of the wicked,
nor stands in the path of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers!

²but his delight is in the law of the
LORD

and His law he ponders day and night.

³He is like a tree planted by streams
of water,

that yields its fruit in its season,

whose leaf does not wither;

and everything he does shall prosper.

⁴The ungodly are not so
but are like chaff which the wind
blows away.

⁵Therefore the ungodly shall not stand
in the judgment,^c

nor sinners in the assembly of the
righteous,^d

⁶for the LORD knows^e the way of the
righteous;^d

but the way of the ungodly shall end
in ruin.

The Lord and His Anointed Are Supreme^f

2 Why do the nations make a tumult
and the peoples devise an empty
scheme?

²The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers consult together
against the LORD and His anointed,

saying,

³"Let us tear their restraining bands^g

apart,

and let us cast their shackles from us."^h

⁴He^h who dwellsⁱ in heaven
laughs: the LORD derides them.

⁵Then He speaks to them in His
indignation

and terrifies them by His fury:^j

⁶I have indeed set My King upon Zion,
My holy mountain.

⁷I will tell of the decree:

The LORD said to Me, Thou art My
Son;

this day have I begotten Thee.

a) From the Greek word, meaning a song accompanied by stringed instruments. See Ps. 150:3-5. The title in the Hebrew Bible, *Tehillim*, "praises," refers to the content rather than to the form.

b) Jesus made similar contrasts: sheep and goats, wise and foolish virgins, broad and narrow way; for our Bible recognizes only two classes, the godly and the ungodly.

c) The sinner shall experience judgment but shall not be approved.

d) Especially in the New Jerusalem after God's final judgment [Rev. 21].

e) God knows what the ungodly do, but He knows favorably His own people. Commonly in the Old Testament, "to know" has that favorable and intimate meaning. Cf. Amos 3:2.

f) By David. See Acts 4:25 about the futility of opposition to Christ, for the Hebrew for "Anointed" is *Messiah*. g) Man has continually rebelled against God.

h) Thought divisions occur at vss. 4, 7 [where Christ Himself speaks], and 10.

i) Or, "sits," watching such ridiculous behavior.

j) God "laughs" that men should attempt to challenge Him, but He brings punishment because such challenging is rebellion.

PSALMS 2-5

⁸Ask it of Me, and I will make the nations Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth Thy possession.

⁹Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's jar.^k

¹⁰Now therefore, O kings, act wisely; be warned, O rulers of the earth.
¹¹Serve the LORD reverently and rejoice with trembling.

¹²Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way; for soon shall His wrath be kindled. But, oh, the joy of all who take refuge in Him!

Trust God in the Morning
A Psalm of David, when He Flew From Absalom, His Son^l

3 O LORD, how many are my foes! How many have risen up against me!

²Many say of me, "There is no help for him in God." *Selah*^m

³But Thou, O LORD, art a shield about me; my glory and the One who lifts my head.

⁴With my voice I cry to the LORD, and He answers me from His holy mountain. *Selah*

⁵I laid me down and slept:ⁿ I woke again, for the LORD sustains me.
⁶I do not fear the myriads of people who have set themselves against me all around.

⁷Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God; for Thou hast struck all my enemies on the cheek; Thou hast broken the teeth of the wicked.

⁸Salvation belongs to the LORD; Thy blessings be upon Thy people. *Selah*

Prayers of Trust and for Guidance

Trust God in the Evening
For the Chief Musician; on Stringed Instruments. A Psalm of David

4 Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!^o
Thou hast given relief when I was in distress; be gracious to me and hear my cry.

²Sons of men, how long will you turn my honor into shame?
How long will you love futility and pursue falsehood? *Selah*

³But know that the LORD has set apart the redeemed for Himself; the LORD will hear when I call to Him.

⁴Be agitated,^p but do not sin; commune in your heart upon your bed, and be still. *Selah*

⁵Offer sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

⁶Many say, "Who will show us any good?"^q
Lift the light of Thy countenance upon us, O LORD.

⁷Thou hast put gladness in my heart — more than is present when their grain and wine abound.

⁸In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for Thou, O LORD, alone makest me dwell in safety.^r

A Morning Prayer
For the Chief Musician; with the Nehiloth.^a A Psalm of David

5 Hear my words, O LORD, give heed to my meditation.

²Listen to the voice of my cry for help, my King and my God, for to Thee I pray.

³O LORD, in the morning Thou shalt hear my voice; in the morning I will set in order^t before Thee my prayer, and will look up.

⁴For Thou art not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; evil does not dwell with Thee.

k) The forces of God will triumph in due time [Phil. 2:10].

l) Described in II Samuel 15-18. A psalm of great comfort, especially for those similarly oppressed.

m) "Selah" may indicate a musical accompaniment or doxology or rest; but it always comes after an impressive thought, thus deserving special notice.

n) David's trust enabled him to sleep even though in flight from his own son.

o) David is aware that he has no righteousness except from God. Cf. Isaiah 45:24,25.

p) Christ Himself demonstrated righteous indignation [Mark 3:5]. Paul's exhortation along similar lines is indicated in Ephesians 4:26. q) The skeptic's attitude.

r) We would do well to make this a part of our evening prayer. s) Probably "wind instruments."

t) Hebrew suggests the picture of arranging a sacrifice.

The boastful have no standing in Thy presence:

Thou hatest all who practice the wrong.

Thou wilt destroy those that tell lies; he LORD abhors the murderer and the deceiver.^a

But as for me, by the greatness of Thine unfailing love I will enter Thy house; at Thy holy temple I will worship in reverence of Thee.

O LORD, lead me in Thy righteousness because of those who watch me; make Thy way straight before me.

For there is nothing in their speech upon which one can rely:

their heart is a destructive chasm; their throat is an opened grave; they deceive with their tongue.

Hold them guilty, O God; let them fall by their own designs; for the mass of their transgressions thrust them away, because they have rebelled against Thee.

But let all who take refuge in Thee rejoice.

Let them ever shout for joy since Thou dost make a covering over them.

Let all who love Thy name be glad in Thee;

For Thou, O LORD, dost bless the righteous; as with a shield Thou dost surround him with favor.

A Prayer for Mercy

For the Chief Musician; on Stringed Instruments; according to the Sheminith.^u

A Psalm of David

O LORD, do not rebuke me in Thine anger; do not discipline me in Thy hot displeasure.

Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am faint: heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled,

and my soul is exceedingly disturbed But Thou, O LORD — how long?^w

Return, O LORD, deliver my soul; save me for the sake of Thy covenant love.

For in death there are no memorials made to Thee; in the grave^x who shall render praise to Thee?

I am weary in my groaning; every night I moisten my bed with tears; I drench my couch.

My eye has grown dim from grief; it is aging because of all my enemies.

Depart from me, all you who practice the wrong; for the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

The LORD has heard my pleading; the LORD receives my prayer.

All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly dismayed; they shall turn back; they shall be put to shame in a moment.

Prayer for Deliverance

A Shiggaion^y of David, Which He Sang to the LORD concerning the Words of Cush,^z a Benjamite

O LORD, my God, in Thee have I put my trust:

save me from all who pursue me, and deliver me,

lest like a lion he tear my soul, dragging me away while there is none to deliver.

O LORD, my God, if I have done this,

if there is injustice on my hands,

If I have rendered evil to him who was at peace with me,^a

u) Intending to dispatch David when they have a chance.

v) Or, "the eighth," an eight-stringed instrument; or an octave lower than *alamoth*.

w) How long until the LORD returns in mercy?

x) Hebrew *Sheol*, sometimes translated "hell" [Prov. 15:11], but here simply parallel to "death."

y) Possibly an irregular song.

z) There is no mention of a Cush in David's biography as we have it. Possibly he was one of Saul's company in the attack on David.

a) This enemy seems to have accused David unfairly, and David knows that God is fair in His dealings.

or, without cause, have plundered him
 who was my enemy,^b
⁵let the enemy pursue and overtake
 my soul;
 let him trample my life to the ground
 and lay my honor in the dust. *Selah*

⁶Arise, O LORD, in Thine anger,
 raise Thyself against the rage of my
 enemies;
 awake for me, Thou who hast ordained
 judgment.

⁷Let the assembly of the people be
 gathered to Thee,
⁸and over them return on high.
 May the LORD judge the people.
 Vindicate me, O LORD, according to my
 righteousness
 and according to the integrity that is
 upon me.^c

⁹Let the evil of the wicked cease, I
 beseech Thee,
 and establish Thou the righteous;
 for Thou, who triest hearts and
 emotions,^d art a righteous God.
¹⁰My shield depends upon God,
 who saves the upright in heart.

¹¹God is a righteous judge,
 a God who is indignant every day.

¹²If a man will not repent, He will
 sharpen His sword:^e

He has strung His bow and made it
 ready.

¹³He has prepared for him weapons of
 death,
 making His arrows fiery shafts.

¹⁴Behold, he who writhes with
 iniquity
 has conceived wrongdoing and brings
 forth falsehood.

¹⁵He has dug a pit, having hollowed it
 out,
 and has fallen into the hole even while
 making it.

¹⁶His wrongdoing returns upon his own
 head,
 and his violence comes down on the
 top of his head.

¹⁷I will give thanks to the LORD
 according to His righteousness,
 and I will sing praise to the name of
 the LORD Most High.

The Glory of the Lord

For the Chief Musician; upon the Gittith^f
 A Psalm of David

8 O Jehovah, our LORD, how glorious
 is Thy name in all the earth!^g
 Thou hast displayed Thy majesty above
 the heavens.

²From the mouth of children, even the
 unweaned,
 Thou hast ordained strength^h
 on account of Thy foes,
 that the enemy and revengeful might
 be silenced.

³When I observe Thy heavens, the
 work of Thy fingers,
 the moon and the stars which Thou hast
 established:ⁱ

⁴what is man that Thou art mindful
 of him,
 or the son of man that Thou carest for
 him?

⁵Yet Thou hast made him little
 less than heavenly beings,
 and Thou dost crown him with glory
 and honor.

⁶Thou givest him dominion over the
 works of Thy hands;
 Thou hast placed all things under his
 feet,

⁷all sheep and oxen,
 the beasts of the field also,

⁸the birds of the air and the fish of
 the sea,
 whatever passes along the paths of
 the seas.

b) From his own personal vindication, David looks forward to God's coming for the final judgment. David had indeed cut off the hem of Saul's robe in the cave [I Sam. 24:4], but with ample justification and it could hardly be called "plundering."

c) A possible reference by David to God's imputed righteousness.

d) Or "kidneys." Often the "heart" in the Old Testament means our "thinking powers."

e) God punishes the unrepentant. f) Possibly an instrument or a tune from Gath.

g) Here is a prayer without petition — just telling God how wonderful He is.

h) Children testify to God's glory. Jesus quoted this when children in the temple courts sang Him their praises [Matt. 21:15-16].

i) The glory of the heavens seems to make man insignificant, except that God ordained him to be ruler on the earth [Gen. 1:28-30]. When Adam sinned, man lost much of his dominion [Heb. 2:7-8]; but Jesus Christ came as the last Adam and won back what the first Adam had lost. Hence this is a Messianic psalm, applying basically to Him [Heb. 2:9], but also to all men who stand in Him.

⁹O Jehovah, our LORD, how glorious is Thy name in all the earth!

The Lord Is Judge

For the Chief Musician; according to Muth-labben.^j A Psalm of David

9 I will praise the LORD with my whole heart;
I will tell of all Thy marvelous works.
²I will be glad and rejoice in Thee,
I will sing praise to Thy name, O Most High.

³When my enemies are turned back,
they stumble and perish before Thee.
⁴For Thou hast maintained my right and my cause;
Thou dost occupy the throne, a righteous judge.

⁵Thou hast rebuked the heathen;
Thou hast destroyed the wicked;
Thou hast blotted out their name for ever and ever.

⁶The enemy has been cut off, a never-ending ruin.
Thou hast overthrown the cities;
even the memory of them has vanished.

⁷But the LORD abides for ever,^k
He has established His throne for judging.

⁸And He will judge the world in righteousness;
He will minister justice to peoples in uprightness.

⁹So shall the LORD be a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.^l

¹⁰Thus shall those who know Thy name trust in Thee,
for Thou, O LORD, hast not forsaken those who seek Thee.

¹¹Sing praise to the LORD who dwells in Zion,
declare among peoples His works.

¹²For He who avenges blood remembers them,
He does not forget the cry of the afflicted.

¹³Be gracious to me, O LORD,
see what I suffer from those who hate me,
O Thou who dost lift me up from the gates of death,

¹⁴that I may recount all Thy praises,
that in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in Thy deliverance.

¹⁵The nations have sunk into the pit which they made;
in the net which they hid have their own feet been caught.

¹⁶The LORD has made Himself known,
He has executed judgment;
in the work of His own hands have the wicked been snared. *Higgaion.*^m

Selah

¹⁷The wicked shall be turned into Sheol,
all the heathen that forget God.

¹⁸For the needy shall not always be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be lost for ever.

¹⁹Arise, O LORD! let not man prevail;
let the nations be judged before Thee!
²⁰Put them in fear, O LORD!
Let the nations know that they are but human. *Selah*

A Prayer for Judgment on the Wicked

10 Why dost Thou stand at a distance, O LORD?
Why dost Thou hide Thyself in times of trouble?

²In arrogance the wicked hotly pursue the afflicted;
let them be taken in the schemes which they have devised.

³For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire;
the greedy one curses and spurns the LORD.

⁴According to the pride of his countenance, the wicked will not inquire;
all his thoughts are that there is no God.ⁿ

j) Hebrew *Muth-labben* means "death of the son," perhaps title of a tune.

k) What contrast! Nations rise and fall, but God, their Judge, continues for ever.

l) This same great God never forsakes His own!

m) *Higgaion* coming from a word meaning "to meditate," probably has reference to a solemn sound [Ps. 92:3] in the music intended to induce a contemplative mind.

n) Notice the emphasis in this psalm on the manner in which the wicked person thinks [vss. 4, 6, 11, and 13].

⁵His ways persist at all times;
Thy judgments are on high, beyond his sight;^o
as for all his foes, he sniffs at them.
⁶He says to himself, "I shall not be moved;
I shall never^p come to adversity."

⁷His mouth is full of cursing,
deceit, and oppression;
under his tongue^q are trouble and sin.
⁸He sits in ambush in the villages;
in hiding places he murders the innocent;
his eyes watch stealthily for the unfortunate.
⁹He lies in wait in the hiding place like a lion in his thicket;
he lies in wait to catch the afflicted;
by drawing him into his net, he catches the afflicted,
¹⁰who is crushed and sinks down;
thus do the unfortunate fall by his powers.
¹¹He says to himself that God has forgotten,
that He has hidden His face and will never see.

¹²Arise, O LORD; lift up Thy hand, O God;
forget not the afflicted.
¹³Why does the wicked spurn God
and say to himself that Thou wilt not call to account?
¹⁴Thou hast seen, for Thou dost take note of trouble and grief,
that Thou mayest repay it with Thine own hand.
The unfortunate commits himself to Thee;
for the orphan Thou hast been a helper.
¹⁵Break the arm^r of the wicked;
seek out the wickedness of the sinner
till Thou findest no more.^s

¹⁶The LORD is King for ever and ever;
the heathen will have perished out of His land.
¹⁷O LORD, Thou hast heard the longing of the afflicted;

Thou dost establish their heart;
Thou dost incline Thine ear
¹⁸to render justice to the orphan and the oppressed,
so that no earthly mortal^t may terrify them any more.

Confidence in the Lord

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

11 In the LORD I take refuge;
how can you say to my soul,
"Flee as a bird to your mountain"?
²For see, the wicked are bending the bow,
they have fitted their arrow to the string
to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart.

³When the foundations are torn down,
what can the righteous do?^u
⁴The LORD is in His holy temple,
the LORD's throne is in heaven.
His eyes observe, His eyelids^v test the children of men.

⁵The LORD puts the righteous to the proof,
but His soul abhors the wicked and anyone who loves violence.
⁶Upon the wicked He will rain snarcs:
fire, burning sulphur;
and a scorching wind will be the portion of their cup.

⁷For the LORD is righteous; He loves acts of righteousness;
His countenance beholds the upright.

The Lord Will Judge the Wicked

For the Chief Musician; according to the Sheminith.^w A Psalm of David

12 Do help, O LORD, for godly men
have come to an end;
for the faithful have vanished from among the descendants of man.

²Men speak falsehood with each other;
with flattering lips and a double heart^x
they speak.

³May the LORD cut off all
flattering lips,
and the tongue that talks so proudly;

^o) In his prosperity the wicked does not think of God's judgment.

^p) Hebrew, "to generation and generation."

^q) Consequently ready to be brought forth at any time in speech.

^r) The arm stands for strength and comes from God, for the ungodly as well as for the godly.

^s) The final conquest over evil [Rev. 21:27]. ^t) Hebrew, "man from the earth."

^u) The righteous take refuge in God, but they themselves have a responsibility as directed by Him. See vs. 7. ^v) Eyelids often close slightly in close examination.

^w) Or, "the eighth." See note under Ps. 6. ^x) A hypocritical heart.

⁴those who have said, "To our tongues will we give strength, our lips are our own;⁷ who is our master?"

⁵Because of the oppression of the poor and the groaning of the needy, I will now arise, says the LORD; I will grant him the safekeeping for which he longs.

⁶The words of the LORD are pure words, as silver purified in an earthen furnace, refined seven times.²

⁷Thou, O LORD, wilt keep them, Thou wilt guard each one from this generation for ever,
⁸where godless men strut around, as baseness is given a high rating among the descendants of man.

*Prayer for Deliverance
To the Chief Musician
A Psalm of David*

13 How long, O LORD? Wilt Thou forget me for ever?^a

How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me?

²How long shall I keep planning in my soul^b and experience a daily sorrow of heart? How long shall my enemy be higher than I?

³Consider and answer me, O LORD, my God; enlighten my eyes,^c lest I sleep in death;

⁴Lest my enemy say, "I have overpowered him"; lest my foes rejoice that I am overthrown.

⁵But I have trusted in Thine unfailing love:

my heart rejoices in Thy deliverance.

⁶Let me sing to the LORD because He has dealt generously with me.^d

The Wickedness of Mankind

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

14 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

They have corrupted their behavior and made it abominable.

There is none who does right.

²The LORD looked down from heaven upon the descendants of man to see if any were acting wisely, seeking after God.

³All have turned aside; together they have become corrupt.

There is none who does good, not even one.^e

⁴Do not any evildoers understand, who eat up my people as if they ate bread,^f

and who do not call on the LORD?

⁵There they experience great fear, for God is with the generation of the righteous.

⁶You would put to shame the planning of the afflicted; but the LORD is his refuge.

⁷Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!^g

When the LORD shall turn back the captivity^h of His people, may Jacob rejoice; may Israel be glad!

Description of the Godly

A Psalm of David

15 O LORD, who shall stay in Thy tabernacle:

Who shall dwell on Thy holy hill?¹

²He who walks in integrity, who does what is right,

and who speaks the truth in his heart;

³who does not slander with his tongue, who works no evil against his friend, and who does not carry scandal

concerning his neighbor;
⁴in whose eyes a reprobate person is disdained,

y) Hebrew, "with us"; how characteristic of the wicked! z) Completely.

a) David had lost his fellowship with God; time seemed so long!

b) David's contrivances for escape were insufficient. c) In a physical sense; cf. I Sam. 14:27.

d) Restoration to fellowship enables him to say this.

e) In keeping with the thought of Ps. 12:1; also of Elijah when it seemed to him that all had forsaken God. f) With as much indifference to the people's misfortune.

g) God's earthly dwelling, in the Holy of Holies.

h) Captivity to sin, as at Absalom's revolt (II Sam. 15).

i) Zion, where David brought the ark of the covenant.

but who esteems those who revere the
 LORD;
 who, though swearing^l to his own
 detriment, does not change;
^hwho does not give his money for
 interest,^k
 and who will not take a bribe against
 the innocent.

He who does these things shall
 never be moved.^l

A Psalm of Refuge
A Miktam^m of David

16 Preserve me, O God, for I have
 looked to Thee for refuge.

²I said to Jehovah, "Thou art my LORD;
 I have no good beside Thee."

³As for the godly that are in the land,
 they are the glorious in whom is all my
 delight.

⁴The sorrows of those who choose
 otherwise shall be multiplied;
 I will not pour out their drink offerings
 of blood,
 nor take their names upon my lips.

⁵The LORD is my assigned portion and
 my cup:

Thou dost maintain my lot.

⁶The lines^a have fallen to me in
 pleasant [places];
 indeed, a good inheritance is mine.

⁷I will bless the LORD who has
 counseled me:
 even in the night my emotions
 admonish me.

⁸I have placed the LORD before me
 continually;
 because He is at my right hand, I shall
 not be moved.

⁹Therefore my heart was glad and my
 glory^o rejoiced;
 my body too shall dwell securely.

¹⁰For Thou wilt not leave my soul in
 the realm of the dead
 nor allow Thy Holy One to see
 corruption.^p

¹¹Thou dost make me know the
 path of life;
 in Thy presence is fulness of joy;
 in Thy right hand are pleasures for
 evermore.

Prayer for Protection
A Prayer of David

17 Do hear what is right, O LORD;
 listen to my cry!
 Give ear to my prayer, from lips free of
 deceit.

²Let my judgment of vindication come
 forth from Thy presence.
 May Thine eyes see what is equitable.

³Thou hast tested my heart; Thou
 hast visited me in the night;
 Thou hast tried me and hast found no
 evil intention in me;
 neither does my mouth transgress.

⁴In respect to the acts of men, by the
 words of Thy lips
 have I guarded myself against the course
 of the violent.

⁵My steps have held closely to Thy
 paths;^q
 my feet have not slipped.

⁶I have called on Thee, O God, for
 Thou wilt answer me.
 Incline Thine ear to me; hear my words.

⁷In a marvelous way show Thine
 unfailing love,
 O Thou, who savest those who look for
 refuge from their adversaries
 at Thy right hand.

⁸Keep me as the pupil of Thine eye;^r
 hide me in the shadow of Thy wings
⁹from wicked men who have
 maltreated me,
 my deadly enemies who surround me.

¹⁰They are enclosed in their own
 fat;^s

they speak proudly with their mouth.

¹¹Wherever we go, they have
 surrounded us;
 they fix their eyes to cast us to the
 ground.

j) Hebrew, "he swears to..."

k) The Law prohibited taking interest [which was high] from other Israelites [Exod. 22:25].

l) An excellent standard for God's children.

m) *Miktam* means "covering," hence, perhaps a psalm of refuge. n) Boundary lines.

o) Refers to the soul, as in Gen. 49:6, where Jacob calls it "mine honour" [KJV].

p) David's hope for eternity lay in Christ's resurrection, concerning which David speaks here [Acts 2:30-31]. q) Literally "tracks of one who has gone on before."

r) Such are we to our loving Father, as in Christ we trust in Him.

s) Depicts gluttonous living without feelings for others. Cf. Deut. 32:15.

¹²He is like a lion craving to tear,
as a young lion waiting in ambush.

¹³Arise, O LORD! confront him,
put him down!

Deliver my soul from the wicked by
Thy sword,

¹⁴from men by Thy hand, O LORD,
from men of the world,
whose portion is in this life;
whose stomach Thou dost fill with what

Thou hast stored for them,
so that their children are filled,
who leave the remainder to their
young ones.

¹⁵As for me, with righteousness
shall I behold Thy face;
I shall be satisfied when I awake with
Thy likeness.^t

The Lord Cares for His Own

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm^u of
David, the servant of the LORD, who
addressed the words of this song to the
LORD on the day that the LORD delivered
him from the hand of all his enemies and
from the hand of Saul. He said:

18 Fervently do I love Thee,^v
O LORD, my strength.

²The LORD is my stronghold, my
fortress, and my deliverer;

my God is my rock, in whom I take
refuge,

My shield and the horn of my salvation,
my high tower.

³I call upon the LORD, who is
worthy to be praised,
and so I am delivered from my enemies.

⁴Cords of death encompassed me
and the floods of ungodliness
assailed me;

⁵Cords of Sheol surrounded me,
snares of death confronted me.

⁶In my distress I called on the LORD;
to my God I cried for help;
He heard my voice from His temple;^w
my cry before Him reached His ears.

⁷Then^x did the earth quiver and
shake
and the foundations of the mountains
trembled

and rocked, because He was indignant.
⁸Smoke issued from His nostrils,
and fire from His mouth devoured;
coals were kindled by it.

⁹He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under His feet.

¹⁰He rode upon a cherub and flew.
He soared on the wings of the wind.

¹¹He made darkness His covering about
Him;

His shelter, clouds of the sky dark
with water.

¹²At the brightness before Him His
clouds issued forth
hailstones and coals of fire.

¹³The LORD thundered in the heavens;
The Most High uttered His voice;
there were hailstones and coals of fire.

¹⁴He sent forth His arrows and
scattered them;
He shot forth His lightnings and
confounded them.

¹⁵Then the channels of the water
became visible
and the foundations of the world were
laid bare
at Thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of
the breath of Thy nostrils.

¹⁶He reached from on high; He
took me;

He drew me out of great waters.

¹⁷He delivered me from my strong
enemy,
and from them that hated me;
for they were too strong for me.

¹⁸They came upon me in the day of my
calamity,
but the LORD was my support.

¹⁹He brought me out into a roomy
place;^y

He was delivering me because He
delighted in me.^z

t) A contrast between what the worldly man desires [vs. 14] and the heavenly hope of the saint [vs. 15]. u) The content of this psalm is also found in II Samuel 22:2-51.

v) David's realization of God's loving protection from Saul causes him to respond with deep feeling. w) God appeared between the cherubim above the mercy seat of the ark, for which David had erected a place in Jerusalem, II Sam. 6:17. But the "temple" here, v. 6, seems to be heaven, cf. Ps. 11:4.

x) God's power in answering David's request is illustrated in vv. 7-15 by the vivid description of a storm. y) A place, unoppressed.

z) The LORD delights in those who are righteous, as David proceeds to explain.

²⁰The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands He recompensed me.

²¹For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

²²For all His ordinances were before me, and His statutes I did not put away from me;

²³So I was faultless toward Him, having guarded myself against my sinfulness.^a

²⁴Therefore the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

²⁵With the merciful Thou showest Thyself merciful;

with the perfect man Thou showest Thyself perfect;

²⁶with the pure Thou showest Thyself pure;

and with the perverse Thou showest Thyself opposed.

²⁷For Thou deliverest an afflicted people, but haughty eyes Thou bringest down.

²⁸For Thou causest my lamp to shine; the LORD, my God, illumines my darkness.

²⁹For by Thee I can attack a troop, and by my God I can leap a wall.

³⁰God! — perfect is His way!^b The word of the LORD is proven; a shield is He to all who trust in Him.

³¹For who is God but the LORD and who is a rock besides our God?

³²The God who girds me with strength, and makes my way perfect;

³³who makes my feet like those of a doe,^c

and causes me to stand on the heights;^d

³⁴who trains my hands for war, so that my arm can bend a bow of brass.^e

³⁵Thou hast given me the shield of Thy salvation; Thy right hand sustains me,

Thy gentleness^f has made me great.

³⁶Thou hast enlarged my steps under me,^g my feet have not slipped.

³⁷I pursued my enemies and overtook them, I did not turn back until they were consumed.

³⁸I smote them so that they could not rise, they fell under my feet.

³⁹For Thou hadst girded me with strength for the battle.

Thou didst subdue my assailants under me;

⁴⁰Thou didst cause my enemies to turn their backs to me, so that I destroyed those who hated me.

⁴¹They cried for help, but there was none to deliver; even to the LORD, but He answered them not.

⁴²I crushed them as dust before the wind; like dirt of the streets, I emptied them out.^h

⁴³Thou hast delivered me from strivings of the people; Thou hast made me the head of nations; people I knew not serve me.

⁴⁴At the hearing of the ear, they obey me;ⁱ

outsiders submit^j themselves to me; ⁴⁵foreigners fear and come trembling from their strongholds.

⁴⁶The LORD lives; blessed be my rock,

and exalted be the God of my salvation;

⁴⁷the God who executes retribution for me,

and subdues peoples under me;

⁴⁸My deliverer from my enemies.

Indeed, Thou dost exalt me higher than my assailants;

Thou savest me from men of violence.

⁴⁹Therefore I will extol Thee among the nations, O LORD, and will sing praises to Thy name,

a) How important in our daily walk! b) Strong emotion here expressed.

c) Light and swift in battle, sure of footing. d) Symbolizing position of victory.

e) Indicating great strength. f) Or, condescension. g) Given room to take an unhindered step.

h) Contemptuously disposed of them. i) For example II Sam. 8:9-12.

j) Hebrew indicates a cringing submission, one given necessarily, not voluntarily.

¹⁰who gives great deliverances to His king,
and shows lovingkindness to His anointed,
¹¹David and his posterity forever.

God's Glory in Nature and in His Word

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

19 The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and the firmament is showing His handiwork.

¹Day after day pours forth^k speech,¹
and night after night declares knowledge.

²There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard.

³Yet their line^m goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.

⁴In them He has placed a tent for the sun,
⁵which is like a bridegroom going forth from his chamber,
and like a mighty man rejoicing to run a race.

⁶From the end of the heavens is its rising,
and its circuit to its other end;
nothing is hid from its heat.

⁷Theⁿ law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;^o

⁸the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;

⁹the reverence of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and altogether righteous.

¹⁰More to be desired they are than gold, than much fine gold;

sweeter too than honey, and the drippings of the comb.
¹¹Moreover by them is Thy servant reminded;
in keeping them there is great reward.

¹²Who is aware of his sins?
From those that are secret pardon me;^p
¹³from those presumptuous sins too keep Thy servant away:
let them not rule over me;
then I shall be upright and innocent from gross transgression.

¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart^q
be pleasing in Thy sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Prayer for Victory^r

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

20 May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob set you up on high;

²may He send you help from the sanctuary,
and sustain you from Zion.
³May He remember all your offerings,
and accept your burnt sacrifices.

Selah

⁴May He grant you what your heart desires,
and fulfill all your plans.^s

⁵May we shout for joy over your triumph,^t
and in the name of our God wave our banners;

may the LORD fulfill all your petitions.
⁶Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed;^u

He answers him from His holy heaven with the saving might of His right hand.
⁷Some boast of chariots and some of horses,
but we boast of the name of Jehovah, our God.

⁸They have bowed down and fallen;^v

k) As a flowing stream of water.

l) Sufficiently, says Paul, Rom. 1:20, 21, for all humanity to know there is a Creator, worthy of worship. m) Measuring line showing extent of influence.

n) A change here from natural to written revelation. o) One open-minded for either good or evil.

p) Unintentional or unconscious sins in distinction from those presumptuous, of v. 13.

q) Both what we say and what we think is to be pure before God. r) Prayer for Israel's king.

s) Presumed, of course, that they are in agreement with God's plan and program.

t) Or, "deliverance." u) David himself with assured conviction, as if already accomplished.

v) Answers in v. 8 correspond to the thoughts of v. 7.

but we have risen and stand erect.

⁹Save, LORD! May the king
answer us when we call.

Praise for Deliverance

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

21 In Thy strength, O LORD, the
king is made glad,
in Thy saving grace how greatly he
rejoices!

²Thou hast given him the desire of
his heart,
and hast not refused the request of
his lips.

³For Thou dost meet him^w with
blessings of goodness;
Thou dost place a crown of pure gold
on his head.

⁴He asked life of Thee; Thou gavest it
to him;
even length of days forever and ever.

⁵His glory is great because of Thy
deliverance;^x
honor and majesty Thou dost bestow
upon him.

⁶Yes, forever Thou dost make him most
blessed;
Thou dost delight him with joy by Thy
presence.^y

⁷For the king trusts in the LORD;
and because of the covenant-love of the
Most High he shall not be moved.

⁸Your^z hand will contact all your
enemies;
your right hand will contact those who
hate you.

⁹You will make them like a blazing
furnace when you appear;^a
the LORD will swallow them up in His
anger, and fire will devour them.

¹⁰You will destroy their offspring from
the earth
and their children from the sons
of men.

¹¹For they have intended evil
against you;

they have devised a plot: they will be
unable to put it into practice.

¹²For you will make them turn their
back;
you will aim at their faces with your
bows.

¹³Be Thou exalted, O LORD, in
Thy strength;
we will sing and praise Thy power.

*Great Suffering Followed
by Deliverance*

For the Chief Musician, according to "the
Hind of the Morning."^b A Psalm of David

22 My God, my God, why hast
Thou forsaken me,^c
so far from helping me and from the
words of my groaning?

²O my God, I call by day, but Thou
dost not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

³Yet Thou art holy,^d
enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

⁴In Thee our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and Thou didst deliver
them.

⁵To Thee they cried and were delivered;
in Thee they trusted and were not
disappointed.

⁶But I am a worm and not a man,
a reproach of men and despised by the
people.

⁷All who see me, mock me;
they open the mouth;^e they wag the
head:

⁸He^f trusted in the LORD, let Him
deliver him;
let Him save him, since he has delighted
in Him.

⁹Yet Thou art He who took me
out of the womb,
who made me trust when upon my
mother's breast.

¹⁰Upon Thee have I been cast from
my birth;
since my mother bore me, Thou hast
been my God.

w) Such grace as to meet the king with these blessings!

x) The king's success was due to God's help, cf. v. 7. y) True joy is found in God alone.

z) In vv. 8-12 the king is addressed, probably by himself. a) As if they were in a blazing furnace.

b) Perhaps the title of a tune.

c) This cry fulfilled in Matt. 27:46. This is one of the striking Messianic psalms, depicting

marked details of the sufferings of Christ.

d) God's holiness remains, even though we are unable to understand His ways; cf. v. 9.

e) In derision; cf. Ps. 35:21; Joh 16:10.

f) V. 8 gives what these deriders say; fulfilled, Matt. 27:43.

¹¹Be^g not far from me for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.
¹²Many bulls have surrounded me,
strong bulls of Bashan have encompassed me.
¹³They open their mouths at me like a ravening and roaring lion.

¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint.
My heart is like wax melted within me;
¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue cleaves to my jaws;
Thou dost lay me in the dust of death.

¹⁶For dogs have surrounded me;
a crowd of wicked men have encircled me;
they have pierced^h my hands and my feet;
¹⁷I can count all my bones.
They look, they stare at me;
¹⁸they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing do they cast lots.ⁱ

¹⁹But, O LORD, be not Thou afar off;
O my Strength, hasten to help me.
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my lonely self^j from the power of the dog.
²¹Save me from the mouth of the lion;
Even from the horns of the wild oxen,
Thou hast answered me.^k
²²I will make known Thy name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise Thee.
²³You who revere the LORD, praise Him;
all you sons of Jacob, glorify Him;
and stand in awe of Him, all you sons of Israel.
²⁴For He has neither despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted,
nor has He hid His face from him,
but when he cried to Him, He heard.

²⁵From Thee^m comes my praise in the large congregation;
I will pay my vows before those who revere Him.
²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the LORD shall praise Him.
May your heart live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of the nations shall bow down before Thee.
²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD;
He rules over the nations.ⁿ
²⁹All the prosperous^o of the earth shall eat and bow down;
indeed all who go down to the dust shall bow before Him,
even he who is unable to keep his soul alive.
³⁰Posterity shall serve Him; it shall be told of the LORD to the coming generation;
³¹they will come and they will tell of His righteousness to a people yet to be born, for He has performed it.

Shepherd, Guide and Host

A Psalm of David

23 The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not lack;^p
²He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
³He leads me beside restful water; He revives my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.^q
⁴Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no harm; for Thou art with me:
Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.

⁵Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my adversaries;

g) Vv. 11-21 vividly describe the suffering experienced. h) Or, like a lion.

i) Fulfilled, Matt. 27:35. j) Refers to His aloneness in suffering.

k) In this concluding note to the description, confidence that God has heard is strongly expressed.

l) Vv. 22-31 give the song of deliverance.

m) Not only is praise of God, but it is also from God.

n) How reassuring to remember this in time of suffering.

o) Even the prosperous and haughty will someday bow.

p) One reason this psalm is so deeply loved is that it comes warm from the heart of a man who knew the meaning of sheep and shepherd and who knew the LORD as thus related to him.

q) To grow aware of God's care and to feel secure for the future one must willingly follow the Shepherd.

Thou hast anointed my head with oil;
my cup runs over.

⁶Surely, goodness and unfailing love
shall follow me all the days of my life
and I shall dwell in the house of the
LORD forever.

*The True Worshiper
of the King of Glory*

A Psalm of David^r

24 The earth and all its fulness are
the LORD's,
the world and all who live in it;
²for He has founded it upon the seas,
and established it upon the floods.

³Who shall go up into the
mountain of the LORD;
who shall stand in His holy place?

⁴He who has clean hands and a pure
heart,
who has not lifted up his soul to
falsehood,

who has not sworn deceptively;
⁵he shall receive a blessing from the
LORD,
and righteousness from the God of his
salvation.

⁶Such is the generation of those who
inquire for Him;
who seek Thy face, like Jacob.^s *Selah*

⁷Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
and be ye raised, ye ancient doors,
so that the King of glory may enter!

⁸Who is the King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty, the
LORD, mighty in battle.

⁹Lift up your heads, ye gates,
and be raised, ye ancient doors,
so that the King of glory may enter!

¹⁰Who is he then, the King of
glory?
The LORD of hosts, He is the King of
glory. *Selah*

Prayer for Salvation and Forgiveness
A Psalm of David

25 To Thee, O LORD, I lift up my
soul;^t

²my God, in Thee I trust, let me not be
ashamed,
let not my enemies triumph over me.
³Yes, none who wait for Thee shall be
ashamed;
those shall be ashamed who are vainly
disloyal.

⁴Show me Thy ways, O LORD;
teach me Thy paths.^u

⁵Guide me in Thy truth and
instruct me;
for Thou art the God of my salvation;
for Thee I wait all day.

⁶Remember, O LORD, Thy tender
mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses,
for they are from everlasting.

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth,
nor my transgressions;
remember me according to Thy
lovingkindness.^v
for Thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

⁸Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore He will instruct sinners in
the way.

⁹He guides the humble in what is
right
and teaches the humble His way.

¹⁰All the paths of the LORD are
lovingkindness and truth
to such as keep His covenant and His
testimonies.

¹¹For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon
my sin, for it is great.

¹²Who is the man who reveres the
LORD?
Him He shall instruct in the way that
he shall choose.

¹³His soul shall dwell in prosperity,
and his offspring shall inherit the land.

¹⁴The companionship of the LORD
is with them that revere Him;
and He will show them His covenant.

¹⁵My eyes are ever toward the LORD,
for He will release my feet from the net.

¹⁶Turn to me and be gracious
to me,^w
for I am desolate and afflicted.

r) This psalm seems to have been written by David in connection with bringing the ark of the covenant into a tent or tabernacle at Jerusalem, for public worship [II Sam. 6:17].

s) At the brook Jabbok [Gen. 32:22f.], Jacob wrestled face to face with God [Gen. 32:30; Hos. 12:4, 5], in seeking a blessing [Gen. 32:26].

t) Each verse of this psalm begins with its proper letter from the Hebrew alphabet, which has 22 letters. u) We need instruction and God provides it.

v) We are glad God forgets forgiven sins of our youth; but to understand today's youth, we do well to recall our youthful weaknesses. w) Most of our troubles are due to our sins.

¹⁷The troubles of my heart are enlarged.
Oh, bring me out of my distresses!
¹⁸Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

¹⁹Consider my enemies, for they are
many
and they hate me with cruel hatred.

²⁰Keep my soul and deliver me,
let me not be ashamed, for I trust in
Thee.

²¹Let integrity and uprightness
preserve me,
for I wait on Thee.

²²Redeem Israel, O God,* out of
all his troubles!

Self-Examination before Worship

A Psalm of David

26 Vindicate me, O LORD, for I
have walked in my integrity,^y
and in the LORD I have trusted without
wavering.

²Examine me, O LORD, and test me;
test my soul and my attitude.

³For Thy lovingkindness is before
my eyes,
and I have walked in Thy truth.

⁴I have not associated with
deceptive men,
nor do I fellowship with pretenders.
⁵I hate the gathering of evil-doers
and will not fellowship with the
wicked.

⁶I will wash my hands in innocence^z
and would go about Thine altar, O LORD,
⁷that I may publish with a voice of
thanksgiving
and tell of all Thy wondrous works.

⁸O LORD, I love the habitation of
Thy house
and the place where Thy glory dwells.^a

⁹Gather not my soul with sinners,
nor my life with bloodthirsty men,
¹⁰in whose hands is wickedness,
and their right hand is full of bribes.

¹¹As for me, I will walk in my
integrity;

redeem me and be merciful to me!
¹²My foot stands on even ground;
in the congregations I will praise
the LORD.

Assurance in the Lord

A Psalm of David

27 The LORD is my light and my
salvation; whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?^b

²When the wicked came at me to eat
my flesh,^c
my adversaries and my foes, they
stumbled and fell.

³Though an army should encamp
against me, my heart shall not fear:
though war should rise against me, I
would still be confident.

⁴One thing I have asked of the
LORD; that will I look for,
that I may live in the house of the
LORD all the days of my life,^d
to observe the LORD's loveliness, and to
meditate in His temple.

⁵For in the day of trouble He conceals
me in His tabernacle;
He hides me in the shelter of His tent,
He lifts me up on a rock.

⁶Thus shall my head be exalted above
my enemies around me;
in His tent I will offer sacrifices of
triumph;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to
the LORD.

⁷Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;
be gracious to me and answer me.

⁸In Thy behalf my heart proclaims,
"Seek ye My face";

Thy face, LORD, I will seek.

⁹Hide not Thy face from me, put not
Thy servant away in anger.

Thou art my help; reject me not,
neither forsake me,
O God of my salvation.

¹⁰For though my father and my
mother forsake me, the LORD will
take care of me.

x) Our prayers must not be selfish; we include others who also need God's help.

y) We may freely pray for deliverance and vindication when we are in right relations with God and with men.

z) This attitude we show by sincere faith, a consecrated life, aversion to sinful ways, godly behavior.

a) Especially His Presence above the ark of the covenant, between the cherubim, in the Holy of Holies. b) Seeing how God helps us, we can be confident among enemies.

c) "Eat my flesh" may mean, "Slander me."

d) Be able to say, "Thou art my dwelling place," Ps. 90:1.

¹¹Teach me, O LORD, Thy way; and lead me in an even path because of those who lie in wait for me.
¹²Hand me not over to the will of my opponents;^e for false witnesses are risen against me, and such as breathe cruelty.

¹³What if I had not believed to see the LORD's goodness in the land of the living!^f
¹⁴Wait for the LORD; take courage, and He will give strength to your heart; yes, wait for the LORD.^g

An Appeal to God as Judge

A Psalm of David

28 To Thee, O LORD, do I call; my rock, be not deaf to me.^h
 If Thou be silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit.ⁱ
²Hear the voice of my supplication, when I cry to Thee, when I lift up my hands toward Thine inner sanctuary.^j

³Carry me not away with the ungodly, and with those engaged in wrong, who speak peace with their neighbors, while malice is in their hearts.
⁴Repay them according to their work, according to the wickedness of their actions.
 According to the work of their hands repay them; give them what they deserve.^k
⁵Because they do not observe the LORD's doings, nor the work of His hands, He shall demolish them and not rebuild them.

⁶Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplication.^l
⁷The LORD is my defense and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped.

Therefore my heart rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him.
⁸The LORD is their protection; He is the saving defense of His anointed.^m

⁹Save Thy people, and bless Thy heritage; nourish them and carry them forever.

Heartfelt Praise

A Psalm of David

29 Give to the LORD, O you sons of the mighty, give to the LORD glory and strength.
²Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; worship the LORD in sacred adornment.ⁿ

³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the LORD is upon great waters.

⁴The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; yes, the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶He makes them to skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like an antelope.

⁷The voice of the LORD splits flames of fire;

⁸The voice of the LORD makes the wilderness to tremble; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹The voice of the LORD makes the hinds to labor and strips the forests, while in His temple all chant, Glory!

¹⁰The LORD sat enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned King forever.

¹¹The LORD will give strength to His people;^o the LORD will bless His people with peace.

e) It has never been easy to live a consecrated life; for the unconverted cannot believe our godly motives. f) "Think what trouble I would have been in," seems the concluding thought.

g) He is worth waiting for and He responds.

h) We confess our utter and blessed dependence on Him. i) The grave. j) The Holy of Holies.

k) The ungodly shall not miss their reward. l) Prayer in agreement with His will is heard.

m) Of the writer, who had been anointed to be king.

n) Consider God's nature - His wisdom, power, holiness, fairness, mercy into infinity; it helps us to adore Him and to feel our dependence on Him.

o) The forces of nature witness to His sovereignty, and His grace is greater still. Thunder is a voice of God, with lightning that strikes and consumes

Gratitude for Divine Rescue

A Song for the Dedication of the Temple^p

A Psalm of David

30 I will extol Thee, O LORD,
because Thou hast lifted me,
and hast not let my enemies rejoice
over me.

²O LORD, my God,^a I cried to Thee,
and Thou hast healed me.

³LORD, Thou hast brought my soul up
from Sheol;

Thou hast revived me from among
those who go down to the grave.

⁴Sing praise to the LORD, you His
saints,

and praise His sacred memory.

⁶For His anger stays but a moment;
in His favor is life.

At eventide weeping may come in to
lodge for the night,
but in the morning — shouts of joy.

⁶As for me, I said in my
prosperity, "I shall never be
moved."^r

⁷LORD, by Thy favor Thou hast made
my mountain to stand strong;
Thou didst hide Thy face; I felt
disaster.

⁸I cried to Thee, O LORD; to the
LORD I made supplication:

⁹"What profit is there in my
blood, when I go down to the grave?
Shall the dust praise Thee? Shall it
declare Thy truth?

¹⁰Hear, O LORD, and be gracious
to me; O LORD, be Thou my
helper."

¹¹Thou hast turned my lamenting for
me into a procession;

Thou hast discarded my sackcloth, and
hast girded me with gladness,

¹²So that my soul may sing praise to
Thee and not be silent.

O LORD, my God, I will praise Thee
forever.

God Our Protector

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

31 In Thee, O LORD, I take refuge;
let me not be put to shame

forever; in Thy righteousness
deliver me.

²Incline Thine ear to me, speedily
deliver me;

be Thou to me a strong rock, a
fortified house to save me.

³For Thou art my rock and my fortress;
for Thy name's sake lead me and
guide me.

⁴Draw me out of the net, which
they have hid for me,
for Thou art my stronghold.

⁵Into Thy hand I commit my spirit;^a
Thou hast redeemed me, LORD God of
truth.

⁶I have abhorred the worshipers of
vain idols;
but I trust in the LORD.

⁷I will exult and rejoice in Thy
lovingkindness,
because Thou hast seen my distress;
Thou hast known the afflictions of
my soul

⁸and Thou hast not handed me over
into the hand of the enemy;
Thou hast established my feet in a
large place.^t

⁹Have mercy on me, O LORD,
for I am in anguish;
my eye, my soul and my body are
consumed with grief.

¹⁰For my life wastes away with sorrow
and my years with sighing.
My strength has failed because of
my sin,^u

even my bones have languished.

¹¹To all my enemies I am become a
reproach,
most of all to my neighbors; even a
dread to my acquaintances.

Those who see me on the street run
away from me.^v

¹²I am lost to memory like one dead;
I am discarded like a worn-out utensil.

¹³For I have heard the slander of
many;

there was terror on every side.

When they plotted together
against me,

they schemed to take my life.

^p) Temple may refer to the tabernacle David had built, or David may have written this for future use, since he prepared for Solomon's temple.

^q) His exultation is: From the rim of death Thou hast raised me up.

^r) Prosperity tempts to self-confidence; David had to learn that in God alone we stand sure.

^s) Our Lord's final utterance on the Cross; divine assurance through the ages.

^t) With plenty of room to move. ^u) He feels that not God but his sins brought on his trouble.

^v) Sounds like Job, whose experiences were not altogether unique; they remain typical.

¹⁴But I trust in Thee, O LORD;
I said, "Thou art my God;
¹⁵my times are in Thy hand;
free me from my foes, and from my
pursuers.
¹⁶Cause Thy face to shine upon Thy
servant;
in Thy lovingkindness save me.
¹⁷Let me not be put to shame, O LORD,
for on Thee do I call."
The wicked shall be ashamed; they
shall be silenced in the realm of
the dead.
¹⁸Lying lips shall be silenced,
that speak insolently against the
righteous with pride and contempt.

¹⁹How great is Thy goodness,
which Thou hast reserved
for those who revere Thee;
which Thou hast prepared for those
who take refuge in Thee in the
presence of the sons of men!
²⁰In the shelter of Thy presence
Thou shalt protect them
from the conspiracies of men;
Thou shalt hide them in a pavilion
from the strife of tongues.⁷

²¹Blessed be the LORD,
for He has shown me His loving-
kindness as in an entrenched city.
²²As for me, I had said in my alarm,
"I am cut off from before Thine eyes."
Yet Thou didst hear the voice of my
supplication when I cried to Thee.²

²³Love the LORD, all ye godly;
the LORD preserves the faithful and
fully repays the proud doer.
²⁴Be strong and let your heart take
courage, all ye who wait for the
LORD.

The Joy of Confession and Forgiveness

A Psalm of David, for Instruction

32 Blessed is he whose transgression
is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.
²Blessed is the man to whom the LORD

does not charge iniquity,
and nothing in his spirit is deceit.^a

³When I kept silent, my bones
wasted away in my groaning all
the day.

⁴For day and night Thy hand was
heavy upon me;
my marrow dried up as in a summer
drought. *Selah*

⁵I acknowledged my sin to Thee
and my iniquity I did not hide.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions
to the LORD,"

and Thou didst forgive the iniquity
of my sin. *Selah*

⁶For this let all the godly pray to Thee
betimes,

when Thou mayest be met.^b
Surely, the flood of great waters shall
not touch him.

⁷Thou art my hiding place; Thou wilt
preserve me from trouble,
Thou wilt surround me with songs of
deliverance. *Selah*

⁸I will instruct you and train you
in the way you shall go;^c
I will counsel you with My eye
on you.

⁹Be not as the horse, as the mule,
without judgment,^d
whose temper must be curbed with bit
and bridle,
else they come not near to you.

¹⁰Many sorrows are to the
ungodly,
but he who trusts in the LORD shall
be encircled with lovingkindness.

¹¹Be glad in the LORD and exult, ye
righteous;
shout joyfully, ye upright in heart.

Heavenly Joy

33 Rejoice, ye righteous, in the
LORD; praise becomes the
upright!^e

²Give thanks to the LORD with a harp;
with a ten-stringed harp sing Him
praises.

w) Quoted by Browning in his "Rabbi Ben Ezra."

x) Help me so to love, that Thou art pleased with me.

y) When His presence grows real to us, their hands cannot touch us and their noises cannot harm us. z) God's mercy and goodness go beyond our faith.

a) David has fully confessed and has been completely forgiven; now he is spiritually clean; which can be our experience. b) A time when God is nearer. Isa. 55:6. c) Vv. 8, 9 God speaks.

d) God has distinguished us from animals by the gift of reason and a sense of God for right or wrong — our conscience. e) All our good qualities spring from our Creator.

³Sing Him a new song;^f play skilfully with a joyful sound.
⁴For right is the word of the LORD, and all His work is in faithfulness.
⁵He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the LORD's lovingkindness.

⁶By the word of the LORD the heavens were made;^g
 by the breath of His mouth all their host.

⁷Gathering as a heap the waters of the sea,

He places the deeps in store-houses.

⁸Let them be in awe before the LORD, all the earth;

let all the inhabitants of the world be reverent before Him.

⁹For He spoke and it became, He commanded and it appeared.

¹⁰The LORD brought to nought the counsel of the Gentiles;^h

He frustrated the purposes of the peoples.

¹¹The counsel of the LORD stands forever,

the purposes of His heart from generation to generation.

¹²Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD,ⁱ

the people He has chosen for His personal inheritance.

¹³The LORD looked from heaven; He saw all the sons of men.

¹⁴He looked from the place of His dwelling

at all the inhabitants of the earth,

¹⁵He who fashions their hearts to be human;^j

He who takes note of all their works.

¹⁶There is no king delivered by a great army;^k

no mighty man is preserved by great strength.

¹⁷The horse is a vain means of safety, and its great strength affords no escape.

¹⁸Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who revere Him, on those trusting in His mercy,
¹⁹to save their soul from death, to keep them alive in famine.^l

²⁰Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield.

²¹Yes, in Him our heart shall rejoice; for we have trusted in His holy name.

²²Let Thy lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee.^m

God Cares

A Psalm of David, when he feigned his behavior before Abimelech,ⁿ so that he drove him away and he departed.

34 I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

²My soul shall make her boast in the LORD;

let the humble hear it and be glad.

³Magnify the LORD with me and let us exalt His name together.^o

⁴I sought the LORD and He answered me,

and freed me from all my fears.

⁵They looked to Him and were radiant; their faces not put to shame.

⁶This poor man called and the LORD heard,^p

and saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷The Angel of the LORD^q encamps around those who revere Him and rescues them.

⁸O taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him.

⁹Revere the LORD, ye His saints, for there is no lack to those who revere Him.

¹⁰The young lions do need and suffer hunger;

but those who seek the LORD shall lack in nothing good.

f) Nothing of sin and sorrow in this psalm. As in heaven, so here is only joy and praise.

g) This is applied to our Redeemer, John 1:1-3. h) As sung in Ps. 2.

i) People who can and do say from the heart. "In God we trust."

j) Such was God's creation of man in His image.

k) Napoleon said: "God is with the greatest battalions."

l) We may forget Him; how wonderful that He never forgets us.

m) Twenty-two verses, not alphabetic.

n) Achish, of I Sam. 21:10-15. As Pharaoh was the title of Egyptian kings, so was Abimelech that of leading Philistine kings.

o) Joint worship is essential.

p) David himself who had escaped death. q) The Redeemer, of the New Testament.

¹¹Come, sons and daughters,
listen to me,
I will teach you reverence for
the LORD.
¹²Who is the man desiring life, loving
days to see good—:
¹³Keep your tongue from evil and your
lips from speaking deceit;
¹⁴turn away from evil and practice
good;
seek peace and keep after it.

¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are
toward the righteous,
and His ears open to their cry.
¹⁶The face of the LORD is against the
evil-doers;
to root up their memory from off the
earth.
¹⁷The righteous cried and the LORD
heard
and saved them out of all their
troubles.^r
¹⁸The LORD is close to the broken-
hearted, and rescues those whose
spirit is crushed.^s

¹⁹Many are the afflictions of the
righteous;
but out of them all the LORD
delivers him.
²⁰He protects his every bone; not one
of them is broken.^t
²¹Calamity shall slay the wicked
and the haters of the righteous shall
be penalized.
²²The LORD redeems the soul of His
servants;
all those taking refuge in Him shall
go free.^u

Prayer for Safety from Enemies

A Psalm of David

35 Contend, O LORD, with my
contenders; war against those
who war against me.^v
²Lay hold of shield and covering and
stand up for my help.
³Draw out the spear and step in to
encounter my pursuers;

say to my soul: I am your salvation.

⁴Let them be confounded and
ashamed, who seek after my soul;
let them be turned back and abashed
who intend my hurt.

⁵Let them be as chaff before the wind,
the Angel of the LORD driving them.

⁶Let their path be pitch-dark and most
slippery,
the Angel of the LORD pursuing them.

⁷For without provocation they hid
their net for me;^w
without cause they have digged (a pit)
for my soul.

⁸Let ruin come upon him unawares,
and may his net, which he hid,
catch himself;
with destruction let him fall into it.

⁹But my soul shall rejoice in the
LORD, shall exult in His salvation.
¹⁰All my bones^x shall say: "LORD, who
is equal to Thee,
delivering the afflicted from one
stronger than he
and the poor and needy from him who
robs him."

¹¹False witnesses rise up; they
ask of me what I do not know.
¹²They reward me harm in return for
help; bereavement has come to
my soul.

¹³But I—when they were ill, my
clothing was sackcloth—
I humbled my soul with fasting;
but my prayer rebounded to my own
bosom.^y

¹⁴As though it were my friend or a
brother, I went about;
I bowed down mourning as in sorrow
for a mother.

¹⁵But in my stumbling they rejoiced;
slanderers gathered themselves
against me

and I did not know it. Unceasingly
they reviled.^z

¹⁶Among the profanest of the mockers
of a feast,
they gnashed their teeth against me.

r) This was David's experience, typically.

s) God considers the broken heart and the crushed spirit as sacrifices to Him, Ps. 51:17.

t) True of every believer spiritually. Observed physically by the Hebrews for their Passover lamb, Ex. 12:46; applied to our Lord's body, John 19:36.

u) This 22-verse psalm is acrostic, emphasizing the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

v) Only when we live loyally God's way, may we pray like this, and then in the New Testament spirit of seeking salvation. w) Without any decent reason and by deceit trying to trap him.

x) As body and soul he can glorify God.

y) It did not go through to God; they did not care to be prayed for.

z) False accusation is attempt at spiritual murder.

¹⁷LORD, how long wilt Thou
look on?
Rescue my soul from their destructions;
my only one^a from the young lions.
¹⁸I will thank Thee in a great
congregation;^b
among a mighty people I will praise
Thee.

¹⁹Let not those who are
wrongfully my opponents rejoice
over me;
let not those wink the eye, who hate
me without provocation.
²⁰For they do not talk peace; but
against the quiet ones
of the land they plot treacheries.
²¹They open their mouth wide
against me,
they say, "Aha! aha! Our eye has
seen it!"

²²Thou hast observed, O LORD;
be not silent;
O LORD, be not far from me!
²³Arouse Thyself and awake to my
judgment;
to my cause, my God and my LORD.
²⁴Judge me according to Thy
righteousness, O LORD my God,^c
and let them not rejoice over me.
²⁵Let them not say in their heart,
"Aha! There is our desire";
let them not say, "We have swallowed
him up."
²⁶Let them be ashamed and
confounded together who rejoice
at my misfortune;
Let them be clothed with shame and
dishonor who
puff themselves up against me.

²⁷Let those shout with joy and be
glad^d who favor my righteous cause,
and say continually, "Let the LORD be
magnified,
who has pleasure in the peace of His
servant!"
²⁸And my tongue shall speak of Thy
righteousness,
Thy praise all the day.

Life False Without God
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of
David, the Servant of the LORD
36 Sin appeals to the wicked deep
in his heart;^e
no dread of God is present before his
eyes;
²for he flatters himself in his own eyes
until his sin is found out and hated.
³The words of his mouth are falsehood
and deceit;
he has ceased to act wisely, to do good.
⁴He concocts mischief upon his couch;
he takes his stand upon a path that is
not good;
he does not loathe evil.

⁵O LORD, high as the heavens is
Thy lovingkindness;^f
up to the clouds Thy faithfulness!
⁶Thy righteousness is like the
mountains of God;
Thy judgments are a great deep;
LORD, Thou dost preserve man and
beast.
⁷How precious is Thy lovingkindness,
O God,
so the children of men take refuge in
the shadow of Thy wings!
⁸They are perfectly satisfied with the
abundance of Thy house;
Thou shalt give them to drink of the
stream of Thy delights;
⁹for with Thee is the fountain of life;
in Thy light we see light.

¹⁰Prolong Thy lovingkindness to
those who know Thee
and Thy righteousness to the upright
of heart.
¹¹Let not the proud foot approach me,^g
or the hand of the wicked drive
me out.
¹²There are the evil-doers fallen;
they are cast down and shall not be
able to rise.

a) The only soul or life I have.

b) As God's cause is his cause, deliverance is rightly acknowledged among fellow worshippers.

c) Not according to his own righteousness, which is fragile.

d) Very different experiences; the godly can jubilate in view of God.

e) A marvelous picture of the sinner, trying to make sin worth while — of course without God.

f) The hymn of praise to our merciful, ever dependable Creator, the source of all real living

g) Let me keep free from the company of a proud person!

Count on God

A Psalm of David

37 Do not get fretful on account of evil-doers;

be not envious of the workers of wickedness,

²for like the grass they shall be quickly cut down;

and as the green sprout they shall wilt.

³Trust in the LORD and do good; inhabit the land and practice faithfulness.

⁴Have your delight in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart.^b

⁵Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him, too, and He will bring it about.

⁶He will bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your right as the noonday brightness.

⁷Be still before the LORD and resign yourself to Him; be not envious of him who prospers in his way; of the man who carries out wicked plans.

⁸Quit being angry, and dismiss fury; do not get heated; it leads only to evil.¹

⁹For evil-doers shall be eliminated, but those who persevere in the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.¹

¹⁰For yet a little while and the evil-doer shall be no more; you will look for his location and it shall be gone.

¹¹But the gentle shall inherit the land and shall delight themselves in plenty of peace.

¹²The evil-doer plots against the just and gnashes at him with his teeth.

¹³The LORD laughs at him;^k for He sees that his day is coming.

¹⁴Evil-doers have drawn the sword and have bent their bow

to cast down the poor and needy, to slay those upright in conduct.

¹⁵Their sword shall enter into their own heart and their bows shall be broken.¹

¹⁶Better is the little that the righteous have, than the riches of many evil-doers.

¹⁷For the arms of the wicked shall be broken;

but the LORD upholds the righteous.

¹⁸The LORD knows the days of the upright^m

and their inheritance shall be for ever.

¹⁹They shall not be put to shame in time of trouble; even in days of famine they shall be satisfied.ⁿ

²⁰Surely, evil-doers shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures, — they pass away like smoke; they disappear.

²¹The wicked borrows and does not pay back; but the righteous is generous and donates.

²²For those who are blessed of Him shall inherit the earth; but those who are cursed of Him shall be eliminated.

²³A person's steps are confirmed by the LORD; He establishes him and delights in his way.

²⁴When he falls, he shall not be down and out; for the LORD upholds his hand.

²⁵I have been young; now I am old; but I have not seen the righteous forsaken

or his offspring begging bread.^o

²⁶All day long he deals graciously and lends; and his offspring are for a blessing.

^b) Simple and eternal: Learn God's will, live it and progress is inevitable.

¹) One cannot even think straight when furious.

²) With our Father owning the earth, of course we share in its resources; fretting over the apparent prosperity of the ungodly means distrusting our Father.

^k) As in Ps. 2, He laughs at whole nations for their folly. ¹) Our righteous God remains sovereign.

^m) Their immortal self is God-centered. ⁿ) Looks upon them with favor, as in Ps. 1:6.

^o) A personal testimony to a divine order.

²⁷Depart from evil and do good,
and abide for evermore;
²⁸for the LORD loves fairness and will
not forsake His saints;
they are preserved forever;
but the offspring of the evil-doers is
eliminated.
²⁹The righteous shall inherit the earth
and shall dwell on it forever.

³⁰The mouth of the righteous
utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks what is right.
³¹The law of his God is in his heart;
his steps shall not waver.^p
³²The wicked lies in wait for the
righteous
and seeks to put him to death.
³³The LORD will not leave him in his
hand,
nor condemn him when he is judged.
³⁴Wait on the LORD and keep His way,
and He will exalt you to inherit the
earth;
you shall look upon the destruction of
the wicked.^a

³⁵I have seen a lawless evil-doer
spreading himself like a native green
tree;
³⁶yet, he passed away and, look, he
was no more;
I sought him and he was not to be
found.

³⁷Watch the upright and observe
the righteous,
for there is a future to the man of
peace;
³⁸but transgressors shall be destroyed
together;
the offspring of the evil-doers shall be
cut off.^r
³⁹But the salvation of the righteous is
from the LORD,
their fortress in a time of trouble.
⁴⁰The LORD helps them and delivers
them;
He rescues them from evil-doers;
He will save them because they trust
in Him.^s

From Gloom to Confidence

A Psalm of David, to Bring Remembrance

38 O LORD, in Thy indignation do
not rebuke me,
neither in Thy hot displeasure
chasten me;
²for Thine arrows have sunk into me
and Thy hand comes down upon me.
³There is no soundness in my body in
the presence of Thine anger;
there is no peace in my bones in the
presence of my sin;^t
⁴for my iniquities have gone over my
head;
as a heavy load they are too weighty
for me.

⁵My wounds are repulsive; they
are festering because of my folly.
⁶I am bent, I am bowed down greatly;
all the day I go mourning;
⁷for my loins are charged with
inflammation
and in my body there is no soundness.
⁸I am benumbed and sorely bruised;
I groan because of my heart murmur-
ings.

⁹LORD, all my longing is known
to Thee^u
and my sighing is not hidden from
Thee.
¹⁰My heart beats fast; my strength
fails me,
even the light of my eyes; — I have to
do without it.
¹¹My loved ones and my friends stand
aloof from my illness;
even my kinsmen stand at a distance,
¹²and they who seek after my soul lay
snares;
yes, they who seek my hurt talk
mischief;
they think up treacheries all day.

¹³But I am like a deaf man, who
does not listen;
like the dumb man, who does not open
his mouth.
¹⁴Yes, I am like a man who does not
hear

^p) As in v. 5, his steps are divinely guided.

^q) Viewed from His standpoint the ungodly "is not in it."

^r) Psalm after psalm reiterates the favorable contrast for the godly; for it remains eternally true and is so readily forgotten.

^s) This psalm is a double acrostic, each letter used twice to start a verse.

^t) Sin committed by one who knows better has a disastrous effect on the body, for which there is no healing without complete confession.

^u) Where there is a longing for God there is help in store.

and in whose mouth there are no arguments.^v

¹⁵For in Thee, LORD, I hope; Thou wilt answer, O LORD, my God.

¹⁶For I say: "Let them not rejoice over me, who, when my foot wavers, would puff themselves up against me."

¹⁷For I am ready to fall^w and my sorrow is continually before me.

¹⁸Surely I will confess my iniquity; I am anxious because of my sin.

¹⁹But my enemies are vigorous and strong,

and many hate me wrongly.

²⁰They repay me evil for good; they are hostile toward me because I aim at what is best.

²¹Forsake me not, O LORD; O my God, be not far from me.

²²Make haste to help me, O LORD, my salvation.

A Prayer for Silent Assurance
To the Chief Musician, for Praise. A Psalm of David

39 I said: "Let me guard my ways from sinning with my tongue; let me keep my mouth as with a muzzle, while the evil-doer is around."

²I was bound with silence, I remained quiet, with enjoyment gone while my distress grew worse.

³My heart was hot within me; in my musing the fire burned;^x I pled with my tongue:

⁴Make me to know, O LORD, my end, and the length of my days, what it is. Let me know how transient I am.

⁵Behold, as handbreadths Thou hast measured my days, my lifetime is as nothing in Thy presence;

Surely, all mankind, so self-confident, is as a breath. *Selah*

⁶Only as a shadow each man walks about; truly, in vanity they are greatly disquieted;

each stores up riches, not knowing who shall gather them.

⁷Now, LORD, what shall I expect? My hope is in Thee!^y

⁸From all my sins deliver me; do not make me the taunt of the simpleton.

⁹I am speechless; I will not open my mouth, for Thou hast done it.

¹⁰Remove from me Thy blow; by the power of Thy hand I am spent.

¹¹When with rebukes because of iniquity Thou dost correct a person then Thou dost consume his winsomeness like a moth; truly, all mankind is as a vapor. *Selah*

¹²O LORD, hear my prayer; listen to my cry; reply to my tears; to my tears be not speechless; for I am a passing guest with Thee,^z a transient, as were all my fathers. ¹³Oh, spare me and let me rally, before I depart and vanish.

A Christlike Attitude
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

40 I waited and waited for the LORD; then He bent over to me and heard my cry.

²He brought me up from a destructive pit, from the miry clay, and set my feet on a rock, steadying my steps.^a

³He put a new song in my mouth, a praise to our God— Many shall see it and revere and trust the LORD.

⁴Blessings the man enjoys who makes the LORD his trust, and does not turn to those defiant, lying apostates.

⁵Thou hast made numerous, O LORD my God, Thy wonders and Thy thoughts toward us; there is none to compare with Thee; were I to declare and tell them, they are too many to be numbered.^b

v) An example we may well follow; silence rarely nourishes a quarrel.

w) A fact good to know if we also know God's help.

x) He took time to think things through; which served him to reach wholesome conclusions.

y) Life being like a breath, our only certainty is in our gracious God.

z) A guest in the Near East enjoyed childlike privileges—safety, food and shelter. Such is the assurance of the godly. a) "I steadier step when I recall, that though I slip, God does not fall."

b) Count your blessings and find that they are countless.

⁶Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired;
a responsive ear Thou hast prepared for me;^c
burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou hast not required.
⁷Then I said, "Behold, I come;
in the volume of the Book it is written of me."

⁸I delight to do Thy will, my God —
Thy law is deep within my heart.
⁹I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation;
see, my lips I will not close; O LORD, Thou knowest.
¹⁰Thy righteousness I have not hid away in my heart;
Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation I have proclaimed;
I have not concealed Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth from the great assembly.^d

¹¹Thou, O LORD, wilt not withhold Thy mercies from me;
Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth shall continually preserve me.
¹²For evils without number have surrounded me;
my iniquities have overtaken me, even beyond my discerning;
They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart has failed me.^e
¹³Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;
O LORD, make haste to help me!

¹⁴Let them be ashamed and confounded together,
who seek my soul to destroy it.
Let those be turned back and put to shame who desire my hurt.
¹⁵Let them be confounded as a reward for their shame;
they who say to me, "Aha, aha!"
¹⁶Let all those seeking Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee;
let those who love Thy salvation say

continually, "The LORD be magnified!"^f
¹⁷Though I am poor and needy, the LORD thinks of me;
Thou art my help and my deliverer.
O my God, delay not.

The Friend Divine
To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David
41 Blessings are his, who considers the weak;
in the day of misfortune the LORD will deliver him.
²The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive;
he shall be counted blessed in the land;
Thou shalt not hand him over to the desires of his enemies.
³The LORD will uphold him on his bed of sickness;
to all his illness on his bed Thou wilt bring a change.^g

⁴As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me;
heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee."
⁵My enemies speak evil of me: "When will he die and his name vanish?"
⁶And if one comes to visit, he speaks falsehood;
his heart gathers up to itself malice; going out, he tells his tale.
⁷Together they whisper against me, all they who hate me;
they plan harm against me:
⁸"A fatal plague is poured out upon him,
so that, when he lies down, he may not rise again."^h
⁹Even a friend of mine on whom I relied,
who ate my bread, lifted up the heel against me.ⁱ

¹⁰But Thou, O LORD, be gracious to me; raise me up
and let me repay them.
¹¹By this I know that Thou delightest in me,

c) Only by divine grace do we respond to God's call.

d) God reveals Himself to us; we, made in His likeness, are to reveal our experiences with Him to others.

e) Our troubles do not spring from surroundings and neighbors as much as from our own weaknesses. f) A glorious contrast to the godless.

g) Imparting a sense of His presence; infusing physical health.

h) When one is helpless, he discovers who are his real friends.

i) Quoted by Jesus in the upper room regarding Judas, John 13:18.

because my enemy does not exult
over me.

¹²As for me, in my integrity Thou hast
upheld me,
and dost set me before Thy face for
ever.

¹³Blessed be the LORD God of
Israel, from everlasting to ever-
lasting! Amen and Amen!¹

A Soul's Longing for God

To the Chief Musician. Instructive, by the
Sons of Korah

42 As a deer pants for water brooks
so my soul longs for Thee,
O God.

²My soul thirsts for God, for the living
God;
when shall I come and appear before
God?

³My tears have been my food day and
night,
while they keep on saying to me,
"Where is your God?"

⁴These things I would remember
and pour out my inner soul,
for I used to walk on with the throng
in their van
to the house of God,^k
with the voice of joy and praise, a
multitude that kept festival.

⁵Why are you bowed down, O my
soul; why so restless within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet thank
Him

for the help of His countenance.
⁶O my God, my soul is cast down
within me,
therefore, I remember Thee from
Jordan-land and the Hermon ranges;
from the Mizar hills.¹

⁷Deep calls out to deep at the
sound of Thy cataracts;^m
all Thy waves and Thy billows have
passed over me.

⁸By day the LORD will confirm His
lovingkindness
and in the night His song shall be
with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹I will say to God, my refuge: "Why
hast Thou forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the
oppression of the enemy?"

¹⁰As a crushing in my bones my
adversaries reproach me,
while they keep on saying to me,
"Where is your God?"ⁿ

¹¹Why are you bowed down, O my
soul
and why do you groan within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise
Him,
my face-healer and my God.^o

An Appeal for Fairness

43 Treat me justly, O God, and
plead my cause against a
merciless people;
from the man of deceit and wickedness
deliver me.^p

²For Thou art the God of my strong-
hold; why hast Thou cast me off?
Why must I go about mourning
because of the oppression of the
enemy?

³Send out Thy light and Thy
truth; let them lead me;^q
let them bring me to Thy holy hill
and to Thy dwellings.

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, the joy of my exultation,
and praise Thee with the harp, O God,
my God.

⁵Why are you bowed down, O my
soul,^r
and why do you groan within me?
Hope in God, for I shall yet praise
Him,
my face-saver and my God.

j) With the benediction of verse 13, the First Book of Psalms closes. Note also Ps. 72, Ps. 89, Ps. 106 and all of Ps. 150 for similar endings.

k) As Jesus often worshiped the Father alone, so should we, and as Jesus attended congregational worship regularly, Luke 4:16, so should we. David wanted to worship with many others.

l) Faith in God means confidence in trial.

m) Soul wants to commune with soul; spirit with the Spirit.

n) Their sneer intimated, "God forsakes you because you are not really godly," as Job so sharply experienced.

o) Man's satisfaction is attained in a right relationship with God.

p) Like Job, misunderstood by men, he turns to the Supreme Judge.

q) Deservedly this verse is basic to one of our great anthems.

r) This psalm may have been part of Ps. 42; it seems to spring from a similar occasion.

A Defeated People's Prayer

To the Chief Musician. Instructive by the
Sons of Korah

44 O God, with our ears we have
heard; our fathers have told us
what work Thou didst perform in their
days, in the days of old.^a

²Thou with Thy hand didst drive out
nations and didst plant them;^t
Thou didst scatter nations and Thou
didst spread them out.

³For not by their own sword did
they possess the land,^u
neither did their own arm gain
deliverance for them;
but it was Thy right hand and Thine
arm and the light of Thy face,
because Thou didst favor them.

⁴Thou art He, my King, O God, who
didst command the setting free of
Jacob.

⁵Through Thee we shall push
down our foes;
through Thy name we shall tread
down those who rise up against us.

⁶For I will not trust in my bow; nor
shall my sword deliver me;

⁷but Thou hast freed us from our
enemies,
and those who hate us Thou hast put
to shame.

⁸In God we have made our boast
all day,
and Thy name we shall forever praise.

Selah

⁹But now Thou hast cast us off and
put us to shame;
nor dost Thou go forth with our
armies.^v

¹⁰Thou didst make us turn back from
the enemy,
and they who hated us take plunder
for themselves.

¹¹Thou hast surrendered us as
slaughter-sheep,
and didst scatter us among the nations.

¹²Thou didst sell Thy people dirt-cheap
and hast made no profit by their price.

¹³Thou didst make us a taunt to our
neighbors,
a scorn and a derision to those
around us.

¹⁴Thou didst make us a byword among
the Gentiles,
a shaking of the head among the
peoples.

¹⁵All day long my reproach
faces me,
and the shame of my face covers me,
¹⁶because of the voice of the scoffer
and the scorner,
at the sight of the enemy and the
avenger.

¹⁷All this is come upon us, but we
have not forgotten Thee;^w
no, we have not been false to Thy
covenant.

¹⁸Our heart is not turned back,
neither has our step declined from Thy
way.

¹⁹Yet Thou hast crushed us in the
wild-dogs region;
yes, Thou hast covered us with the
shadow of death.

²⁰If we have forgotten the name
of our God,
and spread out our hands to a strange
god,

²¹will not God search this out?
For He knows the secrets of the heart.

²²Truly for Thy sake we are slain
all day long;^x
we are accounted as sheep for
slaughter.

²³Awake! Why sleepest Thou, O
Lord? Arise, cast us not off forever!

²⁴Why dost Thou hide Thy face?
why dost Thou forget our affliction
and oppression?

²⁵For our soul is bowed down to the
dust,
our body cleaves to the earth.

²⁶Rise up as a help to us
and deliver us because of Thy loving-
kindness.^y

a) In the godly family Hebrew history was kept alive, to be retold and relived in new homes.
t) God drove out the Canaanites and planted Israel; He scattered other nations and enlarged Israel's boundaries. u) True globally; but specially of Israel.
v) This suggests a lost battle rather than the great exile.
w) The godly must share sufferings with the ungodly, then and now.
x) In his triumphal hymn of Rom. 8:35-39, Paul quotes this verse as his own experience.
y) Not because the supplicant is so good, but because God is so good; which is the poet's conclusion.

The Love of God and His People
To the Chief Musician. The Tune of the
Lilies. An Instruction by the Sons of Korah
A Song of Love

45 My heart overflows with a
goodly theme;
I speak my poem before a king;
my tongue is (like) the pen of a
skilled writer.

²Thou art fairer than the children
of men;²
graciousness is poured upon Thy lips,
therefore God has blessed Thee
forever.

³Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh,
O mighty One,
with Thy glory and Thy majesty,
⁴and in Thy majesty ride forth
triumphantly
for the cause of truth, humility and
righteousness;
Thy right hand shall guide Thee to
awe-inspiring deeds.
⁵Peoples shall fall under Thee; Thine
arrows are sharp
in the heart of the King's enemies.

⁶Thy throne, O God, is for ever
and ever,
a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre
of Thy kingdom.

⁷Thou hast loved righteousness and
hated injustice,
therefore God, Thy God has anointed
Thee
with the oil of gladness above Thy
companions.^a

⁸Myrrh, aloes and cassia are on all Thy
robes;
strung instruments out of ivory
palaces delight Thee.

⁹Daughters of kings are among Thine
honorable women;
the queen has set herself at Thy right
hand
wearing gold of Ophir.

¹⁰Listen, O daughter, see and
incline your ear;

forget your people and your father's
house,
¹¹and the king will delight in your
beauty, —
for He is your Lord; yes, revere Him.^b
¹²Then the daughter of Tyre, the rich
of the people
shall seek your favor with gifts.

¹³All glorious is the king's
daughter within (the palace),
inwrought with gold is her clothing.
¹⁴In embroidered work she shall be led
to the king;
virgins, her companions, accompanying
her,
are brought to Thee.
¹⁵They shall be led with joy and
exultation;
they shall enter into the palace of the
king.

¹⁶Instead of your fathers shall be
your sons,^c
whom you shall make princes in all
the earth.
¹⁷I will cause Thy name to be
remembered in every generation,
therefore the peoples shall praise Thee
for ever and ever.

God Our Strength

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the
Sons of Korah, According to Alamath.
A Song

46 God is for us a refuge and a
fortress; found to be a mighty
help in troubles.^d
²Therefore we do not fear though the
earth is displaced,
though the mountains reel into the
midst of the sea;
³though its waters roar and foam;
though the mountains shake at its
swelling. *Selah*

⁴There is a river whose streams make
glad the city of God,
the holy dwelling of the Most High.

2) No Hebrews were allowed to read "The Song of Songs" until they were 30, for fear they might misunderstand it. This song summarizes it for everyone to read.

a) The one addressed is man plus, God among men, the Godman.

b) As Christ is the Bridegroom and the Church His bride, so God was the Husband and Israel the Wife, Isa. 54:5; Hos. 2:15. Idolatry was adultery.

c) Our richest legacy is our offspring trained to live with and for God.

d) This psalm, together with the Wartburg Castle in which the Saxon king protected him against Emperor and Pope, inspired Luther to compose "A Mighty Fortress." The psalm itself was probably inspired when the Angel of the Lord had slain 185,000 Assyrians, who besieged Jerusalem, II Kings 19:35.

⁶God is in her midst; she shall not totter;
at morning's dawn God shall help her.
⁶Nations rage, kingdoms fall;
He raises His voice, the earth dissolves.
Selah

⁷The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
⁸Come, see the works of the LORD!
Who brings desolations in the earth;

⁹Who makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth;^a
He breaks the bow into pieces and snaps the spear in two.
He burns the chariots in the fire.

¹⁰Be still and know that I am God;^f
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted on the earth.

¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

Our Sovereign Lord
For the Chief Musician. A Psalm
by the Sons of Korah

47 All you peoples, clap your hands;
raise a shout to God with a triumphant note.^g

²For the LORD Most High is awe-inspiring, a great King over the whole earth.

³He subdues peoples to us and puts nations under our feet;

⁴He selects for us our inheritance, the pride of Jacob, whom He loves.
Selah

⁵God has ascended with a shout, the LORD with trumpet-peals.
⁶Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing psalms to our King, sing psalms;
⁷for God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a thoughtful psalm.

⁸God rules over all the nations;
God sits upon His holy throne.

⁹The nobles of the Gentiles are gathered, a united people for the God of Abraham;
for the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

The Beauty of God's Church
A Song, a Psalm by the Sons of Korah
48 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised
in the city of our God, His holy mountain.

²Beautiful for elevation, the joy of all the earth
is Mount Zion, the side of the north,^h the city of the great King.

³In her palaces God made Himself known as a defence.

⁴For, behold, the kings came together; they marched up together;
⁵as they looked, they were amazed and, terrified, they fled.

⁶Panic seized them there, throes like those of childbirth.

⁷With an east wind Thou didst wreck the Tarshish ships.ⁱ

⁸As we have heard, so we have seen
in the city of the LORD of Hosts, in the city of our God;^j

God will establish it forever. *Selah*

⁹We are thinking, O God, of Thy lovingkindness within Thy temple.

¹⁰In agreement with Thy name, O God, so is Thy praise to the ends of the earth;
Thy right hand is full of Thy righteousness.

¹¹Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah leap for joy, because of Thy just decisions.

¹²Walk about Zion; make a circuit around her; count her towers.

e) Not God, but sinners bring about these desolations.

f) In the hour of prayer, moments of silent meditation are helpful.

g) This psalm continues the teaching of God, the almighty and sovereign God, who rules all nations, but has selected Abraham's offspring to be His special servants under the covenant privileges.

h) The northern portion of Jerusalem.

i) On the Spanish coast; not to be confused with Tarsus, where Paul was born.

j) The essence of Zion's beauty was neither its location, nor its architecture, but the presence of God, especially the Holy of Holies with the ark of the covenant.

¹³Notice well her defence-walls; walk through her palaces,
so you may tell the next generation.
¹⁴For this God is our God, for ever and ever;
He will guide us until death.^k

A Mortal Body; an Immortal Spirit
For the Chief Musician. A Psalm, by the Sons of Korah

49 Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

²both low and high, rich and poor together.^l

³My mouth shall speak wisdom;
and the thoughts of my heart shall be of insight.

⁴I will incline my ear to a parable,
I will disclose my riddle upon the harp:

⁵Why should I fear in the evil days,
when the iniquity of those who would supplant me surrounds me completely?

⁶They who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches,

⁷none can by any means redeem his brother,^m
or give God a ransom for him.

⁸For such redemption of their life is costly and can never suffice,
⁹so that he should live forever,
so that he should not see the pit.

¹⁰For he shall notice that wise men die,
that the fool and the brutish similarly perish,
leaving their wealth to others.

¹¹They inwardly think that their houses are forever,
their dwelling places to all generations;
they call their lands after their own names.

¹²But man with all his honor does not remain;

he is like the animals that perish.

¹³This is the fate of the self-confident;
yet after them men approve their sayings. *Selah*

¹⁴They are appointed as a flock for Sheol;ⁿ
death shall be their shepherd.^o
the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;
their form shall be for Sheol to consume,
so that there is no habitation for it.

¹⁵But God will redeem my soul from the hand of Sheol;
for He will receive me. *Selah*

¹⁶Be not afraid when some one grows rich,
when the splendor of his house increases;

¹⁷for when he dies, he shall carry nothing away;^p
his glory shall not descend after him.

¹⁸Though while he lived he blessed his soul,^q

and people praise you, when you do well for yourself,

¹⁹yet he shall go to the generations of his fathers,
who shall see the light no more forever.

²⁰Man with all his pomp but without insight
is like the animals that perish.

True Godliness

A Psalm of Asaph^r

50 The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks
and calls the earth from where the sun rises to where the sun goes down.

²Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God appears in glory-light.^s

³Our God comes and shall not keep silent;^t

before Him a fire consumes
and around Him a fierce tempest rages.

⁴He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, to judge His people:

⁵Gather to Me My holy ones,

k) A bride and groom might wisely write v. 14 on the flyleaf of their Bible, to be their motto to the end.

l) Ideally humanity is a great democracy; physically of the animal world, of brief existence; spiritually immortal. m) From death. n) The realm of the dead.

o) To the wealthy oppressor, death is the end of habitual activity; to the righteous it is a new beginning. p) An obvious fact. q) Wealth, honor and flattery deceive the careless soul.

r) Also Ps. 73-83. Asaph, a Levite, sounded cymbals in David's time, leading the choir.

s) God had promised His special Presence in the Holy of Holies.

t) God is ever active; if He were not, the universe would cease existing.

who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.^u

⁶The heavens declare His righteousness;
for God Himself is Judge. *Selah*

⁷Hear, O My people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will testify against you:
I am God, your God.

⁸Not for your sacrifices will I reprove you,
and your burnt offerings are always before Me.

⁹I will not take a bullock out of your house,^v
nor he-goats from your folds;
¹⁰for every animal of the forest is Mine,
and cattle by the thousands on the hills.

¹¹I know all the birds of the mountains,
and the animals of the field are before Me.

¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and its fulness are Mine.^w

¹³Shall I eat the flesh of bullocks, or drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴Offer the sacrifice of praise to God,
and pay your vows to the Most High.
¹⁵Call on Me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall honor Me.^x

¹⁶But to the wicked God says:
Why are you reciting My statutes with praise,
and taking My covenant upon your lips,

¹⁷though you hate correction and cast My words behind you?

¹⁸When you see a thief, you delight to associate with him,
and you take part with adulterers.

¹⁹Your mouth you use for evil and your tongue frames deceit.

²⁰You sit and talk about your brother;
on the son of your mother you bring ruin.

²¹These things you have done and I kept silent;
you thought I was altogether like you.
I will censure you and put the case in order before your eyes.

²²Now consider this, you who forget God,
lest I tear you up and there be none to deliver.

²³He who offers a sacrifice of praise honors Me:
to him who prepares his way I will show the salvation of God.

A Prayer of Confession

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David,
when Nathan the Prophet Came to Him,
after He had Gone in to Bathsheba^y

51 Have mercy upon me, O God,
according to Thy loving-kindness:

according to the greatness of Thy
compassion blot out my transgressions.

²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin,

³for I am conscious of my transgressions,
and my sin is ever in mind.

⁴Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned,^z
and done what is evil in Thy sight;
so that Thou art justified in Thy sentence
and pure in Thy judging.

⁵Behold, in sinful state I was born
and in sin did my mother conceive me.^a

⁶Surely, Thou desirest truth in the inner self,
and Thou makest me to understand hidden wisdom.

⁷Purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

u) God accepts the sacrifice of gratitude and sense of dependence.

v) But He does not stand in need of them.

w) Quoted by Paul, I Cor. 10:26, to show our Christian liberty in matters of eating.

x) Sacrifices then and gifts now for His service are in their nature much like presents we offer loved ones and friends: "The gift without the giver is bare." y) II Sam. 12:10.

z) Crime is against man; sin is against God.

a) My mother was sinful; so am I. No teaching here that conception is sin.

⁸Cause me to hear joy and gladness,
so that the bones which Thou hast
broken may rejoice.

⁹Hide Thy face from my sins and blot
out all my iniquities.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹Cast me not away from Thy
presence,

and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of Thy

salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit;

¹³then I will teach transgressors Thy
ways,

and sinners shall be converted to Thee.

¹⁴Deliver me from bloodguilt,^b O God,
Thou God of my salvation;

and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy
righteousness.

¹⁵O LORD, open Thou my lips and my
mouth shall declare Thy praise.

¹⁶For Thou delightest not in
sacrifice, else would I give it,
burnt-offering Thou dost not desire.^c

¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken
spirit;

a broken and penitent heart, O God,
Thou wilt not despise.

¹⁸Do good in Thy good pleasure to
Zion; build Thou the walls of
Jerusalem.

¹⁹Then shalt Thou delight in sacrifices
of righteousness,

in burnt-offering and whole burnt-
offering;

then shall bullocks be offered upon
Thy altar.

Deceit Is Self-Destructive

For the Chief Musician. A Meditation of
David, when Doeg the Edomite Came and
Told Saul, David Had Come to the House
of Ahimelech^d

52 Why do you boast of mischief,
you tyrant?

The lovingkindness of God is exercised
continually.

²Your tongue devises wickedness like a
sharpened razor, working deceit.^e

³You love evil more than good, lying
more than speaking the truth. *Selah*

⁴You love all destroying words, O
deceitful tongue.

⁵God will likewise strike you down
forever;

He will lay hold of you, pluck you out
of the tent

and uproot you from the land of the
living. *Selah*

⁶The righteous shall see and be in
awe;

but about him they shall laugh,
(saying),

⁷"Look, this is the man who did not
make God his stronghold,

but trusted in the abundance of his
wealth

and sought security through his
misdemeanor."

⁸But I am like a green olive tree in
the house of God;^f

I trust in God's lovingkindness for
ever and ever.

⁹I will give Thee thanks forever,
because Thou hast done it;

And I will hope in Thy name, for it
is good, in the presence
of Thy followers.

The Folly of Atheism

For the Chief Musician; upon Mahalath.^g
A Meditation of David

53 The fool says to himself: "There
is no God."

They are corrupt and do abominable
evil;

there is none who does good.

²God looked out from the heavens
at the children of men,

to see if there were any who
understood, who looked for God.

³They have all backslidden; they are
all corrupt;

there is none well-behaved; no, not
one.

⁴Have the workers of iniquity no
understanding.^h

b) The murder of Uriah, for an outstanding example of highhanded sin, as distinguished from
sins of error [Numbers 15:27-31]. c) Obedience is preferred, 1 Sam. 15:22.

d) Incident reported in 1 Sam. 22:9, 10.

e) Doeg had told Saul a partial truth with a false accusation.

f) In faith yet to be realized; in fact he was in serious trouble.

g) Which means "grief," so, probably to be sung in a minor key.

h) To think they can accomplish it without penalty.

who devour my people as if they ate bread?

They do not call on God.

⁶They were in dread where there was nothing to fear;¹
for God scatters the bones of your besiegers;
you will put them to shame, because God has rejected them.

⁶Oh, that from Zion Israel's deliverance might come!
When God returns the captivity of His people,
Jacob shall rejoice; Israel shall be glad.

Men Fail Us; God Never

For the Chief Musician; on Stringed Instruments. A Meditation of David, when the Ziphites Came and Said to Saul, "Is Not David Hiding with Us?"¹

54 O God, in Thy name deliver me and in Thy power vindicate me.

²O God, hear my pleading; give ear to the words of my mouth.

³For strangers are risen against me; and violent men seek my life;
they do not keep God in sight. *Selah*

⁴Behold, God is my ally;^k the LORD is with those who sustain my soul.

⁵He will return the damage upon my enemies.

Cut them off in Thy faithfulness!

⁶With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to Thee;¹

I will praise Thy name, O LORD, for it is good.

⁷For He has delivered me from every distress,

And my eyes have looked with satisfaction at my enemies.

Prayer Because of a False Friend
For the Chief Musician, on Stringed Instruments. A Meditation of David

55 Hear, O God, my prayer; hide not Thyself from my petition.

²Observe me and answer me.^m

In restlessness I groan and am distracted

³because of the enemy's noisiness; because of the threatenings of the wicked.

For they engulf me with their mischief and in anger they assault me.

⁴My heart is distressed within me,
and terrors of death come down on me.
⁵Fear and trembling get hold of me and horror overpowers me.

⁶So I said, "Oh, had I the wings of a dove,

then I would fly away and be at rest.

⁷Yes, then I would wander far away, and lodge in the desert. *Selah*

⁸I would hasten to my place of refuge, from this raging wind and storm."

⁹Destroy, O LORD, confuse their speeches,^o

for I have seen violence and strife in the city.

¹⁰Day and night they go about on the walls;

damage and trouble are in its center;

¹¹violence is within her, and from her market place oppression and deceit are never absent.^p

¹²For it is not an enemy who reproaches me;
that I could bear;
it is not a hater, who vaunts himself against me;

then I could hide myself from him;

¹³but you, a man regarded as an equal with me,^q

my companion and my familiar friend,

¹⁴we who together held sweet fellowship;

to the house of God we walked in the festive throng.

¹⁵Let destruction seize them; let them go down alive to Sheol;

i) With nothing and no one to fall back on, the ungodly is likely to turn panicky. But to deny the existence of God is to classify oneself with fools. j) Incident related in I Sam. 23:19,20.

k) To have God as our Helper, we must walk in His truth.

l) Our response for rescue must be as freely offered as was our petition.

m) No one to appeal to except God; fortunately He suffices.

n) Another Babel seems required, but usually God-haters are man-haters, too, and get to quarreling.

o) Without God earth becomes hell. It all sounds like a period of rebellion.

p) In rank none was equal with King David; but in counsel Ahithophel was not below him, II Sam. 15:12, but sided with Absalom against him.

for wickedness is in their dwelling, in their heart.

¹⁶As for me, I will call on God and the LORD will save me.

¹⁷Evening, morning and noon I will lament and sigh;^r and He will hear my voice.

¹⁸He will rescue my soul to have peace from those who war against me; for they who oppose me number many.

¹⁹God will hear and humble them,^s He, who sits enthroned from of old. *Selah*

Because in them there has been no change^t

and they do not revere God.

²⁰He put forth his hand against those at peace with him;

he violated his covenant.^u

²¹His mouth is sleeker than butter, but in his heart there is war: his words are softer than oil, yet they are drawn swords.

²²Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will sustain you:^v

He will never allow the righteous to be pushed over.

²³But Thou, O God, wilt bring them down into the pit of destruction; bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.

But I will trust in Thee.

Confide in God

For the Chief Musician; to the Tune, A Silent Dove among Strangers. By David, a Psalm of Refuge, when the Philistines Seized Him in Gath.^w

56 Have mercy upon me, O God; for man would walk over me; all day long the enemy oppresses me.^x

²Daily would my enemies devour me; for many are they who proudly fight against me.

Confidence in God; His Sufficiency

³In the day when I am afraid, I will have confidence in Thee.

⁴In God, I will praise His word; in God I trust,^y I will not fear; what can flesh do to me?^z

⁵All day long they twist my words; all their thoughts are against me to hurt.

⁶They join together, they lie in wait; they watch my steps as they have waited for my soul.

⁷Shall they escape by such evil-doing?

In Thine indignation cast down the people, O God.

⁸Thou takest note of my roaming; put my tears into Thy bottle; are they not in Thy book?

⁹Then shall my enemies fall back in the day of my crying out; this I know, because God is for me.

¹⁰In God I will praise the word, in the LORD I will praise the word.

¹¹In God I trust, I will not fear; what can man do to me?^a

¹²On me, O God, are Thy vows;^b I will give Thee thank-offerings,

¹³for Thou hast delivered my soul from death,^c

yes, my feet from stumbling too, so that I might walk before God in the light of life.

No Hope but God, Who Suffices
For the Chief Musician, to the Tune, Do Not Destroy, By David, a Refuge Psalm, when He Fled from Saul into the Cave^d

57 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me,

for in Thee my soul takes refuge, and in the shadow of Thy wings I will shelter

until these calamities^e have passed.

r) Hebrew prayer periods, Dan. 6:10; 9:4.

s) Usually "hear" means a favorable response. Here it would result in their being humbled.

t) Continued prosperity renders them ever less godly.

u) His loyalty pledge as officer of the king and of the state.

v) As butter comes from the churning of milk, so comes this sentence out of the writer's experience. It is not always God's will to remove the trial, but rather to sustain the righteous in it.

w) I Sam. 21:10-15.

x) In the first line man is collective and in the second line "he" retains the plural significance.

y) "In God we trust," is our national motto. May we all practice it.

z) Flesh in the presence of God and opposed to Him stands for weakness. In the N.T. it usually stands for absence of His Spirit, therefore sinfulness.

a) His God-related self no man can touch.

b) From birth there is the covenant-vow, signified by circumcision.

c) Ps. 116:8 gives identical reason for gratitude; in response to deliverance, to walk with God.

d) I Sam. 22:1. e) The threatening dangers occasioned by the crimes of others.

²I will cry to God Most High,
to God who completes (all things)
for me.

³He will send from heaven and save
me from the slanders
of him who would swallow me. *Selah*
God will send forth His mercy and
His truth.

⁴My soul is among lions;
I lie among those sons of men who
breathe fire,
whose teeth are spears and arrows, and
their tongues a sharp sword.^f

⁵Be exalted, O God, above the
heavens,
Thy glory over all the earth.

⁶They have prepared a net for my
steps;
my soul is bowed down.
They dug a pit before me,
but they themselves have fallen into
the center of it. *Selah*

⁷My heart is confident, O God;
my heart is confident,^g
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises.
⁸Awake, my glory, awake psaltery and
harp;
I will awaken the dawn.^h
⁹I will give thanks to Thee, O LORD,
among the peoples;

I will praise Thee among the Gentiles.
¹⁰For Thy lovingkindness reaches to
the heavens, Thy faithfulness to the
clouds.ⁱ

¹¹Be exalted, O God, above the heav-
ens; Thy glory over all the earth.

An Appeal for Fair Judges

For the Chief Musician; to the Tune, Do
Not Destroy, by David, a Refuge Psalm

58 Do you indeed speak righteous-
ness, O you judges,
do you judge the children of men fairly?
²No, at heart you work iniquity;
you deal out the violence of your hands
in the land.^j

³The godless are perverse from
the womb;

they go astray from birth, they are
falsifiers,

⁴Their poison is like a serpent's venom,
like a deaf adder that stops its ear,
⁵that will not listen to the voice of
charmers
casting spells skilfully.

⁶O God, break the fangs in their
mouths;
shatter Thou the eyeteeth of young
lions, O LORD!

⁷Let them melt away like outrunning
water;^k

as he aims his arrows, let those be as
split apart,

⁸as a snail that dissolves as it moves on;
as an untimely birth that never sees
the sun.

⁹Before your pots get the touch of the
thorns,^l
whether green or ablaze, He will
sweep them away with a whirlwind.

¹⁰The righteous will rejoice when
he sees the fair punishment;
he will wash his feet in the blood of
the wicked.

¹¹And men will say, Surely there is a
reward for the righteous; surely there
is a God judging in the earth.

The Persecuted Turns to God

For the Chief Musician; to the Tune, Do
Not Destroy; by David, a Refuge Psalm,
when Saul Sent and They Watched the
House to Kill Him^m

59 Deliver me from my enemies, O
my God;
keep me away from those who rise
against me.

²Deliver me from the workers of
iniquity,
and save me from bloodthirsty men.

³For, behold, they lie in wait for
my life;
strong men are banding together to
attack me,
not for my transgression, nor for my
sin, O LORD.ⁿ

f) The men who joined David in the cave might also answer the description, before David has
trained them. g) Confident: the state of perfect certainty. h) Up before daybreak.

i) The psalmist's earthly conception of God's infinity.

j) When God is forgotten, so is fair dealing among men, for God is the source of right and love.

k) Water from a spring that soon dries up. l) Thorns to be used in the kitchen for fire.

m) I Sam. 19:11-17. n) We may pray un hindered when innocent before God and man.

⁴Without any wrong of mine, they run
and prepare themselves.
Arise to my aid and take a look!

⁵Thou, O LORD God of hosts,
God of Israel,
arise to visit all the nations;^o
spare none of those who treacherously
plot evil. *Selah*

⁶They return at evening; they snarl
like dogs and go about the city.

⁷See, they foam at their mouth; swords
are in their lips;

for who, they think, will hear us?

⁸But Thou, O LORD, wilt laugh at
them;

Thou shalt mock at all the nations.

⁹O my Strength, I will wait on
Thee, for God is my stronghold.

¹⁰My God in His covenant-love will
meet me;

God will let me look at my enemies
with satisfaction.

¹¹Slay them not, lest my people forget;^p
scatter them by Thy power and bring
them down, O LORD, our shield.

¹²The sin of their mouth is the
word of their lips;
they shall be taken in their pride
for the curses and lies which they
utter.

¹³Destroy in indignation, destroy, that
they may be no more,
and let them know that God rules in
Jacob^q to the ends of the earth.

Selah

¹⁴They return at evening; they
snarl like dogs^r
and go about the city.

¹⁵They wander around for food;
they stay out all night, if they are not
filled.

¹⁶But I will sing of Thy strength,^s
and will sing aloud of Thy righteous-
ness in the morning;
for Thou hast been a stronghold
for me,

a refuge in the day of my distress.

¹⁷I will sing to Thee, O my strength,
for God is my stronghold, my merciful
God.

Prayer for Victory

Lily of Testimony, a Refuge Psalm by
David, for Instruction, when He had
Striven with the Arameans of Mesopotamia
and the Arameans of Zoba, and
when Joab Returned and Killed Twelve
Thousand of Edom in the Salt Valley^t

60 O God, Thou hast cast us off;
Thou hast scattered us;
Thou hast been angry; O restore us
again.

²Thou hast made the land to quake;
Thou hast rent it;

heal its fissures, for it is shaken.

³Thou hast made Thy people to
endure hardness;

Thou hast made us drink wine that
makes us reel.^u

⁴Thou hast given a banner to
those who revere Thee,
so it may display itself, because of Thy
truth. *Selah*

⁵So that Thy loved ones may be
delivered,
save with Thy right hand and
answer us.

⁶God has spoken in His holiness:^v

I will exult; I will divide Shechem
and measure out the valley of Succoth.

⁷Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine;

Ephraim is the defense of My head;

Judah is My lawgiver;^w ⁸Moab is My

washbasin;

over Edom I will throw My shoe; over

Philistia I shout in triumph.

⁹Who will bring me into the
fortified city,

who will lead me into Edom?

¹⁰Hast Thou not cast us off, O God,

but wilt Thou not go forth, O God,
with our armies?

^o) From the personal petition David considers his people's situation; for neighboring nations are not friendly; they invade when they dare. ^p) Israel needs frequent discipline.

^q) Prayer for their destruction is not Christ's idea; however, those who persist in evil must end in ruin, as Jesus warned the Galilean cities, which did not repent.

^r) Like scavenger dogs, not getting what they want even in the dark.

^s) A happy contrast for him who depends on God.

^t) II Sam. 8 reports much warring against the Arameans, and I Kings 11:16 tells of Joab's slaying Edomites, with no mention of defeats; but many Hebrews probably paid a bloody price.

^u) These verses reflect the ups and downs of war. ^v) Vv. 6-12 are identical with Ps. 108:7-12.

^w) As designated by Jacob on his deathbed, Gen. 49:10, in the Messianic promise.

¹¹Grant us help because of trouble, for vain is the help of man.

¹²With God we shall do valiantly;^x it is He who will tread down our enemies.

Confidence in the Lord's Protection
For the Chief Musician; on Stringed Instruments, by David

61 Hear, O God, my pleading; attend to my prayer.

²From the end of the earth I will call to Thee,^y

when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.^z

³For Thou art a refuge to me, a strong tower from the presence of the enemy.

⁴Let me dwell in Thy tent forever; let me take refuge under the covering of Thy wings. *Selah*

⁵For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows,
Thou hast given a heritage to those who revere Thy name.

⁶Thou wilt add days to the days of the king,^a
so his years shall equal many generations.

⁷He shall remain forever before God; ordain lovingkindness and truth to keep him.

⁸Then I will ever sing praises to Thy name,
so I may daily pay my vows.^b

Calm in His Friendship
For the Chief Musician; According to Jeduthun.^c A Psalm of David

62 Truly my soul looks in stillness to God;
from Him is my salvation.

²He alone is my rock and my health, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.^d

³How long will you assail a person to break him down, all of you, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

⁴They consult only to cast him down from his height;
they cherish falsehood;^e
with their mouth they bless, but at heart they curse. *Selah*

⁵Truly, my soul, look in stillness to God,

for my expectation is from Him.

⁶He alone is my rock and my health,^f my sure defence; I shall not be shaken.

⁷My salvation and my glory depend on God;
the rock of my defence, my refuge is in God.

⁸Trust in Him at all times, ye people; pour out your heart before Him; God is to us a refuge. *Selah*

⁹Lowly man is but a breath; the sons of nobles are only lies;
in the scales they go up, altogether lighter than emptiness.

¹⁰Put no trust in oppressing;
do not vainly hope in robbery.
If riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

¹¹Once God has spoken,^g twice have I heard this,
that strength belongs to God.

¹²And to Thee, O Lord, belongs covenant love,

for Thou rewardest every man according to his work.

A Soul Thirsting for God
A Psalm of David, when He Was in the Wilderness of Judah^h

63 O God, Thou art my God, I seek Thee earnestly;

x) Faith in the promises of God inspires confidence of coming victory.

y) Wherever he may be; and we know from Ps. 23 that David communed with God most intimately when he felt at ease.

z) The rock he could not climb without divine help. The words have become part of a lovely church anthem. a) King Saul.

b) Vows made with petitions must be fulfilled with praise when the prayers are answered.

c) Earlier mentioned as Ethan, a Levite musician.

d) Quietly David relates life to God and forms a practical philosophy that rests on God.

e) He is not fooled by appearances; godlessness is sham; it is illness.

f) God alone is the source of health.

g) When we worship God humbly, we may converse with Him. Observe silence, to hear Him make Himself and His will known to us, and read His Word. h) I Sam. 22:5 and 23:1-3.

my soul thirsts for Thee; my flesh longs for Thee¹
in a dry and worn-out land, where
there is no water.

²So have I beheld Thee in the
sanctuary,
to see Thy power and Thy glory.

³Because Thy lovingkindness is
better than life,
my lips shall praise Thee.

⁴So will I bless Thee as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands in Thy name.

⁵My soul shall be satisfied as with
marrow and fatness,
and my mouth shall praise Thee with
joyful lips.

⁶When I remember Thee on
my bed in the night watches, I
meditate on Thee.

⁷For Thou hast been my help,
and in the shadow of Thy wings I
will sing joyfully.

⁸My soul follows close behind Thee;¹
Thy right hand upholds me.

⁹But those who seek to ruin my
soul
shall go into the lower parts of the
earth.^k

¹⁰They shall be handed over to the
power of the sword;
they shall be a prey for foxes.

¹¹But the king shall rejoice
before God;
all who swear by Him shall jubilate;
for the mouth of those who speak lies
shall be stopped.

Divine Judgment on the Wicked
For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

64 Hear my voice, O God, in my
complaint;
guard my life against the terror of the
enemy.

²Hide me from the conspiracy of
wicked men,

from the noisy gangs of the evil-doers,¹
³who sharpen their tongue like a
sword,
who aim poisoned words like arrows.^m
⁴To shoot from ambush at the
innocent
they shoot unexpectedly and without
self-reproach.

⁵They confirm for themselves an
evil agreement;
they talk of laying snares secretly;
they say, "Who shall detect them?"
⁶They work out wicked schemes;
they are ready with a well-conceived
plan;ⁿ
for the inner man and the heart are
fathomless.

⁷But God will shoot an unlooked-for
arrow at them;^o they will be
wounded.

⁸They will be made to stumble, their
own tongue being against them;
all who see them shall wag the head.

⁹Then shall all men be in awe,
proclaim the act of God
and learn to know His work.

¹⁰The righteous shall be glad in the
Lord, and trust in Him;
and all the upright in heart shall offer
praise.^p

How Great Thou Art!
For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.
A Song

65 Silence is praise to Thee, O God,
in Zion;^q
and to Thee the vow shall be fulfilled.
²O Thou who hearest prayer, to Thee
shall all flesh come.^r

³Iniquities got the better of me;
our transgressions Thou forgivest.

⁴Blessed is the man whom Thou
choosest
and bringest near to dwell in Thy
courts.

We shall be satisfied with the goodness
of Thy house,
Thy sacred temple.

i) A soul longs for God when aware of belonging to God. Attending worship with others helped him to understand God better. j) The longing soul wants to stay near Him.

k) Is there a greater sin than ruining another's soul? Correspondingly there is no greater service than to lead a soul to Christ.

l) Like a few frogs in a pond, so those on the wrong side manage to seem many.

m) Poisoned arrows are usually fatal if they hit.

n) The godly must have a definite plan, being "wise as serpents."

o) They get what is coming to them.

p) The finals are always with God, to whom praise is due.

q) We must be silent, and be receptive. r) Weak man and mighty God.

⁵With awesome deeds Thou dost respond to us in righteousness,
O God of our salvation,^a
who art the confidence of all the ends
of the earth
and of the remotest seas.

⁶Who by Thy might hast founded the mountains,
being clothed with power.

⁷Who dost still the roaring of the seas,
the moaning of their waves, and the clamor of the nations.

⁸Those who live farthest away,
stand in awe at Thy signs.

Thou makest the morning dawn and
the evening sunset to shout for joy.

⁹Thou visitest the land and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it; God's river
is brimful of water.¹

Thou providest them grain, for so
Thou hast ordained it;

¹⁰watering the furrows, softening its
ridges,

Thou makest it soft with showers;
Thou dost bless its vegetation.^u

¹¹Thou crownest the year with
Thy goodness,^v
and Thy footsteps drop abundance.

¹²The pastures of the wilderness drip
and the hills are girded with rejoicing.

¹³The meadows are clothed with flocks
and the valleys are covered with grain;
they shout for joy; they also sing.

How Great Thy Goodness!
For the Chief Musician. A Song. A Psalm
66 Shout joyfully to God, all the
earth;

²Sing out to glorify His name; render
Him glorious praise.

³Say to God, "How awe-inspiring are
Thy works;
for Thy great power Thine enemies
submit to Thee.

⁴All the earth shall do Thee homage
and shall sing to Thee; they shall sing
to Thy name."^w *Selah*

⁵Come and see what God has
done;
in His work He is awesome toward
the children of men.

⁶He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river on foot;^x
there we rejoiced in Him.

⁷He rules by His power forever; His
eyes observe the nations;
let not the rebellious exalt themselves.
Selah

⁸Bless our God, O ye peoples,
and sound His praise abroad,^y

⁹who keeps our soul in life,
and does not allow our foot to slip.

¹⁰For Thou hast tested us, O God,^z
Thou hast refined us as silver is
purified.

¹¹Thou hast brought us into the net;
Thou hast laid a heavy burden on
our hips.^a

¹²Thou hast made men to ride over
our head;

we went through fire and through
water,

and Thou hast brought us to an
overflowing abundance.

¹³I will enter Thy house with
burnt-offerings;^b

I will pay Thee my vows,

¹⁴which my lips have uttered

and my mouth has spoken when I
was in distress.

¹⁵Burnt-offerings of fat sheep I will
offer
with the incense of rams;
I will offer bullocks with he-goats.
Selah

¹⁶Come and hear, all who
revere God,
and I will declare what He has done
for my soul:

¹⁷I called out to Him with my mouth,
and praise was in my tongue.^c

¹⁸If I regard iniquity in my heart the
LORD will not hear;

¹⁹But God certainly has heard;

s) If we will listen, God's mighty acts answer many questions.

t) The irrigation canal, supplying untold acres.

u) God provides the moisture; He also causes the growth for which the farmer hopes.

v) From here on we have an up-to-date hymn, parts of which we use in our Thanksgiving anthems.

w) For which the psalmist prepares them. x) At the Red Sea and the Jordan.

y) As lined in one of our great hymns. z) Plenty of testing, leading to victory.

a) Carrying loads on the hip was customary.

b) None but priests entered tabernacle or temple; here as usual the courts outside the holy place

and the Holy of Holies are meant.

c) No sooner had he invoked the LORD than he had reason to praise Him.

He has attended to the voice of my prayer.^d

²⁰Blessed be God, who has turned away neither my prayer nor His covenant-love from me.

The God of the Nations

For the Chief Musician, on Stringed Instruments. A Psalm. A Song

67 God be merciful to us and bless us,
and cause His face to shine upon us,^e

Selah

²so that Thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy saving health among all nations.^f

³May the peoples praise Thee, O God;
may all the peoples give thanks to Thee.

⁴May the nations be glad and sing for joy;
for Thou shalt judge the people fairly
and guide the nations upon earth.

⁵May the peoples thank Thee, O God;
may the peoples praise Thee, all of them.

⁶The earth has yielded her harvest;
God, our God, will bless us.

⁷God will bless us
and all the ends of the earth will revere Him.

Our God Victorious

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. A Song

68 God shall arise; His enemies shall be scattered;^g
those who hate Him shall flee before His face.

²As smoke is driven away, so Thou shalt drive them away;
as wax melts before the fire, so the wicked shall perish before God.

³But the righteous shall exult;
they shall rejoice before God;

yes, they shall rejoice with mirth-making.

⁴Sing to God, sing to His name:
raise a highway for Him who rides through the wilderness;
the LORD is His name; be jubilant before Him.

⁵A father to the fatherless and a champion of the widows^h
is God in His holy habitation,
⁶God who makes the lonely to live in a home;
who brings out prisoners into prosperity;
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

⁷O God, when Thou didst go forth before Thy people,ⁱ
when Thou didst move through the wilderness,
Selah

⁸the earth trembled; even the heavens dropped before God;
Sinai (quaked) before God, the God of Israel.

⁹O God, Thou didst shed a plentiful rain upon Thy heritage,^j
Thou didst restore Thy heritage when exhausted.

¹⁰Thy congregation settled in it;
Thou didst in Thy goodness provide for the destitute, O God.

¹¹The LORD sent forth the command;
those who proclaimed the good news were a great host.

¹²The kings of armies fled; they fled and the women at home divided the booty.

¹³Did you camp among the sheep-folds?
The dove's wings are covered with silver,
and her feathers with glistening gold.^k

¹⁴When the Almighty scattered kings there,
it was like snow-fall on Zalmon.^l

¹⁵A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan;

d) Proof that his heart was clean.

e) For communion with God we need more than forgiveness. Pardon is in a way negative; we need His blessing. Then we should so live that God is pleased with us; His face shines on us.

f) Following this we are ready to tell everyone about our wonderful God, praying that they, too, may find Him, so bringing thanksgiving to all.

g) This is a victory song, God being the Victor, a joy for the righteous, a dread to the wicked.

h) Of whom men so readily took advantage. i) From Egypt to Canaan. j) The Promised Land.

k) After horrible war experiences, luxury. l) Zalmon is a hill in central Palestine.

a mountain studded with peaks is the Bashan range.

¹⁶Why do you gaze with envious hostility, O many-peaked mountains, at the mountains which God has chosen for His abode?^m
Yes, the LORD will dwell there forever.

¹⁷The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands;

the LORD came from Sinai into the holy place.ⁿ

¹⁸Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captive a band of captives; Thou hast received gifts among men,^o even rebellious men, for a dwelling of the LORD God.

¹⁹Blessed be the LORD; day by day He carries us, the God of our salvation. *Selah*

²⁰Our God is a God of rescuings; from the LORD God are escapes from death.

²¹Yes, God will strike the head of His enemies, the hairy scalp of him who goes on in his guilty doings.

²²The LORD said, I will bring back from Bashan; I will restore from the depths of the sea.^p

²³so that your foot may bathe in blood and the tongue of your dogs may have a portion of your enemies.

²⁴They have seen Thy procession, O God, the procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.

²⁵Singers in the van; musicians in the rear, in the center maidens playing on timbrels.^q

²⁶Praise ye God in the congregations, the LORD, you who are from Israel's fountain.^r

²⁷There is Benjamin, the smallest, their ruler;

the princes of Judah in their crowd; the princes of Zebulun; the princes of Naphtali.

²⁸Your God has commanded your strength.

O God, display Thy strength, Thou who hast achieved for us.

²⁹Because of Thy temple in Jerusalem, kings shall bring gifts to Thee.

³⁰Rebuke the beasts of the reeds,^s the herd of bulls, with the calves of the peoples,^t

prostrating themselves with pieces of silver.

He has scattered the peoples that delight in war.

³¹Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands to God.

³²Sing to God, ye kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the LORD;

Selah
³³to Him who rides upon the heavens, the ancient heavens:

Behold, He sends forth His voice, His mighty voice.

³⁴Ascribe power to God: His majesty is over Israel; His might is in the clouds.^u

³⁵Awe-inspiring art Thou, O God, from Thy sanctuary; the God of Israel, who bestows strength and fulness of might to His people.^v
Blessed be God!

Prayer for God's Fatherly Protection
For the Chief Musician, to the Tune, The Lilies. By David

69 O God, save me; for the waters come up to my lips;^w

²I am sinking in deep mire and there is no place for me to stand;

I have come to deep waters and a flood overwhelms me.

³I have cried until I am exhausted; my eyes grow dim while I wait for my God.

m) Zion. n) Zion.

o) Quoted by Paul, Eph. 4:8, applied to the gifts God has granted Christian workers to serve in His church. p) From the heights and from the depths.

q) Like Miriam and the women, Ex. 15:20. r) Jacob's descendants, the tribes of Israel.

s) Crocodiles, so referring to Egypt. t) Bulls represent leaders; calves, the people.

u) Sensed strongly during a thunderstorm.

v) In His strength alone can Israel stand, and He suffices.

w) This is prayer, beginning with telling God of the plight he is in. To know that and to talk it over with God is the beginning of release.

⁴They* that hate me without a reason are more numerous than the hairs on my head.
Those who wish to destroy me are powerful;
they are my enemies wrongfully;
I have to replace what I did not steal.

⁵Thou knowest my blundering;
my guilt is evident to Thee.
⁶May those who have their hope in Thee
not be put to shame because of me.⁷
May it never happen that those who seek Thee
be brought to dishonor on my account,
O God of Israel!

⁷Because I have been humiliated for Thy sake,
confusion has covered my face.
⁸I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my mother's children.
⁹Because the zeal for Thy house has consumed me,²
and reproach falls on me from those who affront Thee.

¹⁰When I myself mourned with fasting, I was humiliated;
¹¹When I put on sackcloth for my clothing,
I became a laughingstock to them.
¹²Those who sit by the gate talk about me;
I have become the song of the drinkers.³

¹³But as for me, my prayer is to Thee, LORD;
at an opportune moment, O God, in Thy plenteous grace,
answer me with the truth of Thy salvation.
¹⁴Do not allow me to sink, but save me from the mire;^b
rescue me from my enemies and from the deep waters.

¹⁵Keep the flood waters from overwhelming me;
do not let the deep swallow me up,
or the pit close its mouth over me.

¹⁶Answer me, O LORD, for Thy grace is good;
turn to me according to Thy plenteous mercy.

¹⁷Do not turn Thy face from Thy servant,^c
for I am in trouble; answer me speedily.

¹⁸Come near to me, redeem me, free me from my foes.

¹⁹Thou knowest my reproach, my shame and my dishonor;
all my adversaries stand before Thee.

²⁰Reproach has broken my heart and I feel depressed;
I looked for sympathy, but there was none;

and for comforters, but I found no one.
²¹They gave me gall for my food;
and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.^d

²²Let their table before them become a snare,^e
and to those at ease a trap.

²³Let their eyes be darkened, that they cannot see,
and make their loins continually to tremble.

²⁴Pour out Thine indignation upon them,
and let the heat of Thine anger overtake them.

²⁵Let their dwelling be a ruin,^f
let none live in their tents.

²⁶For him who is smitten of Thee, they persecute,
they gossip of the pain of Thy pierced ones.

²⁷Add iniquity to their iniquity and let them not enter into Thy justification.

²⁸Let them be blotted out of the book of life,
and not be recorded with the righteous.

x) Being misunderstood is basic to many of our difficulties.

y) We, too, may well pray daily not to be stumbling blocks. Paul in Romans 14 shows his great concern along that line. z) Fulfilled in Jesus, John 2:17.

a) The leaders meeting in council as well as the riffraff are against him.

b) Similar to Jeremiah's experiences, Jer. 38:6, with whom it was literal.

c) So he is driven to God.

d) In each of the Gospels our Lord's drinking vinegar on the cross is reported.

e) These curses are not in the N. T. spirit. We should consider, though, that the writer felt his cause to be God's cause and his foes God's foes. f) Peter quotes this regarding Judas, Acts 1:20.

²⁹But I am afflicted and in pain,
let Thy salvation, O God, set me
on high.

³⁰I will praise the name of God with
a song
and will magnify Him with
thanksgiving.

³¹It will please the LORD better than
any ox,
or bullock with horns and hoofs.

³²The humble shall see it, and be
glad:
you who seek God, let your heart
revive!

³³For the LORD hears the needy, and
does not despise His prisoners.

³⁴Let heaven and earth
praise Him,
the seas and everything that moves
in them;

³⁵For God will save Zion and build
the cities of Judah;
that people may dwell there and
possess it.

³⁶The offspring of His servants shall
inherit it,
and they who love His name shall
abide in it.^g

A Prayer for Speedy Aid

For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David;
to Bring to Remembrance

70 O God, to my rescue,^h
O LORD, to my help make haste.

²Let those be ashamed and con-
founded who seek my soul;
let those be turned back and put to
shame who desire my hurt.

³Let those turn back as a reward of
their shame,
who say: "Aha, aha!"ⁱ

⁴Let all those who seek Thee rejoice
and be glad in Thee;
and let those who love Thy salvation
say continually,
"Let God be magnified."

⁵But I am poor and needy, O God,
hasten to me:

Thou art my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not tarry.

The Prayer of an Aged Worshiper

71 In Thee, O LORD, I take refuge:
let me never be put to shame.^j

²Through Thy righteousness, deliver me
and set me free;

incline Thine ear to me and save me.^k

³Be Thou to me a rock for a dwelling,
to which I may always resort;
Thou hast ordered to save me, for

Thou art my rock and my
stronghold.

⁴Deliver me, O my God, from the
hand of the wicked, from the
hand of the unjust and ruthless;

⁵For Thou art my hope, O LORD
God; Thou art my trust from my
youth.

⁶Upon Thee I have leaned from
birth; it was Thou who took me
from the maternal womb. My praise is
continually of Thee.

⁷I have been a marvel to many, but
Thou art my strong refuge.

⁸My mouth is filled with Thy praise
and with Thy glory all day.

⁹Cast me not off in my old age;
forsake me not now that my
strength is spent.

¹⁰For my enemies talk of me; those
who watch my life consult together,

¹¹saying, "God has forsaken him;
chase and seize him, for there is
none to deliver."

¹²O God, be not far from me; O
my God, make haste for my help.

¹³Let them be ashamed and consumed,
who waylay my life;

with reproach and dishonor may they
be covered, who seek my hurt.

¹⁴But I will hope continually and
praise Thee more and more.

¹⁵My mouth shall tell of Thy
righteousness and Thy salvation all
the day;

g) Present rescues encourage the saints and inspire them to expect future security.

h) This psalm is nearly identical with Ps. 40:13-17, also ascribed to David; both plead in different ways and with assurance of God's help. i) May they turn to join the singers of the next verse.

j) Ps. 31:1, 2 is almost identical with vv. 1, 2 of this psalm. Remarkable in both is the plea resting on God's righteousness, in which they felt they had a share.

k) Here is witness to a godly training.

for they are beyond my numbering.

¹⁶I will go in the strength of the LORD God; I will make mention of Thy righteousness, Thine alone.

¹⁷O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth and I still declare Thy wonders.¹

¹⁸So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, till I proclaim Thy might to this generation and Thy power to all descendants.

¹⁹Thy righteousness, O God, is most high, and Thou hast done great things, O God; Who is Thine equal?

²⁰Thou, who hast made me experience troubles great and sore,^m wilt revive me again

and wilt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

²¹Thou wilt add to my stature, and comfort me again.

²²I will also praise Thee with the harp for Thy faithfulness, O my God;

I will sing praise to Thee with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.

²³My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to Thee; and my soul, which Thou hast redeemed.ⁿ

²⁴My tongue also shall mention Thy righteousness all day long; for those who sought my hurt have been shamed and disgraced.

Prayer for Righteous Ruling

By Solomon

72 O God, grant the king Thy justice and Thy righteousness to the king's son.

²May he judge Thy people with righteousness^o and Thy poor with justice.

³May the mountains bring peace to the people, and the hills, through righteousness.

⁴May he judge the poor among the people, save the children of the needy and crush the oppressor.

⁵May they revere Thee while the sun endures,^p as long as the moon, to all generations.

⁶May He come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that refresh the earth.

⁷In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace till the moon be no more.

⁸May He have dominion from sea to sea and from the river^q to the bounds of the earth.

⁹Before Him shall the dwellers of the wilderness bow, and His enemies shall grovel in the dust.

¹⁰The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

¹¹Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.

¹²For He will deliver the needy, when he calls, and the poor, who has no helper.

¹³He will have pity on the weak and needy

and will save the souls of the needy;^r ¹⁴from oppression and violence He shall redeem their soul;

and precious is their blood in His sight.

¹⁵He shall live and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba, and they shall pray for Him continually;^s

1) If he keeps on seeing God's wonders, he will never grow old in attitude.

m) He accepted adversities for what they are—divine discipline.

n) His whole soul was in it when he sang or played.

o) Solomon's reign is to be like that of the Messiah, righteous, spreading and of lasting influence. Here he sets the standard for himself.

p) As this goes beyond human attainments, we consider it Messianic.

q) The Euphrates, which was the eastern boundary of lands promised to Israel and conquered by David.

r) How accurate a picture the poet draws of the Messiah's character! This King is more than human. s) As now we pray for the spread of His kingdom.

they shall bless Him all the day.

¹⁶May there be abundance of grain in the land on top of the mountains;^t may its fruit wave like Lebanon, and may they of the city flourish like grass of the earth.

¹⁷May His name endure for ever; may His reputation flourish before the sun.
May men be prospered in Him; may all nations call Him blessed.

¹⁸Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,^u who alone does wondrous things.

¹⁹And blessed be His glorious name for ever; may the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen.^v

²⁰The prayers of David, the son of Jesse are ended.*

Two Kinds of Life; Two Destinies
A Psalm of Asaph

73 Surely God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure;
²but as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.

³For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴They suffer no violent pain; their body is well nourished.

⁵They do not share the troubles of mortals, nor are they plagued like others.

⁶Pride therefore encircles their neck; violence covers them like a garment.

⁷Their eyes swell out from fatness, their hearts overflow with illusions.

⁸They scoff and wickedly they mention depression; they talk disdainfully.

⁹They set their mouth against the heavens^w

and their tongue ranges the earth.

¹⁰Therefore His people turn this way and that,^x and like profuse waters are gulped down^y by them.

¹¹And they say, "Does God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?"

¹²Truly such are the wicked; they are secure and their riches increase.

¹³Uselessly then I have cleansed my heart and have washed my hands in innocence,

¹⁴for all day long I have been beaten and chastened every morning.

¹⁵Had I said, "So I will speak," I would indeed have played false to Thy children.^z

¹⁶Yet, when I pondered to understand this, it was too overwhelming for me,^a
¹⁷until I went into God's sanctuary and perceived their ending.^b

¹⁸Truly, Thou dost set them in slippery places;

Thou dost make them tumble to ruin.

¹⁹How they are brought to desolation in a moment,

wiped out, annihilated through terrors!

²⁰Like a dream after one wakes up, so, LORD, Thou wilt despise their imaginings when Thou awakest.

²¹When my heart was bitter and I was pierced deep within,

²²I was stupid and ignorant, a reasonless creature in Thy sight.

²³Nevertheless I am continually with Thee;

Thou dost hold my right hand;^c

²⁴Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel,

and afterward Thou wilt receive me to glory.^d

t) The least likely place for a grain crop.

u) Literally we cannot bless God, for, Heb. 7:7, "The less is blessed of the better." In Scripture, blessing God means ascribing to Him the highest possible praise.

v) This completes the second Book of Psalms. *) For this Second Book of the Psalms.

w) Their mouth they set in heaven; i.e., they speak with supposed heavenly authority, and they blaspheme God. x) Confused in their thinking.

y) They swallow the philosophy and thinking of the ungodly as a thirsty man drinks water.

z) Had the psalmist spoken his thoughts to others, he would have misled God's people.

a) It was labor to my eyes. b) The sad end of evildoers.

c) By faith vivid enough to be felt as an experience.

d) Glory here is not merely a place, but a Presence that will be sensed when afflictions cease and the end of life has come.

²⁶Whom have I in heaven
[but Thee]?
And besides Thee there is none on
earth whom I desire.
²⁶Though my flesh and my heart
fail,
God is the strength of my heart and
my portion for ever.
²⁷For see, those who are far from Thee
shall perish;
Thou wilt destroy all who play Thee
false.
²⁸But as for me, drawing near^e to God
is good for me;
I have made the LORD my refuge,
so that I may announce all Thy works.

Prayer for God's Help

A Psalm of Asaph. An Instruction

74 O God, why hast Thou cast us
off for ever?

Why does Thine anger burn against
the sheep of Thy pasture?

²Remember Thy congregation, which
Thou hast acquired of old,
which Thou hast redeemed as the tribe
of Thy heritage,
this Mount Zion, where Thou art
dwelling.

³Direct Thy steps to this
perpetual ruin; the enemy
has destroyed everything in the
sanctuary.

⁴In the midst of Thine appointed place
the adversaries roared and
erected their emblems for signs.

⁵It looks as if one had brought down
the axe on brushwood;

⁶all its carved work, too, they have
broken down with axe and hammer.

⁷They have set Thy sanctuary on fire;
they have profaned to the ground the
dwelling to Thy name.^g

⁸They said to themselves, "Let us
subdue them completely";
they burned all God's meeting places
in the land.

⁹We do not see our symbols; there is
no longer a prophet,

and none among us knows for how
long.

¹⁰How long, O God, shall the
adversary reproach?
Shall the enemy disdain Thy name
forever?

¹¹Why dost Thou hold back Thy hand,
even Thy right hand?
[Draw it] out of Thy bosom; make an
end.

¹²Still, God is my King from of
old,
who has worked salvation in the midst
of the earth.

¹³It was Thou who didst divide the
sea by Thy power;
It was Thou who didst crush the heads
of the dragons on the waters.^h

¹⁴It was Thou who didst smash the
heads of the Leviathan,
giving him as food to the animals of
the desert.

¹⁵It was Thou who didst break open
fountain and brook;ⁱ
It was Thou who didst dry up ever-
flowing rivers.^j

¹⁶Thine is the day as well as the
night;
Thou hast established the starlight and
the sun.

¹⁷It was Thou who didst fix all the
boundaries of the earth;
summer and winter are the work of
Thy hand.

¹⁸Remember, LORD, that the
enemy scoffs;
a foolish people reviles Thy name.

¹⁹Do not deliver to the wild beasts the
life of Thy turtledove;^k
do not forget the life of Thine afflicted
ones for ever.

²⁰Remember the covenant,^l
because the dark places of the land are
full of caves of violence.

²¹Let not the downtrodden return
in shame;
let the oppressed and needy praise Thy
name.

e) Drawing near and being in the presence of God.

g) Temple-burning is mentioned only at the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. There is no mention of houses of Jehovah's worship until after the captivity, but there may have been such earlier.

h) Dragons and Leviathan – the crocodile – typify the Egyptians destroyed at the Red Sea.

i) Water from the rock in the desert.

j) The Jordan through which the Israelites passed.

k) So precious was Israel to God.

l) The old pledge between God and Abraham, confirmed at Sinai.

²²Arise, O God, plead Thy cause;
remember the insults which the fools
have hurled at Thee all day long.^m
²³Do not forget the clamor of Thine
enemies,
the noise of Thine adversaries that
keeps on increasing.

Thanks to God, the Righteous Judge
To the Chief Musician, to the Melody of
"Destroy Not." A Psalm of Asaph. A Song

75 We praise Thee, O God, we
praise Thee;
for that Thy name is near
Thy wondrous works declare.
²At the time which I have appointed
I will render fair judgments.ⁿ
³The earth is quaking with all its
inhabitants;
I have set firm its pillars. *Selah*

⁴I said to the boastful, "Do not
boast;" and to the wicked,
"Do not lift up your horn."
⁵Do not lift your horn up high, and
do not talk with an insolent throat.^o
⁶For neither from the east nor from the
west nor from the desert does
promotion come;
⁷but God is the Judge. He puts down
one and promotes another.

⁸For there is a cup in the LORD's
hand; the wine is foaming,
thoroughly mixed.
He pours out from it; yes, the wicked
of the earth must swallow it and
drink its dregs.

⁹As for me, I will declare for
ever; I will sing psalms to the God
of Jacob.
¹⁰All the horns of the ungodly I will
strike down; but the horns of the
righteous shall be highly exalted.

God, His People's Protector
To the Chief Musician on Stringed In-
struments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song
76 In Judah God has renown; His
name is great in Israel.

²His tabernacle is in Salem,^p His
dwelling place in Zion.
³There He broke the fiery arrows of
the bow,
the shield, the sword, and the battle.^q
Selah

⁴Glorious Thou art,
more glorious and more excellent than
the mountains of prey.^r
⁵The stouthearted have their loot
taken;
they have slept their sleep.
None of the men of might could use
their hands.
⁶At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both charioteer and horse lie sunk in
sleep.
⁷Thou, even Thou, art to be revered,
and who can stand before Thee when
Thou art indignant?

⁸From heaven Thou didst cause
judgment to be heard;
the earth feared and was still
⁹when God arose for judgment to save
all the meek of the earth. *Selah*
¹⁰Surely the wrath of man shall praise
Thee;
further wrath wilt Thou restrain.

¹¹Make vows to the LORD your
God, and perform them;
let all around Him bring gifts to Him,
who is to be revered,
¹²who cuts off the breath of princes,
who is dreadful to the kings of the
earth.

Encouraging Memories
To the Chief Musician, to Jeduthun.^a A
Psalm of Asaph

77 My voice is to God; I call; my
voice is to God,^t
that He may listen to me.
²I sought the LORD in the day of my
distress;
in the night my hand was stretched out
and did not weary;^u
my soul refused to be comforted.
³When I was moaning, I thought of
God;

m) What they did against God's worshipers they were doing against God, as Jesus taught concerning His disciples [Matt. 25:40, 45]. n) The Judge of all sets His own time.

o) The bowed head is more befitting. p) Abbreviation for Jerusalem.

q) He breaks battles, too, as Ps. 46:9 teaches.

r) "The everlasting mountains," the Septuagint translates it.

s) "Praise," either indicating the song's content or the name of a musician appointed by David

[1 Chron. 16:41; 25:16]. t) Repetition indicates extreme seriousness.

u) Palm up, hoping to receive divine help.

when my spirit was faint, I pondered.

Selah

⁴Thou holdest my eyelids waking;^v I am so disturbed I am speechless.

⁵I think about the days of old, the years of ancient times.

⁶In the night I remember my song; with my heart I meditated and my spirit made diligent search.

⁷Has the LORD rejected me for ever?^w Will He never again be favorable?

⁸Has His love ended eternally? Has His promise failed to all generations?

⁹Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has He in indignation locked away His compassion? *Selah*

¹⁰I said, "This grieves me; the right hand of the Most High changes."

¹¹I brought to mind the works of the LORD,

for I remembered Thy miracles of old.

¹²I will think of all Thy works and consider well all Thy wonders.

¹³Thy way, O God, is holy.^x

Who is so great a god as God!

¹⁴Thou art the God who workest wonders; Thou hast revealed Thy power.

¹⁵With a mighty arm Thou hast redeemed Thy people,^y the sons of Jacob and Joseph.^z *Selah*

¹⁶The waters saw Thee, O God; the waters saw Thee, they shuddered;^a the deep shuddered, too.

¹⁷The clouds poured down water; the skies rumbled with thunder;

Thy lightning arrows zigzagged.

¹⁸The voice of Thy thunder was in the whirlwind;

the lightnings illumined the world; the earth trembled and shook.

¹⁹Thy ways are in the sea, Thy paths in the great waters; Thy footprints are untraceable.

²⁰Thou hast led Thy people as a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.^b

God in the Nation's History

A Meditation of Asaph

78 My people, give ear to my instruction;

listen to the words of my mouth,

²as I open my lips in a parable, as I utter lessons from ancient times,

³which we have heard and known, for our fathers related them to us.

⁴We do not conceal them from their children,

recounting to the following generation the praises of the LORD

and His might, yes, the wondrous works He has performed.

⁵For He established a testimony with Jacob;

He appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to disclose to their sons,^c

⁶in order that the succeeding generation might know, that the children still to be born might arise and recount it to their sons,

⁷so as to put their confidence in God and not to forget God's works, but to keep His commandments.

⁸That they might not be like their fathers, a generation of obstinacy and rebellion, a generation which did not prepare its heart; and its spirit was not faithful to God.

⁹The sons of Ephraim, equipped with the bow, retreated in the day of battle.

¹⁰They did not keep God's covenant and refused to walk in His Law.

¹¹They forgot His deeds and His wonders

which He had shown them.

¹²He performed miracles before the eyes of their fathers in the land of Egypt in the field of Zoan.^d

v) God's nearness never doubted.

w) While this psalm sounds personal, it also represents the nation.

x) The conclusion upon devout observation. y) Also impression of His might.

z) Jacob, as father of all Israel; Joseph through his saving the family.

a) The Red Sea and the Jordan. b) In the exodus and desert journeys.

c) The holy Israelites taught lessons to their children. The textbook was the Word which God had revealed. Their purpose was to bring up the children as worshipers of God, adoring Him and keeping His covenant. The method was narration of the saving acts of God for His people. The school was the home where the fathers took time and pains to teach the children.

d) A town in the eastern part of the Nile Delta now known as San.

¹³He divided the sea and had them pass through;
yes, He made the waters stand up like a heap.^e

¹⁴By day He guided them with a cloud
and all night with a burning light.
¹⁵He split the rocks in the wilderness
and gave them drink as from the great deep.

¹⁶He made streams gush from the rock
and caused waters to run down like rivers.

¹⁷But they sinned still more against Him

by showing disobedience
to the Most High in the wilderness.

¹⁸Indeed, they tested God in their hearts

by asking for flesh as they craved it.

¹⁹They even spoke against God. They said,

"Does God have power to set a table
for us in the wilderness?"

²⁰Behold, He struck a rock, so that the
waters gushed out
and streams overflowed.

Is He also able to give bread?

Will He prepare meat for His people?^f

²¹Therefore, when the LORD
heard, He was provoked;
a fire was kindled against Jacob and
anger arose against Israel,

²²because they put no faith in God;
neither did they trust in His salvation,

²³although He had ordered the clouds
from above

and opened the doors of heaven;

²⁴although He had rained manna upon
them to eat

and had given them heavenly grain.

²⁵Man ate the bread of the mighty;
He furnished them food in abundance.

²⁶He set loose an east wind in the
heavens,

and in His might He brought in a
south wind.

²⁷He rained flesh upon them as dust,
yes, winged fowl as the sand of the
sea.

²⁸He let them fall in the midst of
their camp all around their tents.

²⁹So they ate and were fully satisfied,
for He sent them what they had
craved.

³⁰But scarce had they stilled their
craving,

their food still being in their mouths,

³¹when God's indignation came upon
them and He slaughtered their
sturdiest

and felled the choicest of Israel.

³²In spite of all this, they sinned still
more

and had no confidence in His
wondrous works.

³³So He made their days disappear like
a fog,

made their years end in sudden
disaster.^g

³⁴When He ruined them, they
inquired for Him;

they returned and sought God
diligently.

³⁵They remembered that God was their
Rock,

the Most High God, their Redeemer.

³⁶They flattered Him with their
mouth,^h

they lied to Him with their tongue;

³⁷for their heart was not sincere with
Him,

they were not faithful in His covenant.

³⁸But He, the merciful One,
forgave their sin and did not destroy
them.

Many a time He restrained His anger
and did not give vent to His

indignation.ⁱ

³⁹He remembered that they were flesh,
a wind that leaves and does not return.

⁴⁰How often they disobeyed Him
in the wilderness

and grieved Him in the desert!

⁴¹Repeatedly they tested God and
provoked the Holy One of Israel.^l

⁴²They did not remember His hand,
the day when He delivered them from
the enemy;

e) Such a heap of water as a mighty wind had formed.

f) Severe discipline was needed and proved effective for those who witnessed it.

g) By the same discipline, some obeyed; others rebelled, as in our day.

h) At Moses' earnest pleading.

i) Blessings God was so ready to bestow were withheld because the people were not receptive.

⁴³how He worked His signs in Egypt
and His wonders in the field of
Zoan.

⁴⁴He turned their rivers into
blood,
and their streams so that they could
not drink.^j

⁴⁵He sent among them swarms of flies
that ate them;
frogs, too, that devastated them.

⁴⁶He gave their crops to locusts and
their produce to grasshoppers.

⁴⁷With hail He broke down their vines
and with sleet their sycamores.

⁴⁸He gave up their cattle to hail and
their herds to thunderbolts.

⁴⁹Sending forth evil spirits, He cast
upon them bursting anger,
His overflowing wrath, indignation,
and distress.

⁵⁰He leveled a path for His anger;
He did not spare their soul from death,
but He caused their lives to be
delivered to the plague.

⁵¹Yes, He smote all the first-born
of Egypt,
the prime of their strength in the tents
of Ham.

⁵²But He moved out His people like
sheep
and guided them like a flock in the
desert.

⁵³He led them in safety, so they
were not afraid;
but their enemies He covered with the
sea.^k

⁵⁴He brought them to His holy
domain,
to the mountain which His right hand
had gained.

⁵⁵He drove out peoples before them
and allotted them a measured
inheritance;

He settled the tribes of Israel in their
tents.

⁵⁶But they tested and embittered
the Most High God

and did not observe His testimonies.^l
⁵⁷They turned away and acted unfaith-
fully like their fathers;
they twisted like a warped bow.^m
⁵⁸They made Him angry with their
high places,
and with their idols they provoked His
jealousy.

⁵⁹God heard it and His anger
burned; He deeply abhorred Israel.
⁶⁰He forsook the dwelling at Shiloh,
the tabernacle which He had pitched
among men;

⁶¹Yes, He delivered His ark into
captivity
and its gloryⁿ into the hand of the foe.
⁶²He abandoned His people to the
sword and poured His anger on His
inheritance.

⁶³The fire consumed their young men
and their maidens were not serenaded.^o

⁶⁴Their priests fell by the sword, and
their widows made no mourning.

⁶⁵Then the LORD was aroused as
one from sleep,
like a strong man heated from wine.

⁶⁶He beat His enemies back; He caused
them unending disgrace.

⁶⁷He rejected the tabernacle of Joseph
and did not choose the tribe of
Ephraim;

⁶⁸but He chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which He loved.^p

⁶⁹He built His sanctuary of [heavenly]
height and enduring like
the earth which He has established.

⁷⁰He chose David, His servant, whom
He took from the sheepfold,

⁷¹whom He brought from following
ewes with their young,
to rule Jacob His people, and Israel
His heritage.

⁷²And he^q shepherded them according
to the integrity of his heart;
he guided them by the skilled
workings of his hands.

j) A restatement of the plagues in Egypt as God prepared for Israel's exodus. To sing these lines greatly aided in these facts being mastered and remembered. k) The Red Sea of the exodus. l) Law, history, poetry, and prophecy.

m) No target can be hit from an imperfect bow. So deceit ruins the aims of persons and of nations. Immanuel Kant called a lie "murder."

n) The ark of the covenant, captured by the Philistines [I Sam. 4:21-22].

o) Youthful love-life was shipwrecked. p) The temple and ultimately the Messiah. q) David.

A Prayer for Retribution on Jerusalem's Destroyers

A Psalm of Asaph

79 O God, the Gentiles have invaded Thy heritage;^r they have profaned Thy holy temple; they have turned Jerusalem into ruins.^s

²They have given the corpses of Thy servants to the birds of the heavens for food, the flesh of Thy worshipers to the beasts of the earth.

³They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, and no one buried them.

⁴We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a derision and a mockery to those around us.

⁵How long, O LORD? Wilt Thou be angry for ever?

Shall Thy jealousy burn like a fire?^t
⁶Pour out Thy fury on the Gentiles who do not acknowledge Thee, and on the kingdoms that do not call upon Thy name,

⁷for they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his dwelling.

⁸Remember not against us the guilt of our fathers; let Thy compassion speedily meet us, for we are greatly weakened.

⁹Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name.^u
Deliver us and forgive our sins^v for Thy name's sake.

¹⁰Why should the Gentiles say, "Where is their God?"

Let there be manifested among the nations before our eyes, the avenging of the blood of Thy servants which is shed.

¹¹Let the groaning of the prisoner come before Thee;

according to the greatness of Thine arm^w spare the children of death.

¹²Return sevenfold into the bosom of our neighbors their reproach, with which they have scorned Thee, O LORD.

¹³And we Thy people, the flock of Thy pasture, shall give Thee thanks for ever; we shall publish Thy praise to successive generations.^x

A Prayer for Salvation

To the Chief Musician; to the Tune, "The Lilies." A Testimony of Asaph. A Psalm
80 O Shepherd of Israel, give ear, Thou who ledest Joseph like a flock!

Thou who art enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth!

²Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,^y

arouse Thy strength and come to our rescue.

³O God, restore us, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt Thou be angry in the face of Thy people's prayers?^z

⁵Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears,

and Thou hast furnished them tears to drink in triple measure.

⁶Thou makest us a contention to our neighbors; our enemies mock us among themselves.

⁷O God of hosts, restore us; cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

⁸Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt;

Thou hast driven out nations and planted it.

r) The Promised Land remained God's property; the Israelites received it in lease.

s) So far as we know, the Chaldean and much later Syrian invasion are the only occasions of city destruction or temple profanation.

t) According to our Lord's parable [Luke 15:8-10], all salvation is to God's glory.

u) Sin brings the need of personal and national discipline.

v) The arm stands for might, so spoken of regarding God and man.

w) They would so deeply and constantly impress God's greatness on their children that the children, when mature, would perpetuate the godly instructions.

x) The supplication concerns northern Israel particularly. Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin had camped together during the desert journey.

y) The worshipers of God were few among the northern Israelites. Only seven thousand are mentioned to encourage Elijah [I Kings 19:18]. As a nation the people had rejected God, and for these people the psalmist was praying.

⁹Thou didst clear [the land] before it,^z
so it took root and filled the land.

¹⁰The mountains were clothed with
its shadows,
the cedars of God with its boughs.

¹¹It spread its branches to the sea
and its shoots to the River.^a

¹²Why hast Thou broken down
its fences,
so that all who pass by pluck from it?

¹³The boar from the forest devours it,
and the beasts of the field feed on it.^b

¹⁴O God of hosts, do return;
look from heaven and observe and visit
this vine.

¹⁵Protect what Thy right hand has
planted,^c
the son whom Thou hast raised for
Thyself.

¹⁶Burned with fire, cut down,
they perish at the rebuke of Thine
appearance.

¹⁷May Thy hand be on the man
of Thy right hand,
upon the son of man whom Thou hast
chosen for Thyself.

¹⁸Then we shall not depart from Thee;
revive us and we shall call upon Thy
name!

¹⁹O LORD God of hosts, restore us,
cause Thy face to shine, and we shall
be saved!

How to Worship Acceptably
To the Chief Musician, to a Gittite In-
strument or Tune. By Asaph

81 Sing joyfully to God our
strength; shout for joy to
Jacob's God!

²Start a psalm, sound the timbrel, the
lovely lyre with the harp.

³Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
at the full moon on our feast day.^d

⁴For this is a statute for Israel, an
ordinance of the God of Jacob.

⁵He assigned it in Joseph for a
testimony
when He went forth against the land
of Egypt.^e

The speech of those I knew not, I
heard.^f

⁶I freed his shoulder of the burden;
his hands were freed from the freight
basket.^g

⁷You called in distress, and I delivered
you;

I answered you in the hiding place of
thunder;^h

I tested you at the waters of Meribah.
Selah

⁸Hear, O My people, and I will
testify to you,

O Israel, if you will listen to Me!

⁹There shall be no strange god among
you;
neither shall you worship any alien
god.

¹⁰I, the LORD, am your God,
who brought you out of the land of
Egypt.ⁱ

Open your mouth wide, and I will
fill it.

¹¹But My people did not listen to
My voice;

Israel would not obey Me.

¹²So I left them to the hardness of
their hearts;^j
they walked in their own deliberations.

¹³Oh, that My people would
listen to Me,^k

that Israel would walk in My ways!

¹⁴Readily I would subdue their
enemies

and turn My hand against their
oppressors.

¹⁵Those who hate the LORD would
cringe before Him;

and their time [of retribution] would
last for ever.

¹⁶But He would feed you with the
choicest of the wheat,

^z) As pioneers clear forests for cultivation, so God had cleared Canaan for His people.

^a) The empires of David and Solomon.

^b) Typifying the surrounding peoples who invaded their country and looted it.

^c) Many interpreters see references to Christ as Protector of the vineyard, the Man of God's right hand. ^d) Memorializing the exodus from Egypt, almost certainly the Passover.

^e) To slay Egypt's first-born and to save those of Israel. ^f) Possibly Egyptian.

^g) God freed them from slavery. Pictures of slaves carrying basketloads still remain in Egypt.

^h) On Mount Sinai. ⁱ) Preamble to the Decalogue [Exod. 20:2].

^j) Had God left us to ourselves, no matter how well we were trained, what sort of character would we have developed?

^k) From here on to the end of the psalm, it is all "IF" — supposition contrary to fact, for the people would not listen to poet or prophet; they moved on to their captivity.

and with honey out of the rock I
would satisfy you.

God, the Judge of Judges

A Psalm of Asaph

82 God stands in the congregation
of God;
in the midst of the judges He gives
judgment:¹

²How long will you judge
unjustly and favor the wicked?

Selah

³Dispense justice to the weak and the
orphan;

vindicate the wretched and needy!^m

⁴Deliver the lowly and the oppressed,
rescue them from the hand of the
wicked!

⁵They neither know nor understand;
in darkness they go;

All the foundations of the earth are
shaking.

⁶I said, "You are gods,"
indeed, you are all sons of the Most
High.

⁷Yet you shall die as men and fall as
one of the princes!

⁸Arise O God! Judge the earth,
for Thou dost possess all the nations!

A Prayer for Help Against the Ungodly
A Song. A Psalm of Asaph

83 O God, do not stand idly by,
mute and inactive, O God!

²For Thine enemies are ranting,
and they who hate Thee carry their
heads high.^p

³They shrewdly forge a plot
against Thy people;
they consult together against Thy
precious ones.

⁴They say, "Come, let us wipe them
out as a nation,

so that the name of Israel may no
longer be remembered."

⁵For they have conspired with a united
heart;^q

against Thee they make an alliance —
⁶the tents of Edom, the Ishmaelites,

Moab and the Hagrites,

⁷Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek,^r
Philistia jointly with those who live
in Tyre.

⁸Even Assyria has joined them;
they have meant a strong support for
the children of Lot. *Selah*

⁹Do to them as Thou didst to
Midian,

as to Sisera and Jabin at the brook
Kishon,^s

¹⁰who were destroyed at Endor, who
became fertilizer for the ground.

¹¹Make Thou their nobles like Oreb
and Zeeb,^t

all their princes like Zebah and
Zalmunna,^u

¹²who say, "Let us take possession for
ourselves of the pastures of God."

¹³O my God, make them like the
whirling dust, like stubble before
the wind.

¹⁴As fire consuming a forest,
as flames setting the mountains ablaze,

¹⁵so do Thou pursue them with Thy
wind,
and terrify them with Thy tornado.

¹⁶Fill their faces with shame,
and let them seek Thy name,^v O
LORD.

¹⁷Let them be ashamed and terrified
for ever;

yes, let them be disgraced and perish.

¹⁸And let them acknowledge that Thou
alone

whose name is the LORD, art the Most
High over all the earth.

1) Named *Elohim*, the name of the Triune God, which the Hebrews also applied to their judges. God speaks to the judges, and through them.

m) The widow, the orphan, and the foreigner are God's special care against unfair judges and greedy people with power.

n) Quoted by Jesus [John 10:34-36], when He had declared Himself to be One with the Father, and they would stone Him.

p) Haters of Israel, because they are God's people are haters of God.

q) United in evil. r) All these, except Hagrites and Gebal, are descendants of Abraham or of Lot.

s) Judg. 4:12-24. t) Judg. 7:23-25. u) Judg. 8:10-21.

v) A consuming passion for God's honor and a hope that those now ungodly may yet learn to know God are the marks of the true believer.

Thanks to God for His Church
To the Chief Musician, on a Gath
Instrument. Of the Sons of Korah.
A Psalm

84 How lovely are Thy dwellings,^w
O LORD of hosts!

²My soul longs, yes, is homesick for
the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh shout hopefully
to the living God.

³Even the sparrow has found a home
and the swallow a nest
for herself where she may lay her
young,

at Thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my
King and my God.^x

⁴Blessed are they who live in Thy
house;
they shall ever sing Thy praise.

Selah

⁵Blessed is everyone who is strong in
Thee,

in whose heart are Thy ways.

⁶Passing through the valley of weeping,
they regard it a place of springs;^y
also with blessings it is covered, as
with early rain.

⁷They go on from strength to strength;^z
each appears before God in Zion.

⁸LORD God of hosts, hear my
prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob.

Selah

⁹O God, our shield, observe
and see the face of Thine anointed.

¹⁰For better is a day in Thy courts
than a thousand [elsewhere];
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the
house of my God
than to live in the tents of wickedness.

¹¹For the LORD God is a sun and
shield;
the LORD bestows mercy and honor.
He holds back nothing good from those
who walk uprightly.

¹²O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man
who trusts in Thee.^a

Prayer for Continued Mercies
To the Chief Musician. Of the Sons of
Korah. A Psalm

85 Thou didst show favor to Thy
land, O LORD;
Thou didst turn Jacob's captivity.

²Thou didst forgive the iniquities of
Thy people;
Thou didst cover all their sin.^b

Selah

³Thou didst take back all Thine
indignation;
Thou didst turn away from Thy
blazing anger.

⁴Turn to us, O God of our
salvation,
and put an end to Thy vexation
toward us.

⁵Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever?
Wilt Thou prolong Thine anger to
distant generations?

⁶Wilt Thou not revive us again,
so that Thy people may rejoice in
Thee?

⁷Show us Thy lovingkindness, O
LORD, and grant us Thy salvation.

⁸I will hear what God the LORD
will say,^c

for He will speak peace to His people
and to His worshipers;
but let them not turn again to folly.

⁹Surely His salvation is near to those
who revere Him,
so that glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Lovingkindness and truth have
met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed
each other.

¹¹Truth sprouts forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from
heaven.

¹²Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its produce.

¹³Righteousness will go before Him
and make His footsteps into a way.^d

w) God had given definite orders to make the house of worship lovely.

x) No bird nests on or against the altars; fires and sacrifices would hinder that; but near them, unmolested. y) Only as the traveler trusts in God.

z) The believer who prays, works, and advances, grows stronger on the way.

a) As we trust in Him, we are neither anxious nor self-seeking. Countless blessings come our way, undeserved, yet promised. b) The past is witness for divine grace in the present.

c) Our prayer life would be more fruitful and enjoyable if we, too, would take time to listen to His response when we pray. d) That we may keep in step with Him.

David's Trust in a Self-Revealing God

A Prayer of David

86 Incline Thine ear, O LORD,
reply to me, for I am distressed
and needy.

²Oh, keep my life, for I am dedicated;^e
save Thy servant, O Thou my God, as
he trusts in Thee.

³Be merciful to me, O LORD, for to
Thee I cry all day long.

⁴Gladden the soul of Thy servant,
for I lift my soul to Thee, O LORD.

⁵Truly, Thou, O LORD, art good
and ready to forgive,
rich in lovingkindness to all who call
on Thee.

⁶Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; take
note of my cry of entreaty.

⁷In the day of my anxiety I call on
Thee, for Thou wilt answer me.^f

⁸There is none like Thee among the
gods, O LORD,
nor are there any works like Thine.

⁹All the nations which Thou hast
made shall come
and bow down before Thee, O LORD,
and they shall glorify Thy name;

¹⁰For Thou art great and workest
wonders; Thou alone art God.

¹¹Teach me Thy way, O LORD; I
will walk in Thy truth;

unite my heart to revere Thy name.^g

¹²I will praise Thee, O LORD my God,
with all my heart,

and I will glorify Thy name for ever!

¹³For Thy lovingkindness was great
toward me;

indeed, Thou didst rescue my soul
from the lower world beyond.^h

¹⁴O God! arrogant men have risen
up against me;

a gang of brutal men seek my life,
and they do not place Thee before
them.

¹⁵Yet Thou, O LORD, art a compassion-
ate and gracious God,
slow to anger and rich in lovingkind-
ness and truth.

¹⁶Turn to me and be gracious to me;
grant strength to Thy servant.

¹⁷Give a sign of favor to me,ⁱ
so that those who hate me may see
and be ashamed
because Thou, LORD, didst help me
and comfort me.

The Great Glory of Zion

Of the Sons of Korah. A Psalm. A Song

87 What He founded stands on the
holy mountains;

²the LORD loves the gates of Zion more
than all the dwellings of Jacob.

³Glorious things are told of you,
O City of God. *Selah*

⁴I mention Egypt and Babylon as those
who know Me.^j

Behold, Philistia and Tyre, together
with Ethiopia —

[they say], "This one was born there."^k

⁵Yes, of Zion it will be said, "This one
and that one were born in her";
and the Most High Himself establishes
her.

⁶The LORD will count as He regis-
ters the peoples:

This one was born there. *Selah*

⁷And in processions they are singing,
"All my fountains are in you."

*A Prayer in Severe Illness*A Song. A Psalm of the Children of
Korah. To the Chief Musician, to Chant
Mournfully. An Instruction of Heman
the Ezrahite

88 LORD, God of my salvation, by
day I cry for help;

at night I am in Thy presence.

²Let my prayer come before Thee,
incline Thine ear to my appeal.^l

e) When we are truly devoted to Him [which is one meaning of being holy] then His preserving us assures our continued worship of, and service to, Him.

f) God alone is able to meet our spiritual needs and shortcomings.

g) For genuine dedication to God, thought, will, emotions, every element of our being must be harmonious and in tune with Him. A genuine Christian is no divided personality.

h) Saved him from dreaded harm or healed him from seemingly fatal illness.

i) He knows, but his foes are not aware that they are fighting God when they work against His servant.

j) In the Bible, for God to know persons or for persons to know God always means a favorable feeling between them.

k) This is Gospel; all those Gentiles who know Him [v. 4] are being divinely registered as natives of the Kingdom of God. God's temple means life to them — still our encouragement for missions abroad. l) Distressed but not in despair, for he directs his prayer to God who hears and helps.

⁵For my soul is filled with troubles
and my life is nearing death's portals.

⁴I am reckoned among those who
go down to the pit.^m

I am as a man without manly strength,
⁵left to himself among the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave,
whom Thou no longer dost remember;ⁿ
they are removed from Thy help.

⁶Thou hast put me in the pit of the
lowest, in dark places, in deep
regions.

⁷Thine indignation rests heavy on me,
and with all Thy waves Thou art
keeping me down. *Selah*

⁸Thou hast put my acquaintances far
from me;

Thou hast made me an object of
loathing to them.

I am shut in and I cannot escape.

⁹My eye grows dim because of sorrow;
to Thee I cry daily, O LORD.
I stretch out my hands to Thee.

¹⁰Wilt Thou do wonders for the
dead?

Will the dead rise and praise Thee?
Selah

¹¹Is Thy lovingkindness declared in
the grave,
Thy faithfulness in the place of
destruction?

¹²Can Thy wonders be known in the
darkness,
or Thy righteousness in the land of no
remembrance?

¹³Therefore, O LORD, I cry to Thee for
help;
in the morning my prayer comes before
Thee.

¹⁴Why, LORD, dost Thou reject
my soul
and hide Thy face from me?

¹⁵I am wretched and close to death from
my youth up;
I bear Thy terrors, I am helpless.

¹⁶Thy blazing anger passes over me;
Thy terrors destroy me;

¹⁷they surround me like water all day
long; together they encircle me.

¹⁸Thou hast put friend and companion
far from me,
my familiar friends into darkness.^o

God's Promises to David

An Instruction. Of Ethan the Ezrahite!

89 I will sing^q of the mercies of
the LORD forever;

I will make known Thy faithfulness
with my mouth

from generation to generation.

²For I said, "Forever shall Thy loving
kindness be built up;

in the heavens Thou wilt establish
Thy faithfulness."

³Thou didst say: I have made a
covenant with My chosen one;
I have sworn to David, My servant:

⁴Your offspring I will make secure
forever,

and I will build your throne to all
generations.^r *Selah*

⁵The heavens shall celebrate Thy
wonders, O LORD,

Thy faithfulness shall be praised in the
assembly of the holy ones.

⁶For who in the heavens is comparable
to the LORD?

Who is like the LORD among the sons
of the mighty?

⁷God is greatly revered in the council
of the holy ones,
revered above all who are around Him.

⁸LORD God of hosts, who is like
Thee, Thou mighty LORD?

And Thy faithfulness surrounds Thee.

⁹Thou rulest over the proud swelling
of the sea;
when its billows surge, Thou stillest
them.

¹⁰Thou hast crushed Rahab^s as
someone slain;
with Thy mighty arm Thou hast
scattered Thine enemies.

¹¹Thine are the heavens; Thine is the
earth, too;
the world and its fulness, Thou hast
founded them.

m) The grave. n) Until Christ's resurrection, there was little thought of a joyful life hereafter.
o) Rarely does a psalm end on this negative note. The title suggestion - to chant mournfully -
seems to suit a funeral dirge.

p) In David's arrangement of choirs, Ethan was appointed a leader [I Chron. 6:44; 15:17, 19];
but in ch. 25:1, his name seems changed to Jeduthun, so mentioned with Ps. 39, 62, and 77.

q) A song of faith when divine promise seems to fail. r) The last two lines state God's promise.
s) Rahab, meaning insolence, stands for Egypt, typical of all who rise against God.

¹²The north and the south, Thou hast created them;
Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Thy name.

¹³Thine is an arm with might;
strong is Thy hand and high Thy right hand.

¹⁴Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne;^t
lovingkindness and faithfulness are at Thy service.

¹⁵Blessed are the people who recognize the festal call.^u
they walk, O LORD, in the light of Thy countenance;

¹⁶in Thy name they rejoice all day long,
and through Thy righteousness they are exalted.

¹⁷For the glory of their strength art Thou,
and through Thy favor shall our horn be raised high.^v

¹⁸For our shield is of the LORD,
and our king of the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁹Once Thou didst speak to Thy devoted one in a vision, saying:
I bestowed help on a hero; I have elevated a chosen one of the people.^w

²⁰I have found David My servant;
with My holy oil I have anointed him
²¹with whom My hand shall be steadfast, and My arm shall strengthen him.

²²The enemy shall not exact from him,
and no villain shall oppress him.

²³Rather, I will crush his adversaries before him,
and I will smite those who hate him.

²⁴My faithfulness and my loving-kindness are with him,
and in My name shall his horn be exalted.

²⁵I will also place his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶He will call to me, "Thou art my Father,
my God, and the rock of my salvation."
²⁷Yes, I will appoint him first-born,^x
the highest of the kings of the earth.

²⁸Forever shall I maintain My loving-kindness toward him;
My covenant shall be unshakeable with him.

²⁹His offspring I will establish forever,
and his throne as the days of heaven.

³⁰If his children forsake My law,^y
if they deviate from My judgments,

³¹if they profane My statutes
and do not keep My commandments,
³²then I shall punish their transgressions with the rod
and their iniquity with stripes.

³³But My lovingkindness I will not retract from him,
nor will I be false to My faithfulness.

³⁴I will not desecrate My covenant,
nor will I change what went forth from My lips.

³⁵Once I have sworn by My holiness: I will not lie to David.

³⁶His offspring shall endure forever,
and his throne shall be like the sun before Me.^z

³⁷As the moon it shall always remain reliable,
and the witness in the sky is faithful.

Selah

³⁸But now Thou hast rejected and abhorred;

Thou hast become indignant with Thine anointed one.

³⁹Thou hast spurned the covenant of Thy servant;

Thou hast defiled his crown to the dust.

⁴⁰Thou hast broken down all his walls;^a

Thou hast laid his forts in ruins.

⁴¹All who pass on the road plunder him;

he has become the scorn of his neighbors.

t) Our sovereign God, the infinitely righteous, who judges with fairness.

u) Joining in the annual festivals helped to keep alive spiritual fellowship with God and with one another. v) The horn [of ram or bull] symbolizes strength.

w) God's dealings with David from the sheep to the throne.

x) Neither David nor any other mortal could literally be God's first-born; but Christ, David's offspring, could.

y) "If," on man's part. Discipline and punishment follow disobedience; the sinner disqualifies himself. z) In Christ the covenant with David was amply fulfilled.

a) The king is mentioned as representing the people. Disobedience has brought on national disaster.

⁴²Thou hast exalted the right hand of his antagonists;
Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

⁴³Besides, Thou hast turned the edge of his sword,
and Thou hast not made him stand in battle.

⁴⁴Thou hast caused all his splendor to vanish
and hast hurled his throne to the ground.

⁴⁵Thou hast shortened the days of his prime;
Thou hast covered him with disgrace.

Selah

⁴⁶How long, O LORD? Wilt Thou hide Thyself forever?

Shall Thy wrath burn like fire?

⁴⁷Remember how brief my time is,
for what emptiness Thou hast created all the sons of men.

⁴⁸What man is there so strong that he shall live and not see death,
so as to deliver his soul from the grip of the grave?

Selah

⁴⁹Where are Thy lovingkindnesses of old, O LORD,
which Thou didst pledge to David in Thy faithfulness?^b

⁵⁰Remember, LORD, the reproach of Thy servants,
how I carry it in my bosom among all great nations

⁵¹with which Thine enemies have taunted, O LORD,
with which they have taunted the footsteps of Thine anointed.

⁵²Praised be the LORD for ever!
Amen and Amen.^c

Mortal Man's Eternal God

A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God

90 LORD, Thou hast been our home
in successive generations.^d

²Before the mountains were given birth,^e

or Thou didst bring forth the earth and the world,
yes, from age to age, Thou art God.

³Thou turnest mortal man back to dust
and sayest: Return, ye children of men.

⁴For in Thy sight a thousand years are as yesterday when it is past,
and as a watch in the night.

⁵Thou carriest them away as with a flood;^f they are like a sleep.

In the morning they are as the grass that springs up;

⁶in the morning it flourishes and springs up;
by evening it is mown and it withers.

⁷For we are consumed by Thine anger,
yes, terrified by Thine indignation.

⁸Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee,
our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.

⁹For all our days pass away in Thine indignation;
we spend our years as a sighing.

¹⁰The days of our years — there are seventy of them,^g
and if there is great strength, eighty years —

yet their best involves toil and grief,
for it is soon gone, and we vanish.

¹¹Who knows the force of Thine anger,
and Thine awesomeness according to Thine indignation?

¹²Teach us so to number our days,^h
that we may acquire discerning minds.ⁱ

¹³Return, O LORD, how long?
Have compassion on Thy servants.

¹⁴Satisfy us in the morning with Thy lovingkindness,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

b) God's pledge involved the continuance of the Davidic monarchy [II Sam. 7:11-16], on which most of this psalm is based. Persistent sin of prince and people fouled the covenant, which was fulfilled in Jesus, the offspring of David. c) This ends the third Book of Psalms.

d) So we live in God as all our fathers. Do we sense it?

e) What marvelous painting of creation — mountains appearing from the womb of the earth Not merely poetry; it is fact.

f) If you witnessed one of our great floods and saw roofs, cattle, people sweeping by, this duly registers.

g) Only those twenty or under at the exodus entered Canaan, except Caleb and Joshua; all others were taken during the desert wanderings. h) Consider each day of value.

i) The Hebrew's word for "mind" is our "heart."

¹⁶Make us glad to the measure of the days Thou hast afflicted us, of the year in which we have seen calamity.

¹⁶Reveal Thy work to Thy servants and Thy glory to their children.^j

¹⁷May the grace of the LORD our God rest upon us and confirm the work of our hands upon us; yes, the work of our hands, confirm Thou it.

Divine Security

91 He who lives in the secret shelter of the Most High lodges in the shadow of the Almighty.^k

²I will testify of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I am trusting."

³Certainly it is He who rescues you from the hunter's trap and from the fatal pestilence.

⁴He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find protection;

His faithfulness is a shield and armor.^l

⁵You will not fear night's hidden terrors,

nor the arrow that flies in the daytime, nor the plague that lurks in the darkness,

nor the calamity that spreads havoc at noontime.

⁷A thousand may fall right beside you and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you.

⁸You will merely see it with your eyes and witness the sinners' reward.

⁹For Thou, O LORD, art my refuge.^m Since you, too, have established the

Most High as your shelter,

¹⁰no harm shall befall you,

nor shall any plague come near your tent.

¹¹For He gives His angels orders regarding you, to protect you wherever you go.

¹²They will support you with their hands

lest you strike your foot against a stone.ⁿ

¹³You will trample on the lion and the adder;

you shall tread upon the lion cub and on the snake.

¹⁴Because he has anchored his love in Me,^o

I will deliver him.

I will place him securely on high, for he has faith in My name.

¹⁵When he calls upon Me, I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.

¹⁶I will satisfy him with a long life and show him My salvation.

Our Faithful God

A Psalm to Sing on the Sabbath Day

92 It is good to give thanks to the LORD,^p

to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High,

²to proclaim Thy loving-kindness in the morning

and Thy faithfulness into the night

³on a ten-stringed instrument and a lute,

along with music on a harp.

⁴For Thou hast made me glad by Thy doings, LORD;

I shall rejoice in what Thy hands have accomplished.

⁵How great are Thy doings, O LORD!

j) Make us and especially our children aware of Thy active benevolent Presence.

k) This song of trust is precious to Bible readers, and many have memorized portions of it. It was probably sung in responses, with vs. 2 as a solo.

l) The whole psalm is God-centered with the believer assured because God is so dependable.

m) Read Ps. 121:7 in this connection, where being kept from harm is equivalent to our soul being kept safe, if our trust is in God.

n) Quoted by Satan [Matt. 4:6], to tempt Jesus, but true for all believers. God's angels are around us now.

o) From here to the end of this psalm God speaks of us, who sense our need of Him; it is a personal promise.

p) The LORD gives us His day as a joyous day; not as a sad and dreary succession of hours. The first three verses are a call to worship.

How deep are Thy thoughts!

⁶An unthinking person does not understand;

a fool cannot grasp this.⁹

⁷Though sinners spring up like grass and those who practice evil flourish, it is that they shall be eternally destroyed;⁷

⁸but Thou, O LORD, art exalted for ever.

⁹For see, Thine enemies, LORD, for see, Thine enemies shall perish; all those who habitually sin shall bring about their own separation.

¹⁰But Thou hast magnified my horn like that of the wild ox;⁸

I am anointed with invigorating oil.

¹¹My eye has spotted those who insidiously watch me,

my ears shall detect those who rise up against me with evil intentions.

¹²The righteous shall thrive like the palm tree;

he shall become mighty like the cedar of Lebanon.⁴

¹³Those who have been transplanted into the LORD's household, they shall flourish in the courtyards of our God.⁵

¹⁴In old age they shall still be bearing fruit.

They shall be full of life and vitality,

¹⁵thus testifying that the LORD is upright,

my Rock, in whom there is no unrighteousness.

In Exaltation of the Lord

93 The LORD reigns; He has robbed Himself with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength; thus has He girded Himself.

The world also is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

²Thy throne is established from of old;

Thou art from everlasting.⁷

³The rivers have risen, O LORD; the streams have swirled up with their roar;

the floods are surging high.

⁴Above the sound of expansive waters, of mighty ocean breakers, the LORD on high stands supreme.

⁵Thy testimonies are trustworthy; holiness is the mark of Thy house, O LORD, forevermore.

The Folly of Opposing the Lord

94 O LORD, Thou God of retribution,

Thou God of retribution, shine forth!

²Rise up, O Judge of the earth;

give to the proud their due reward.⁷

³O LORD, how long shall sinners, how long shall the wicked be jubilant?

⁴They boast freely; they speak arrogantly; all the wrongdoers brag about themselves.

⁵They trample on Thy people, O LORD;

they oppress Thy heritage.

⁶They kill the widow and the immigrant;

they murder orphans.⁷

⁷For they say, "The LORD is not looking; the God of Jacob pays no attention."

⁸You pay attention, you stupid among the people!

You fools, when will you become wise?

⁹He who makes the ear, is He deaf?

He who forms the eye, is He blind?

¹⁰He who disciplines the nations, shall He not correct?

Is He not the One who teaches man all he knows?

¹¹The LORD discerns the thoughts of man

that they are futile.⁷

q) Those so smart they would get along without God are justly termed senseless, foolish.

r) They are wilfully following a path that ends in destruction. s) A horn typified strength.

t) Where the wicked grow like grass [vs. 7], the righteous grow stately, graciously, and strongly.

u) If this verse occurred in the N.T., "transplanted" would intimate regeneration. Possibly a new, a heavenly way of living, is in the writer's mind.

v) Whatever wholesome certainty we enjoy on earth has its basis in God's eternal faithfulness.

Even vs. 3 and 4 leave us secure in Him.

w) God repays. One great reason Immanuel Kant saw for believing in God's existence was that otherwise the wicked might carry out their unfair behavior without retribution.

x) God maintains special interest in widows, orphans, and foreigners because the evil-minded find it easiest to take advantage of them.

y) Our Father's omniscience is among the most encouraging facts of life and is not sufficiently considered by us, His children. Ps. 139 is almost completely devoted to this teaching.

¹²Blessed is the man whom Thou dost discipline,
whom Thou dost instruct from Thy Law, O LORD,
¹³that he may enjoy security during the days of distress,
till a pit be dug for the wicked.
¹⁴For the LORD will not forsake His people
nor ever abandon His heritage.
¹⁵But justice will be applied to the righteous,
and all whose hearts are right will subscribe to it.
¹⁶Who will arise for me against the evildoers?
Who will take his stand with me against the workers of iniquity?

¹⁷Unless the LORD had been my help,
my soul would soon have dwelt in silence.
¹⁸When I said, "My foot is slipping," Thy lovingkindness, LORD, supported me.²
¹⁹Whenever perplexing cares crowd my inmost self,
Thy consolations cheer my soul.

²⁰Can a corrupt government be allied with Thee,
one that organizes oppression under the pretense of law?

²¹They join forces against the life of the righteous;
they convict innocent people.³

²²But the LORD has been my high retreat,
my God, my impregnable rock of safety.

²³He has made them pay for their crime,
and He will destroy them in their sin;
the LORD our God will make an end of them.

Praise and Obedience to God

95 Come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us cheer in honor of the

Rock of our salvation.
²Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;^b
let us joyfully sing to Him with psalms.
³For the LORD is a great God,
a mighty King above all gods.
⁴The depths of the earth are at His finger tips;
the tallest summits belong to Him.
⁵The sea is His, for He made it;
His hands formed the dry land.
⁶Come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
⁷For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture,
the flock which He tends.

Oh, if you would only listen to His voice today!
⁸Do not stiffen your heart as at Meribah,
at the time of testing in the wilderness,
⁹when your fathers tried My patience and tested Me
though they had witnessed what I had done.^c
¹⁰For forty years I was disgusted with that generation
and said, They are a people whose heart strays,
who do not acknowledge My ways.
¹¹Therefore I vowed in My indignation,
They shall never enter My rest.

Render Praise to God's Majesty

96 Sing a new song to the LORD;^d
sing to the LORD, all the earth!
²Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
proclaim His salvation from day to day.
³Publish His glory among the nations,
His marvelous works among all peoples.

⁴For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised;
He is to be revered above all gods.

2) God not only knows and cares, but He helps — with advice to go right and with strength: to move on.

a) In I Kings 21, we have the morbid story of Naboth's vineyard, which could not have occurred if the rulers of Israel had been God-minded. This psalm suggests that idolatry had permeated the southern kingdom, too, but His worshipers turned the tide.

b) Thanksgiving is the chief motive of devotion.

c) Meribah means contention, strife, described in Ex. 17:2-7, where the Hebrews complained bitterly for lack of water, prophetic of their repeated discontent with God's dealings.

d) With new experience, we need new songs and the church should teach them to young and old, lest we vegetate.

⁵For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.^a
⁶Honor and majesty are before Him;
strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!
⁸Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;
procure an offering, and come into His courts!^f

⁹Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!
Stand in His presence with awe, all the earth.
¹⁰Proclaim among the nations that the LORD is reigning;^g
the world is established, it cannot be overthrown,
and He judges peoples with uprightness.

¹¹Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;
let the sea in its vastness continually roar;
¹²let the fields and all they contain give glory;
all the trees of the forest rustle with praise
¹³before the LORD, for He is coming,
for He is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with justice,
the nations with His faithfulness.

God's Power and Justice

97 The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice;
let the many islands be glad!^h
²Clouds and darkness surround Him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.
³A fire issues from His presence
and consumes His enemies on every side.

⁴His lightnings illumine the world;
the earth looks on and trembles.
⁵The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before Him who is LORD of all the earth.ⁱ

⁶The heavens proclaim His righteousness;
all nations see His glory.

⁷All who serve images shall be ashamed,
who brag about the worthless idols;
bow before Him in worship, all ye gods!

⁸Zion heard and was glad; the cities of Judah rejoiced
because of Thy justice, O LORD.

⁹For Thou, O LORD, art Most High above all the earth;
Thou transcendest far above all gods.
¹⁰You who love the LORD, hate evil;
He faithfully preserves the lives of His devoted ones;
He rescues them from the grasp of sinners.^j

¹¹Light is sown for the righteous
and joy for those whose hearts are right.

¹²You who are righteous, rejoice in the LORD;
be thankful for the consciousness of His holiness.

God Saves; Worship Him

98 O sing to the LORD a new song
because He has performed wondrous things!^k
His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him victory.
²The LORD has made known His salvation;
He has unveiled His righteousness in the sight of the nations.^l
³He has remembered His loving-kindness and His faithfulness to Israel's descendants.

e) Therefore, crown Him LORD of all

f) The offering to express [for this applies to us] acknowledgment of our utter dependence on Him and His loving care over us.

g) The Hebrews had been chosen, not merely to enjoy divine blessings, but to share them with all nations [Gen. 12:3 to Abraham; 26:4 to Isaac; 28:14 to Jacob].

h) And how glad we are that He whom we worship is in control; but all people everywhere should know it.

i) The LORD on Mount Sinai is not forgotten; His law is a covenant with believers and a threat to evildoers, like the column of darkness and light in the desert.

j) This psalm is full of quotations; its writer knew the Scriptures and used them well.

k) In the physical and in the spiritual world. "The undevout astronomer is mad."

l) So well has God shown His greatness in nature that all human beings of normal mind could know enough of Him to make them believe [Rom. 1:20].

All the ends of the earth have
witnessed the salvation of our God.

⁴Make a joyful sound to the
LORD, all ye lands;
break forth in joyful song; yes, sing
praises!

⁵Make music on a harp for the LORD,
with the harp and melodious song.

⁶With trumpets and sound of the horn
shout ye before the King, even the
LORD!

⁷Let the sea in its vastness roar in
praise,

the world and its inhabitants!

⁸Let the rivers clap their hands
and the mountains sing praises
together

⁹before the LORD, for He is coming to
judge the earth.

He will judge the world with justice,
the peoples with unfaltering fairness.^m

*Revere God's Authority and
His Holiness*

99 The LORD is King; let the na-
tions tremble!

He is enthroned between the
cherubim;ⁿ let the earth quiver!

²The LORD is majestic in Zion;
He is supreme above all the nations.

³Let them revere Thy wonderful and
awe-inspiring name; it is holy!^o

⁴The King's energy is keenly set
on justice;

Thou dost establish equity;

Thou dost guarantee justice and truth
in Jacob.

⁵Exalt the LORD, our God; bow in
worship at His footstool; He is holy!

⁶Moses and Aaron were among
His priests,
Samuel, too, among those who called
on His name.

They petitioned the LORD and He
granted their request.

⁷He instructed them from the pillar
of cloud;

they observed His injunctions and the
statutes He gave them.

⁸O LORD, our God, Thou didst answer
them;

Thou wast a forgiving God to them
although Thou didst make them pay
for their evil practices.^p

⁹Exalt the LORD our God, and worship
at His holy mountain,
for the LORD our God is holy!

A Psalm for the Thank Offering

100 Make a joyful sound to the
LORD, all ye lands!

²Serve the LORD with gladness!

Come into His presence with singing.^q

³Acknowledge that the LORD, He is
God!

It is He who made us, and we belong
to Him;

we are His people and the sheep of
His pasture.

⁴Enter into His gates with
thanksgiving and into His courts
with praise.

Give thanks to Him; bless His name!

⁵For the LORD is good; His loving-
kindness shall continue forever,
His faithfulness throughout all
generations.^r

Aiming for Perfection

A Psalm of David

101 I will sing of lovingkindness
and justice;

I will make melody to Thee, O LORD.

²I will carefully observe the path of
the perfect.

When wilt Thou come to me?^s

I will behave in my home with
heartfelt integrity.

³I will not allow a base thought to
attract my attention.

I despise crooked practices;

They shall not gain hold on me.

⁴A perverse nature shall be absent
from me;

I will not entertain evil.

m) Confirmed by Jesus in His parable of sheep and goats [Matt. 25:31 ff.].

n) Within the Holy of Holies, above the mercy seat, His Shekinah.

o) An echo, as in vss. 5 and 9, of the threefold Holy of Isaiah 6.

p) Forgiveness does not eliminate the consequences of sin in this life, as David learned.

q) That we may commune with God is reason for untold joy.

r) God keeps His covenant with us; do we live up to our obligations?

s) He senses the need of divine help to live that ideal life.

⁵I will silence him who secretly
slanders his neighbor;
I will not tolerate one who is
conceited and arrogant.

⁶I look to the trustworthy in the
land to be my associates.

He who walks the path of integrity,
he shall work for me.

⁷He who practices deceit shall not
stay in my home;
he who habitually tells lies shall not
be secure in my sight.

⁸Morning after morning I will do
away with all criminals within
the country
that I may eliminate from the city of
the LORD all those who
practice sin.^t

Cry of An Afflicted Soul

A Prayer of One Afflicted when He Is
Spent and Pours out His Complaint
to the LORD

102 Listen to my prayer, O LORD;
let my plea for help reach
Thee.

²Do not hide Thy face from me when
I have a distressful day.
Turn Thine ear toward me;
on the day when I call, answer me
readily,

³For my days go up in smoke;
my bones are inflamed as a bonfire.

⁴Like grass my heart is crushed and
withered^u
so that I have neglected my regular
food.

⁵I am nothing but skin and bones
because of the sound of my sighing.

⁶I am like a pelican in the wilderness,
like an owl among the ruins.

⁷I lie awake and feel like a sparrow
alone on the roof.

⁸All day long my enemies
insult me;
those who are angry with me
curse me.

⁹For I have eaten ashes like bread
and have mixed tears with my drink

¹⁰because of Thine indignation and
wrath,
for Thou hast taken me up and thrown
me down.^w

¹¹My days are like the evening shadow
that fades away;
I wither away like the grass.

¹²But Thou, O LORD, art
enthroned forever;
Thy fame shall last throughout all
generations.^x

¹³Thou shalt arise and have mercy on
Zion,
for it is time to pity her.

Yes, the set time has come,
¹⁴for Thy servants hold dear her
stones;
they show sympathy for her dust.^y

¹⁵The nations, too, shall revere the
name of the LORD
and all the kings of the earth Thy
glory.

¹⁶For the LORD has rebuilt Zion;
He has appeared in His glory.

¹⁷He regarded the prayer of the
destitute;
He did not slight their petition.

¹⁸This shall be recorded for a
generation to come;
a people yet to be born shall praise the
LORD.

¹⁹For He has kept watch from the
height of His sanctuary;
from heaven the LORD kept vigil over
the earth,

²⁰to detect the groaning of the
prisoners,
to release those who are destined
to die;

²¹that the name of the LORD may be
proclaimed in Zion,
His praise throughout Jerusalem.

²²when the nations, even the kingdoms,
are brought together
for the purpose of serving the LORD.

²³He has lessened my strength on the
way;
He has shortened my days.

^t) Beginning with himself, he will clean house morally.

^u) Like growing grass trampled on until lifeless.

^w) Discouragement followed encouragement.

^x) No genuine worshiper of God grows hopeless, for He remains faithful.

^y) Jerusalem and the temple seem to be in ruins, but about to be restored, not merely for their
help but for His honor.

24I plead, "O my God, take me
not away in middle age;²
O Thou whose years endure
through all generations!"
25Thou didst found the earth of old,
and the heavens are the work of Thy
hands.
26They shall perish, but Thou
remainest.
They all shall wear out like a garment;
like a coat Thou shalt change them,
and they shall be changed.
27But Thou art the same;
Thy years shall never end.³
28The children of Thy servants shall
dwell safely,
their offspring is established in Thy
presence.

God's Great Goodness

A Psalm of David

103 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless His holy name!^b
2Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget none of His benefits,
3who forgives all your iniquities, who
heals all your diseases,
4who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with lovingkindness
and mercy,
5who satisfies you throughout life with
good things,
so that your youth is renewed like the
eagle's.^c

6The LORD administers justice
and fairness
to all who are oppressed.
7He revealed His ways to Moses,
His dealings to the people of Israel.
8The LORD is merciful and gracious,
patiently considerate and abounding in
mercy.
9He will not always show hostility
nor maintain it forever.

10He has not dealt with us to the
measure of our sins,

nor rewarded us as our iniquities
deserve.
11For as high as the heavens are above
the earth,
so great is His mercy toward those who
revere Him.
12As far as the east is from the west,^d
so far has He removed our
transgressions from us.
13As a father has compassion for his
children,
so the LORD tenderly sympathizes with
those who revere Him.
14For He knows what we are made of;
He keeps in mind that we are dust.

15A man's days resemble grass.
He blossoms like a flower in the field;
16the wind blows over it, and it is
gone,
with not a sign that it has ever been
there.
17But the LORD's faithful love rests
eternally upon those who revere
Him^e
and His righteousness on the children's
children,
18on those who are faithful to His
covenant,
who remember to carry out His
instructions.
19The LORD has established His throne
in heaven,
and His kingdom rules over all.

20Bless the LORD, you His angels
who abound with strength,
who carry out His orders, listening to
the sound of His Word!
21Bless the LORD, all you His armies,
you His servants who continually do
what pleases Him!
22Bless the LORD, all His works in all
places of His dominion!^f
Bless the LORD, O my soul!

God's Care for His Creation

104 Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, Thou art
very great!

z) The singer has not fully worked out his life program as God's servant; he needs more time.
a) This magnificent section is fully quoted (Heb. 1:10-12 and 13:81).

b) Addressing our own soul is a wholesome exercise, especially when our whole being is so
engaged.

c) All this is said to the poet's soul — and to ours, summing up Isaiah 61:1, on which Jesus
preached at Nazareth [Luke 4:18-19] and which He showed the Baptist to be fulfilled in Him
[Matt. 11:2-6]. d) A symbol of infinity.

e) How insignificantly brief a human life and how inconceivably unending God's sustaining grace!
f) Even in the old covenant, the worshiper of God feels kinship with all humanity.

Thou art clothed with honor and
majesty,^g
²covering Thyself with light as with
a robe,
 and stretching out the skies like a tent.
³He lays the beams of His upper
chambers in the waters,
 he uses the clouds for His chariot,
 he marches on the wings of the wind,
⁴making the spirits His messengers,
 flames of fire His servants.
⁵He established the earth on its
foundation,
 so that it should never be overthrown.

⁶Thou didst cover it with the
ocean depth for a garment.^h
 Above the mountains stood the waters,
⁷which surged in retreat at Thy
rebuke,
 at Thy thunderous command swirled
away,
⁸while the mountains sprang up and the
valleys descended
 to the place which Thou didst
reserve for them.
⁹Thou hast set a boundary which they
cannot pass;
 they shall never return to cover the
earth.

¹⁰He causes springs to gush forth
into valleys;ⁱ
 they wind their way down through
the hills.
¹¹They provide drink for every animal
of the field;
 the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
¹²The birds of the air nest beside them;
 they sing among the branches.

¹³He waters the mountains from
His lofty chambers;
 the earth abounds with the fruit of
Thy works.^j
¹⁴He causes the grass to spring up for
the cattle,
 fruits and vegetables for man to
cultivate,
 that he may derive sustenance from the
land,
¹⁵wine to elate the spirit of man,
 oil to brighten his facial appearance,

and bread to improve a man's health.

¹⁶The LORD's trees are full of sap,
 the cedars of Lebanon which He
planted.

¹⁷In them the birds build their nests;
 the stork's home is the fir tree.

¹⁸He made the mountain heights
for the wild goats,
 the rocky crags for the rock-badger's
refuge.

¹⁹He formed the moon to mark out
the seasons;^k

the sun knows the time of its setting.
²⁰Thou makest darkness settle down,
 so that during the night
 all forest animals may roam about.

²¹The young lions roar for their prey
 and look to God for their feed.^l

²²When the sun rises, they slink back
 and lie down in their dens.

²³But man then starts out to his work
 and remains at his task until evening.

²⁴O LORD, how innumerable are
 Thy works;
 in wisdom Thou hast made them all!
 The earth is full of Thy well-made
 creations.

²⁵Yonder is the sea, vast and broad;
 in it are swarms too many to number,
 creatures tiny and large.

²⁶There sail the ships; in it the
 sea mammal Thou madest to play.

²⁷All these look to Thee
 to furnish their timely feed.

²⁸When Thou providest for them, they
 gather it.

Thou openest Thy hand, and they are
 satisfied with good things.

²⁹When Thou hidest Thy face, they
 are struck with despair.

When Thou cuttest off their breath,
 in death they return to their dust.^m

³⁰Thou sendest Thy Spirit and more
 are created,
 and Thou dost replenish the surface
 of the earth.

³¹May the glory of the LORD
 remain forever;

g) This song tells of nature created and ruled for God's glory.

h) The story of creation is generally followed as told us in Genesis.

i) Now the song celebrates nature as man enjoys it in daily life.

j) Interchange of "His" and "Thy" - alternating testimony and prayer.

k) Not so much annual seasons as monthly periods, so that we still use the name "month" from the moon. l) As dependent on God as we are. m) Physically similar to us.

may the LORD be pleased with His works.

³²As He looks at the earth, it trembles; when He touches the mountains, they smoke.

³³I will sing to the LORD through all my life; I will praise my God as long as I have being.

³⁴May my meditation please Him; I will be glad in the LORD.

³⁵The sinners shall perish from the earth and the ungodly be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Hallelujah!

God's Care for Israel

105 O give thanks to the LORD; invoke His name; proclaim His doings among the nations.

²Sing to Him; yes, sing praises to Him; tell of all His wondrous works!

³Glory ye in His holy name; may the heart of the LORD's worshipers be joyful.^a

⁴Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His presence perpetually.

⁵Remember His marvelous deeds which He has performed, His miracles and the judgment which He has pronounced,

⁶O you who are the offspring of Abraham, His servant, you children of Jacob, His chosen ones!^b

⁷He, the LORD, is our God; His judgments reach over the whole world.

⁸He has remembered His covenant forever, the promise which He authorized to a thousand generations,

⁹the covenant He made with Abraham and His oath to Isaac.

¹⁰He also confirmed it to Jacob by decree, to Israel as an eternal covenant,^c

¹¹stating, To you will I give the land of Canaan as your inherited portion.

¹²When there were just a few of them — in fact, very few, and there as strangers —

¹³they wandered about from nation to nation,^d from one kingdom to another people.

¹⁴Yet He allowed no person to harm them;

He rebuked kings on their behalf:

¹⁵Do not touch My anointed ones; see that no harm comes to My prophets.

¹⁶He called for a famine upon the land, depriving them of their bread, the staff of life.

¹⁷Therefore He sent a man to precede them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

¹⁸They bound his feet tightly with chains;^e

his person was laid in the irons, ¹⁹till the time his word came true, when the LORD's word showed him right.

²⁰The king sent and had him released; the ruler of many people set him free.

²¹He appointed him manager of his estate

and ruler over all his possessions ²²with authority to imprison his princes as he pleased and to instruct his elders in the ways of wisdom.

²³When Israel had come to Egypt and Jacob was a migrant in the land of Ham,

²⁴there He greatly increased His people and made them stronger than their oppressors.

²⁵He then changed their heart to hate His people, to deal deceitfully with His servants.

n) Surrounded by pagans and their idols, the godly Hebrew sensed his ineffable privilege of having God to worship and serve.

o) Their history was then as we now regard it, sacred history.

p) No covenant is one-sided; there are at least two covenanters, in this case God and Abraham and his offspring through Isaac and Jacob.

q) When they and their households moved about in Canaan with their herds and flocks.

r) No chains are mentioned in Genesis 39; but they were certainly put on Joseph until he earned the jailer's confidence.

²⁶He sent Moses His servant,
and Aaron whom He had chosen.
²⁷They carried out His orders for signs
against them,
His miracles against the land of Egypt.

²⁸He ordered darkness, and it
grew black;
and they did not disobey His
command.^a

²⁹He turned their waters into blood.^t
He killed their fish.

³⁰He made their country swarm with
frogs,
even in their kings' private rooms.

³¹He commanded; the flies came in
swarms
and lice throughout their land.

³²He showered them with hail instead
of their rain,
coupled with lightning that flamed on
their land.

³³He ruined their vines and their fig
trees.

He destroyed their outlying forests.

³⁴He spoke and along came the locusts
and grasshoppers in countless
numbers;

³⁵they consumed all their country's
vegetation
and devoured the produce of their
land.

³⁶He killed all the first-born in the
land,
the first fruits of all their strength.

³⁷He then led them out with
silver and gold,
there were no invalids among His
tribes.

³⁸Egypt was pleased at their leaving
for dread of them had seized them.

³⁹He spread a cloud for a shade
and a fire to give light in the darkness.^u

⁴⁰They requested, and He brought
in quails
and refreshed them with bread from
heaven.^v

⁴¹He opened the rock and water
gushed forth;
in the desert areas it flowed like a
stream.

⁴²For He remembered His sacred
promise
to Abraham His servant.

⁴³He brought forth His people
with joy,
His chosen ones with singing.

⁴⁴He gave them the lands of the
heathen;^w

they reaped the fruit of their labors

⁴⁵that they might be faithful to His
statutes
and diligently keep His laws.

Hallelujah!

God's Mercies and Israel's Rebellion

106 Hallelujah! O give thanks to
the LORD, for He is good;
for His lovingkindness lasts forever.

²Who can put into words the mighty
deeds of the LORD?

Who can make known all His praise?

³Blessed are they who faithfully
observe justice,^x

who practice righteousness at all times!

⁴Remember me, LORD, with the
favor Thou showest Thy people.

Visit me with Thy salvation,

⁵that I may share in the welfare of
Thy chosen,

enjoy the happiness of Thy nation,
and glory with Thy heritage.^y

⁶We and our fathers have sinned;
we have willfully done wrong;
we have behaved wickedly.^z

⁷Our fathers did not appreciate Thy
miracles in Egypt;

they did not consider the endless tokens
of Thy lovingkindness.

Instead, they rebelled near the sea,
by the Red Sea.

⁸Yet He delivered them for His own
sake

that He might exhibit His power.

s) The poet draws on the last twelve chapters of Genesis, then turns to Exodus.

t) Here follows a summary of the ten plagues.

u) The column that led the Hebrews all the way from Egypt to the Jordan, assuring them of God's presence and guidance.

v) Called manna, for the question each asked of his neighbor, "What is it?"

w) The seven native and colonizing peoples in Canaan.

x) Essentially those who treat others with fairness.

y) The poet, mainly occupied with Israel's sacred history, takes time out to consider his own relationship with God, his personal salvation, his appreciation of being in the covenant.

z) Not simply as but with our fathers. These covenant people were united from generation to generation, so that parental behavior hurt or blessed their offspring — as it does today.

⁹He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up;
He led them through the depths as through a desert.
¹⁰He rescued them from hostile hands;
He redeemed them from the enemies' grasp;
¹¹For the waters engulfed their enemies;
not one of them survived.

¹²Then they believed His promises;
they sang of His glory.
¹³But they speedily forgot His doings;
they would not wait for His counsel.^a
¹⁴For they lusted excessively in the desert
and tempted God in the wilderness,
¹⁵so He let them have what they wanted,
but sent leanness within their soul.^b

¹⁶They were jealous of Moses in the camp,
of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD.
¹⁷The earth opened and swallowed Dathan;
it covered up Abiram's company.^c
¹⁸A fire broke out among their assemblage,
and the flame consumed the wicked.

¹⁹They fashioned a calf at Horeb,
then worshiped the molten image.
²⁰They exchanged their glory^d
for the image of an ox that munches grass.
²¹They forgot God, their Deliverer,
who had done such marvelous things in Egypt,
²²such miracles in the land of Ham,
such awe-inspiring deeds at the Red Sea.

²³Then He said He would destroy them —
had not Moses, His chosen, stepped into the breach before Him,
to turn Him from wiping them out in His anger.

²⁴They then spurned the desirable land;
they would not rely on His promise.
²⁵They complained while in their tents
and would not listen to the voice of the LORD.
²⁶Accordingly, He solemnly swore to them
that He would let them fall in the wilderness,
²⁷would scatter their offspring among the nations,
and disperse them throughout the world.

²⁸They joined themselves to Baal of Peor
and ate the sacrifices to lifeless idols.
²⁹They thus made the LORD angry by their practices
so that a plague broke out among them.
³⁰But when Phinehas got up and intervened,
the plague was checked.
³¹This action was counted to him for righteousness
to successive generations for ever.

³²They angered Him at the waters of Meribah,^e
which made it hard for Moses on their account;
³³for when they aroused his temper,
he spoke indiscreetly with his lips.

³⁴They did not exterminate the nations^f
as the LORD had commanded them;
³⁵but they associated with those pagans
and acquired their habits.
³⁶And they offered sacrifice to their idols,
which became a seductive bait to them.
³⁷Yes, they even sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons.
³⁸They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan

a) Divine suggestions retained to this day in the Pentateuch.

b) How rarely material prosperity is accompanied by spiritual advance!

c) Korah, the leader in that rebellion [Num. 16:1, 5, 6, 31, 32]; who died with them is not mentioned here. Descendants of his became noted writers and leaders of music and song.

d) God was Israel's glory.

e) At least seven delinquencies recorded in this psalm [vss. 7, 14, 16, 19, 24, 28, and 32], all during the forty years of travel.

f) Now four delinquencies after crossing the Jordan are enumerated [vss. 34, 35, 37, and 39].

till the land was polluted with blood.
³⁹They were defiled by what they did;
 they were immoral in their practices;

⁴⁰Therefore the LORD's anger
 burned against His people;
 He regarded His heritage with disgust.

⁴¹He turned them over to the control
 of the nations.^g

Those who hated them ruled over
 them.

⁴²Their enemies severely oppressed
 them;

they were put to submission under
 their power.

⁴³Many a time He delivered them,
 but they repeatedly reverted to their
 rebellious ways,
 so they went down in their sinfulness.

⁴⁴As He observed their anguish
 and heard their lamenting,

⁴⁵He remembered His covenant in
 their behalf and felt grieved
 according to His lovingkindness.

⁴⁶He caused them to find sympathy
 from those who had made them
 prisoners.

⁴⁷Deliver us, O LORD our God;
 bring us together from among the
 nations, so we may render thanks to
 Thy holy name and exult in praising
 Thee.

⁴⁸Blessed be the LORD, the God of
 Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!
 And let all the people say, "Amen!"
 Hallelujah!^h

The Song of the Redeemed

107 Give thanks to the LORD for
 He is good;
 for His lovingkindness is everlasting!^b

²Let the LORD's redeemed say so,
 those He has delivered from trouble
³and gathered in from all lands,
 from the east and from the west,
 from the north and from the south.ⁱ

⁴Some wandered in desert wastes,
 finding no road to a residence city.

⁵Hungry and thirsty,
 their souls became faint within them.

⁶When they cried out to the LORD in
 their distress

He delivered them from their plight,
⁷guiding them by a straight course
 to the residence city they sought.

⁸Let them give thanks to the LORD for
 His mercy

and for His wonderful deeds to the
 children of men!^j

⁹For He satisfies the thirsty soul
 and provides the hungry with good.

¹⁰Some sat in darkness and deep
 gloom,

prisoners in irons and in misery,
¹¹for they had rebelled against God's
 commands

and scorned the counsel of the Most
 High.

¹²He, therefore, brought them low in
 trouble and sorrow
 and they stumbled from weakness with
 none to help.

¹³They, too, in their straits called out
 to the LORD,

and He delivered them from all their
 trials,

¹⁴bringing them out of their darkness
 and dire despair,
 snapping their bands apart.

¹⁵Let them give thanks to the LORD
 for His lovingkindness
 and His wonderful works to the
 children of men!

¹⁶For He has shattered gates of
 bronze and has broken the iron bars.

¹⁷Some developed illness because
 of their wicked ways

and were afflicted on account of sin;^k
¹⁸to them their food became abhorrent,
 and they were close to the gates of
 death.

¹⁹But they cried out to the LORD in
 their sore distress

g) Divine discipline administered [vss. 41 and 43]. *) Here ends the Fourth Book.

h) This is a striking song of thanksgiving used chiefly in the celebration of the great festivals at the Jerusalem temple. Vss. 1-3 are introductory; then in vs. 4 instances of peril and rescue are cited. In each, Israel is in dire straits, cries out to the LORD, is delivered, and gives thanks.

i) Clearly the psalm was composed in the time when the Jews gathered from all the known world for the annual feasts.

j) Each of the four sections of the psalm begins with the word "some" and closes near the end with the refrain, "Let them give thanks."

k) In Israel it was the common belief that sickness was due to sin. This concept runs through many psalms. In good part, the Book of Job was written to dispel this view, but the notion was deep seated and was scarcely shaken. However, sin and sickness are related.

and He delivered them from their troubles.

²⁰He sent out His word to heal them and to save their lives from the grave.

²¹Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness

and His wonderful works to the children of men!

²²Let them bring their thank offerings and gladly tell of His doings.

²³Some went out to sea in ships, there to engage in trade on the great waters.

²⁴These witnessed the works of the LORD, His wonders in the deep.

²⁵At His command storm winds arose and waves rolled high because of them;

²⁶they mounted to heaven, then sank back

to the depths, their courage melting in anguish.

²⁷They went reeling and staggering like a drunken man,

all completely at their wits' end.

²⁸Then they cried out to the LORD in their distress

and He saved them from their sorry plight.

²⁹For He stilled the storm to a zephyr, the waves of the sea became quiet.

³⁰And the men were glad at the hushing of the waves,

and the LORD brought them to their longed-for haven.

³¹Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness

and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

³²Let them exalt Him

in the congregation of the people

and praise Him in the assembly of the elders.

³³He turns rivers into a desert and fountains of water into thirsty ground;¹

³⁴a fruitful land He makes a salty marsh

on account of the wickedness of those who live there.

³⁵He changes desert places into pools of water

and dry ground into springs.

³⁶There He causes the hungry to settle that they may build a city to live in, ³⁷sow fields and plant vineyards and gather fruitful harvests.

³⁸He also blesses them and causes their number to increase many fold, while their cattle He does not allow to diminish.

³⁹Again they become few and are brought low by oppression, misfortune, and sorrow.

⁴⁰He pours contempt on princes and makes them wander over pathless wastes.

⁴¹The poor, however, He lifts out of their afflictions and miseries and makes their families like a fruitful flock.

⁴²Upright men will see this and rejoice, while all wrongdoers will be silent.

⁴³Let the wise man think this over and mark well the LORD's benevolent doings.

Thanksgiving and Petition

A Song, A Psalm of David

108 My heart, O God, is steadfast.

I will sing, yes, I will make melody with my soul.

²Awake, harp; awake, lyre; for I will arouse the dawn!

³I will praise Thee, O LORD, among the peoples,

I will chant praises to Thee among the nations.

⁴For Thy lovingkindness is higher than the heavens, and Thy faithfulness soars to the skies.

⁵Be Thou exalted, O God, beyond the heavens, and may Thy glory tower over all the earth!

⁶To the end that Thy beloved be delivered, save by Thy right hand, O God, and respond to me!

⁷God spoke in His holiness: With rejoicing I will apportion Shechem and measure the valley of Succoth.^m

1) Vss. 33-43 are not a part of the psalm of thanksgiving but constitute a hymn of a general character, descriptive of the usual ways of God. He brings princes low, provides help for the poor.

m) Thus through the divine triumph, Canaan became Israel's land.

⁸Gilead is Mine, Manasseh, too, is Mine;
 Ephraim is the defense of My head,^o
 while Judah is My scepter.
⁹Moab is My washbasin;
 upon Edom I cast My shoe;^p
 over Philistia I will shout in victory.

¹⁰Who will lead me to the fenced city?
 Who will bring me into Edom?
¹¹Hast Thou not cast us off, O God?
 Thou dost not go out, O God, with our armies.
¹²Oh, grant us help against the enemy,
 for vain is the help of man.
¹³With God we shall do valiantly,
 for He will tread down our foes.^a

Petition of One Betrayed

To the Choirmaster. A Psalm of David
109 Do not remain silent, O God
 of my praise;
²for evil men have opened wicked
 mouths against me
 and charged me with a lying tongue,
³besetting me around with words of
 hatred,
 attacking me without cause.^r
⁴For my love they return enmity
 even while I am at prayer.
⁵In such manner they repay me evil
 for good,
 hatred for my affection.

⁶Set a wicked judge over him,
 I pray,^s
 and let a perverse accuser^t stand at his
 right hand!
⁷And when his case is tried, let him
 come off guilty,
 and let his prayer pass for sin!
⁸May his days be few,
 and may another take his office!

⁹May his children be fatherless
 and his wife become a widow;

¹⁰his children wandering off,
 begging bread and driven out from
 home.

¹¹May creditors seize all he has
 and strangers plunder the fruits of
 his toil!

¹²Let no one show him kindness
 or even pity his fatherless little ones!

¹³Instead, let his sons be cut off
 and his name be blotted out
 in the following generation!

¹⁴May the evil deeds of his father
 be remembered before the LORD
 and the sins of his mother never once
 be forgotten!

¹⁵May all these things come before the
 LORD continually,
 and the recollection of him be rooted
 out from the earth;

¹⁶Let it be recalled that it never
 occurred to him to show kindness;
 instead, he persecuted the poor, the
 needy,
 and the brokenhearted even unto
 death.

¹⁷He loved cursing; so may cursing
 overtake him!
 He had no concern for blessing; so may
 blessing be far from him!

¹⁸He dressed himself with cursing as
 with his coat;
 so may it sink into his flesh like water
 and to his bones like oil!

¹⁹May it then be as the robe he wraps
 around him
 and like the girdle he buckles on daily!
²⁰May this be the recompense from
 the LORD to my accusers
 and to those who threaten my life with
 evil!

²¹But Thou, O God, my LORD,
 for Thy name's sake, deal Thou
 with me;
 rescue me for the sake of the goodness
 of Thy love.

o) As a helmet. p) Poetic expression for "dominate," "conquer."

q) In need of help, Israel can put her trust in the LORD alone. For further comment, see Psalms 57 and 60. This psalm has one striking peculiarity; vss. 1-5 come from 57:7-11 and vss. 6-13 from 60:5-12.

r) Vss. 1-5 and 21-31 present a plaint of the psalmist couched in beautiful poetic speech. In 6-20, the imprecation comes with a bit of a shock to us; for the psalmist, the principles of Jesus had not come yet.

s) The singular here means that the psalmist has the worst man among his enemies, a particular individual, in mind.

t) In a court trial, the one who brought the charges was called the satan, the accuser. He stood at the right hand of the offender. The word "satan" is never used as a proper name in the O.T.

²²For I am needy and afflicted, and my heart is pierced within me.

²³Like a lengthening shadow, I go hence; like a locust, I am shaken off.^u

²⁴My knees give way, due to fasting, my flesh is lean and spare.

²⁵I have become a laughingstock to others; they look at me and shake their heads.

²⁶Help me, O LORD, my God!

Save me in Thy lovingkindness,

²⁷so they may acknowledge that this is Thy hand.

Thou, the LORD, hast done it.

²⁸They may curse, but do Thou bless!

Let them that stand against me be confounded,

and let Thy servant rejoice!

²⁹Let my accusers be clothed in disgrace,

and let them wrap themselves in their shame as in a mantle!

³⁰I will give thanks to the LORD in a loud voice;

in a great congregation I will praise Him.

³¹For He stands at the right hand of the needy

to save him from those who would judge his soul.

The Divine Priest-King

A Psalm of David

110 The LORD has said to my Lord:

Sit at my right hand until I make Thine^v enemies

a footstool for Thy feet.^w

²The scepter of Thy strength^x

the LORD sends forth from Zion.

Rule, then, in the midst of Thy foes.

³Thy people will offer themselves

freely in the day of Thy power.

In consecrated array at early dawn,

Thine is the flower of Thy young men.^y

⁴The LORD has sworn and will not change:

Thou art priest forever

after the order of Melchizedek.^w

⁵The LORD is at Thy right hand and will shatter kings in the day of His indignation.

⁶He will execute judgment among the nations;

He will fill them with corpses, and their chieftains He will shatter over a broad land.

⁷He will drink from the brook on the way;

therefore He lifts up the head.

Thanks for Blessings

111 Hallelujah!

With all my heart I give thanks to the LORD

in the gathering of the upright and

in the congregation.

²Great are the doings of the LORD, sought out by all who delight in them.

³Majestic and glorious are His acts, and His righteousness stands for ever.

⁴He has made His wondrous deeds to be remembered,

for the LORD is gracious and merciful.

⁵He provides for those who revere Him and will remember His covenant

forever.

⁶His mighty deeds He made known to His people

when He gave them the nations for their heritage.

⁷The works of His hands are faithful and right

and all His decrees are trustworthy,

⁸standing firm for ever and ever, done in faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹He sent His people redemption and commanded His covenant to be

for ever.

Holy and awe-inspiring is His name.

¹⁰For reverence of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.

u) The psalmist is ill, that is why he has become the laughingstock of others. They believe it is punishment for sin, a common belief in Israel, as already pointed out.

v) Jesus quotes this verse as referring to Himself (Mt. 22:42-44, etc.), hence we capitalize "Thy."

w) This is a royal psalm, in which God speaks directly to the king, inviting him to sit at His right hand while God makes him victorious over all his foes. God gives him another office, that of priest, like the priest-king, Melchizedek. This psalm receives extensive mention in the N.T. and was early regarded as Messianic.

x) The king regularly carried a hallowed staff, symbol of his God-given rule; he used it in battle, and God gave him victory. The first line of vs. 3 belongs with vs. 2.

y) In Israel, the morning dew was life-giving to man as well as to vegetation.

There is insight in all who observe it.
His praise is everlasting.²

The Blessed Righteous

112 Hallelujah!
Oh, the bliss of the man who
reveres the LORD,
who greatly delights in His ordinances!^a
²His offspring shall be the mighty in
the land;
a blessing shall attend the race of the
upright.

³Wealth and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness shall stand firm
for ever.

⁴Light rises for the upright in
times of darkness;
gracious and merciful is the good man.
⁵It is well with him who is generous
and ready to lend,
the man who conducts his business
with fairness.

⁶Such a man will never be laid
low,
for the just shall be held in
remembrance for ever.

⁷He need never fear any evil report;
his heart will remain firm,
fully trusting in the LORD.

⁸He will be joyful and unafraid
while he looks upon his adversaries.
⁹He distributes freely to the poor
and his righteousness will stand firm
for ever;
his horn mounts high in honor.

¹⁰The wicked will see this with
vexation;
he will gnash his teeth, but he will
disappear,
and the hope of the wicked shall come
to naught.

The Lord Raises the Lowly

113 Hallelujah!
Praise the LORD, you servants

of His, praise the LORD's name!^b
²Blessed be the name of the LORD
from now to all eternity and for
evermore!

³From where the sun rises to where
it sets,
the name of the LORD shall receive
praise!

⁴High above all nations is the
LORD
and His glory is exalted above the
heavens.

⁵Who is like the LORD our God,
who is enthroned on high,

⁶who looks down upon
the heavens and the earth?

⁷He raises up the poor from the
dust
and lifts the needy out of the ash
heap,

⁸to have him sit by the side of princes,
with the noblest of His people.

⁹He gives the barren wife a home to
live in,
now the joyous mother of children.
Hallelujah!^c

An Exodus Memorial

114 When Israel came forth from
Egypt,^d
the house of Jacob from a people of
alien speech,

²Judah became His holy place,
Israel His dominion.

³The sea saw it and fled,
the Jordan flowed backwards.

⁴The mountains skipped like rams
and the hills like lambs.

⁵What ailed you, sea, that made
you flee?
And you, Jordan, that made you turn
back in your course?

⁶You too, mountains, that you skipped
like rams?
Or you, hills, like lambs?

z) Psalms 111 and 112 are acrostic in form, each line beginning with the appropriate letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Eight of the psalms follow this acrostic form of poetic production.

a) Psalm 112 belongs among the "wisdom psalms," like Psalms 1, 14, and many others; wisdom in the O.T. plays a great role; see the books of Proverbs, Job, etc. He is wise who honors the will of God.

b) Psalms 113-118 are known as the Hallel. In the Jewish church, they were used especially for the great festivals of Passover, Tabernacles, and the feast of Weeks. Psalm 113 reminds us of the LORD's prayer: "Hallowed be Thy name."

c) In the Hebrew text, "Hallelujah" is added at the end of Psalm 113; in the Greek, it is found before verse 1 of 114.

d) For the events, see the following passages: the sea fled [Ex. 14:21]; Jordan turned back [Josh. 3:13, 16 and 4:7, 22, 23]; mountains trembling [Ex. 19:18, Judg. 5:5]; rocks turned into a pool [Ex. 17:1-6].

⁷Go on, earth, tremble at the presence
of the LORD,
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
⁸who turned the rock into a water pool,
the flint into a fountain of water!

To God Alone the Glory

115 Not to us, O LORD, not to
us, but to Thy name give
glory
because of Thy loving-kindness and
Thy truth.

²Why should the pagan peoples
say,
"Where now is their God?"
³But our God is in the heavens;
whatsoever pleased Him, He has
done.
⁴Their idols are silver and gold;
they are the work of human hands.
⁵Mouths have they, but they cannot
speak;
eyes, too, but they do not see.
⁶Ears they have, but they cannot hear;
and noses, but they cannot smell.
⁷They have hands, as well, but they
cannot feel;
and feet, but they cannot walk;
neither do they produce any sound in
their throats.
⁸Those who make them and all putting
their trust in them shall become like
them.

⁹O house of Israel, trust in the
LORD!
Their help and shield is He.
¹⁰O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD!
Their help and shield is He.
¹¹All you who revere the LORD, put
your trust in the LORD!
Their help and shield is He.
¹²The LORD has been mindful of us;
He will bless us.
He will bless the house of Israel;
He will bless the house of Aaron;
¹³the LORD will bless those who revere
Him, both small and great.
¹⁴May the LORD give you increase,

both you and your children!
¹⁵You are blessed of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
¹⁶The heavens are the LORD's heavens,
but the earth He has given to the
children of men.

¹⁷The dead do not praise the
LORD,
nor do any who go down into the
silence.
¹⁸But we, we will bless the LORD,
from now and for ever. Hallelujah!^a

A Saved Soul Is Grateful

116 I love the LORD for He hears
my voice, my supplications.
²Because He has inclined His ear
to me,
therefore I will call on Him as long
as I live.
³The cords of death were around me;
the terrors of the grave had laid hold
of me;
I suffered anguish and grief.^c
⁴Then I called on the name of the
LORD:
"I beseech Thee, O LORD, save my
life!"

⁵Gracious is the LORD and
righteous;
indeed, our God is merciful.
⁶The LORD takes care of the helpless;
I was brought low, and He saved me.
⁷Return to your rest, O my soul,
for the LORD has dealt bountifully with
you.
⁸For Thou hast saved my soul from
death, my eyes from tears,
and my feet from stumbling.
⁹I will walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.

¹⁰I clung to my faith, even when
I said,
"I am sorely afflicted."
¹¹I said in my alarm,
"Men are all deceitful."^h
¹²What return shall I make to the
LORD
for all His bounties to me?

e) Psalm 115 stands out in three ways: it stresses pure monotheism; it impresses upon Israel the necessity of putting her trust in God, and it illustrates the place of singing in the temple service.
f) A remarkable confession. The psalmist had passed through some almost fatal experience in which he cried out to the LORD and was delivered.
g) Not so much that they are evil-minded, but that they lack wisdom; if you put hope in them, you will be misled. Vss. 10 and 11 are difficult; we cannot be sure we have caught their full meaning. However, it seems that the psalmist is returning in vss. 10-19 to review again his terrible experience from which God had delivered him, asking how he can requite the LORD for His marvellous deed in saving him from the grave, and the following verses are his answer.

13I will take the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.
14I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all His people.

15Precious in the eyes of the
LORD¹ is the death of His saints.
16O LORD, I am Thy servant; I am

Thy servant,
the son of Thy handmaid.
Thou hast loosed my bonds.^j
17I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of
thanksgiving

and call on the name of the LORD.

18I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all His people,

19in the courts of the house of the
LORD,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

World Praise to God

117 Praise the LORD, all you
nations!

Laud Him, all you peoples!

2For His mercy toward us is great
and the truth of the LORD is
everlasting.^k
Praise the LORD!

Our Everlasting Redeemer

118 Give thanks to the LORD,
for He is good;
for His lovingkindness is everlasting!

2Let the house of Israel say,
"For His lovingkindness is
everlasting."

3Let the house of Aaron say,
"For His lovingkindness is
everlasting."

4Let those who worship the LORD say,
"For His lovingkindness is
everlasting."^l

5In my distress I cried out to my
LORD,
and He answered me with release.

6The LORD is for me; I shall not fear.

What can man do to me?

7The LORD is for me; He is my help,
and I look in triumph on them that
hate me.

8It is better to rely on the LORD
than to put confidence in man.

9It is better to rely on the LORD
than to put confidence in princes.

10All nations encircled me,
and in the name of the LORD I^m
beat them down.

11They encircled me, yes, they were all
about me,

but in the name of the LORD I beat
them down.

12They swarmed around me as bees;
they are burned out as a fire of thorns;
in the name of the LORD I beat
them down.

13Hard pressed, about to fall was I,
but the LORD came to my help.

14The LORD is my strength and my
song;
He has become my salvation.

15The shout of joy and victory
is in the tents of the righteous;
the right hand of the LORD is doing
valiantly.

16The right hand of the LORD is
lifted up;
the right hand of the LORD does
valiantly.

17I shall not die, but live, and tell of
the LORD's deeds.

18The LORD has chastened me sorely,
but He has not given me over unto
death.

19Open to me the gates of
righteousness;
through them I will enter in and give
thanks to the LORD.ⁿ

20This is the gate of the LORD,
and through it the righteous shall
enter in.^o

21I will give thanks to Thee for Thou

i) That is, the death of His saints is of great concern to Him; He does not lightly permit it.

j) Loosed me from the bonds of death.

k) This is the shortest chapter in the Bible, and near the center.

l) Psalm 118 is the last of the Hallel Psalms [Psalms of Thanksgiving]. It was clearly intended to be sung in the ritual service of the Temple. Luther called this his psalm because it came to his help in so many grave situations. During later centuries, it was employed particularly at the Feast of Tabernacles.

m) The "I" here is the nation. The celebrating congregation is involved, represented at times by the leading soloist, at times by the choir, at times by the congregation.

n) The procession has reached the gate of the temple and, halting, calls to the Levites within to open it.

o) A Levite within answers the call that comes from without the gate. Who may enter the house of the Lord? See Psalm 15 for the answer.

hast answered me
and hast become my deliverer.

²²The stone which the builders
rejected

has become the head of the corner;

²³This is the LORD's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.^p

²⁴This is the day which the LORD has
made;

let us rejoice and be glad in it.

²⁵O LORD, do grant salvation;

O LORD, do grant prosperity!

²⁶Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the LORD!

We bless you from the LORD's house.^q

²⁷The LORD is God; He has supplied
us with light.

Bind the festal offering with woven
strands to the horns of the altar.

²⁸Thou art my God, and I will give

Thee thanks;

my God, and I will extol Thee.

²⁹Give thanks to the LORD, for He is
good,

for His loving-kindness is everlasting.

Aleph^r

119 Blessed are those whose way
is upright,^a who walk^t in the
law^u of the LORD!

¹²Blessed are those who keep His
testimonies,^v who seek Him
wholeheartedly,^w

¹³who also commit no unrighteousness;
they walk in His ways.

¹⁴Thou hast prescribed Thy precepts to
be observed diligently.^x

⁵Oh, that my ways may be

established in keeping Thy statutes!^y

⁶Then I shall not be brought to

confusion when I respect all Thy
commandments.

⁷I will give thanks to Thee with
integrity of heart when I learn Thy
righteous judgments.^z

⁸I will keep Thy statutes; oh, do not
forsake me completely!

Beth

⁹How can a young man^a cleanse
his way? By living in agreement
with Thy word.

¹⁰Wholeheartedly I will seek Thee;
oh, do not let me stray^b from
Thy commandments!

¹¹Thy word have I stored^c up in my
heart, that I might not sin against
Thee.

¹²Blessed art Thou, O LORD;
teach me Thy statutes!

¹³With my lips^d I have declared all the
ordinances of Thy mouth.

¹⁴I have rejoiced in the way of Thy
testimonies, as much as in all riches.

¹⁵I will meditate^e on Thy precepts and
have respect for Thy ways.^f

¹⁶I take great delight^g in Thy statutes;
I will not forget Thy word.

Gimel^h

¹⁷Deal generously with Thy
servant, that I may live and observe
Thy word.

¹⁸Open my eyes,ⁱ that I may
contemplate the wonders of Thy
law.

¹⁹I am a stranger on earth; do not
hide Thy commandments from me.^j

²⁰My soul is breaking with longing for
Thine ordinances at all times.

²¹Thou dost rebuke the arrogant,

p) A reference to Isaiah 28:16 where God lays the cornerstone of His Kingdom in Zion. The modern builders, the heathen nations, have rejected Zion, but they reckon without the LORD. His kingdom is sure; it is the day of the LORD.

q) The procession is inside the gate now, and they move in a sacred dance or march around the altar, waving palm branches and shouting their joy.

r) The twenty-two chapters of this psalm each have eight sentences beginning with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, beginning with *Aleph*, our "A", the *Beth*, our "B", and so successively, so there are 22 times 8 or 176 verses.

s) Perfection is evidenced by godly behavior.

t) By the revealed will of God, they order their conduct and conversation.

u) *Torah* - the whole code of God's revealed will.

v) Another name for the Law [see Psalm 78:5]; commands to do right and to shun wrong.

w) An expression characteristic of this psalm. Cf. vs. 10, 34, 58, 69, 145.

x) With strict attention and constancy. y) Properly applied to public law.

z) Decrees, laws issuing in acts - no punishments implied, but possible.

a) Especially exposed to temptation. b) Step aside, either in ignorance or in willfulness.

c) As personal and jealously guarded treasure - "no merely outward rule of conduct, but a power and a life within." d) Medium for commending God's law to others.

e) Could mean "converse about." f) The paths of life marked out by the law.

g) "Find my chief pleasure in."

h) *Gimel* stands for our "G". There is no "C" in Hebrew. We need none, either, having "K" and "S" as do the Hebrews. i) Deep treasures of God's word are spiritually discerned.

j) Having no experience or knowledge of the world; hence, in special need of divine guidance.

the accursed, who err from Thy commandments.

²²Remove from me reproach and contempt, for I have observed Thy testimonies.

²³Princes also sat and slandered me, but Thy servant meditated on Thy statutes.

²⁴Yes, Thy testimonies are my delight and are my counsellors.

Daleth

²⁵My soul cleaves to the dust; revive^k me according to Thy word.

²⁶I confessed my ways,^l and Thou hast answered me; teach me Thy statutes.

²⁷Help me to understand the way of Thy precepts; so shall I meditate on Thy wondrous works.

²⁸My soul weeps out of grief; strengthen Thou me according to Thy word.

²⁹Remove from me the way of falsehood,^m and graciously grant me Thy Law.

³⁰I have chosenⁿ the way of faithfulness; Thine ordinances I have found worthy.

³¹I cling to Thy testimonies; O LORD, put me not to shame!

³²I will run^o in the way of Thy commandments when Thou dost open up my heart.^p

He

³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall keep them to the end.^q

³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall observe Thy law, and keep^r it wholeheartedly.

³⁵Make me walk^s in the path of Thy commandments, for I delight in them.

³⁶Incline my heart to Thy testimonies and not to covetousness.

³⁷Turn away^t my eyes from looking at futilities,^u and revive me in Thy ways.

³⁸Confirm to Thy servant what Thou

hast said, which is for those who revere Thee.

³⁹Turn away my reproach, from which I shrink; for Thine ordinances are good.

⁴⁰Truly, I yearn for Thy precepts; give me life according to Thy righteousness.

Vav

⁴¹May Thy lovingkindness come to me, O LORD, even my salvation,^v according to Thy word;

⁴²then I shall have a word to answer the one reproaching me, for I trust in Thy word.

⁴³Do not take the word of truth completely out of my mouth, for I am awaiting Thine ordinances.

⁴⁴Then I will keep Thy law continually for ever and ever.

⁴⁵I shall walk with freedom,^w for I have sought Thy precepts.

⁴⁶I will also speak of Thy testimonies before kings,^x and I shall not be put to shame.

⁴⁷I take delight in Thy commandments, which I love.

⁴⁸I will lift up my hands^y also to Thy commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Thy statutes.

Zayin

⁴⁹Remember the word to Thy servant, because Thou hast made me hope.

⁵⁰This is my comfort in my affliction; what Thou hast said has brought life to me.

⁵¹The arrogant have had me in complete derision, yet I have not deviated from Thy law.

⁵²As I remember Thine ordinances of old, O LORD, I am comforted.

⁵³Burning indignation has seized me because of the wicked who forsake Thy word.

⁵⁴Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

⁵⁵I remember Thy name, O LORD, in the night,^z and I observe Thy law.

k) Restore to vigorous life and health. l) Failures and ministrings.

m) Of every kind of error and deception. n) Indicating the set purpose.

o) Indicates earnestness. p) Expand with a sense of freedom and holy joy. q) Of my life.

r) "Obey." s) From an inward impulse. t) Or, "aid me to turn aside from."

u) Usual word for idols or idolatry. v) Daily deliverance from the power of sin.

w) Hebrew: "in a broad place" — free from constraint and intimidation.

x) Words especially suitable for Ezra and Nehemiah. y) In welcome greetings.

z) Both actual night and nighttime of doubting and fear.

⁵⁶Thus it has happened to me, for I have observed Thy precepts.

Kheth

⁵⁷The LORD is my inheritance; I promised that I would keep Thy words.

⁵⁸Wholeheartedly I sought Thy favor;^a be merciful to me according to Thy word.

⁵⁹I pondered my ways and turned my feet to Thy testimonies.

⁶⁰I made haste^b and did not tarry to observe Thy commandments.

⁶¹The snares of the wicked have coiled around me, but I have not forgotten Thy law.

⁶²At midnight^c I will rise and offer thanks to Thee, because of Thy righteous ordinances.

⁶³I am a companion of all who revere Thee and of those who keep Thy precepts.

⁶⁴The earth, O LORD, is full of Thy lovingkindness; teach me Thy statutes.

Teth

⁶⁵Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O LORD, according to Thy word.

⁶⁶Teach me good taste^d and knowledge, for I have confidence in Thy commandments.

⁶⁷Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now I keep Thy saying.

⁶⁸Thou art good and doest good; teach me Thy statutes.

⁶⁹The arrogant have put together a lie against me;^e with all my heart I will observe Thy precepts.

⁷⁰Their heart is unfeeling as grease;^f but I delight in Thy law.

⁷¹It is good for me that I was afflicted, so that I may learn Thy statutes.

⁷²The law from Thy mouth is better

to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Yodh

⁷³Thy hands have made and prepared me; give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.

⁷⁴Those who revere Thee shall see^g me and be glad, because I have hoped in Thy word.

⁷⁵I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are righteous and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me.

⁷⁶Let, I beseech Thee, Thy lovingkindness be for my comfort, according to what Thou didst say to Thy servant.

⁷⁷Let Thy compassion come upon me, that I may live; for Thy Law is my delight.

⁷⁸Let the arrogant be put to shame; they have distorted my cause deceitfully;^h but I will meditate on Thy precepts.

⁷⁹Let those who revere Thee turn to me,ⁱ and they shall know Thy testimonies.

⁸⁰Let my heart be healthy^j in Thy statutes, that I may not be ashamed.

Kaph

⁸¹My soul longs^k for Thy salvation, but I hope in Thy word.

⁸²My eyes peer longingly for Thy promise,^l while I say, "when wilt Thou comfort me?"

⁸³For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,^m yet I do not forget Thy statutes.

⁸⁴How many days must Thy servant wait? When wilt Thou judge those who persecute me?

⁸⁵The proud have digged pitfallsⁿ for me, men who do not mind Thy Law.

⁸⁶All Thy commandments are faithful; they persecute me undeservedly; help Thou me!

a) Hebrew: "face." b) The signs of hearty earnestness.

c) Showing his constant thought of God. Paul and Silas at midnight sang their thanks [Acts 16:25]. d) Wise and right discernment.

e) Patched up, fabricated a lie as they did against Nehemiah. See Neh. 6:6-13.

f) Obdurate and unfeeling. g) As a recovered man purified in affliction.

h) Oppressing unjustly, without cause. i) For companionship.

j) Sincerity, wholeness is an O. T. ideal. k) With long and eager watching. See Psalm 84:3.

l) Weary from watching for the fulfillment of God's promise.

m) Shriveled and blackened by the smoke in which it hangs. n) Used to ensnare animals.

- ⁸⁷They almost finished me in the land,
but I did not forsake Thy precepts.
⁸⁸Revive me according to Thy loving-
kindness; then I shall keep the
testimony of Thy mouth.

Lamedh

- ⁸⁹For ever, O LORD, Thy word^a
standeth firm in the heavens.
⁹⁰Thy faithfulness is from generation
to generation; Thou hast established
the earth, and it stands.
⁹¹They stand today in accordance with
Thine ordinances; all things are Thy
servants.
⁹²Unless Thy Law had been my
delight, I would have perished^b in
my affliction.
⁹³I will never forget^c Thy precepts;
with them Thou hast granted me
life.
⁹⁴I am Thine, save me, for I have
sought Thy precepts.
⁹⁵When the wicked waited^d to destroy
me, I considered Thy testimonies.
⁹⁶I have seen limits to all things,
however perfect; but Thy
commandment is exceedingly broad.

Mem

- ⁹⁷Oh, how I love Thy law! It is
my meditation all the day.^e
⁹⁸Thy commandments make me wiser
than my enemies, for they are
ever with me.
⁹⁹I have deeper insight than all my
instructors, because Thy testimonies
are my meditation.
¹⁰⁰I have a better grasp on truth than
have the elders,^f because I have
kept Thy precepts.
¹⁰¹I have refrained my feet from every
evil way, that I might observe Thy
word.
¹⁰²I have not turned aside from Thine
ordinances, for Thou hast taught me.

- ¹⁰³How pleasant to my taste^g is
what Thou hast said! Sweeter than
honey^h in my mouth!

- ¹⁰⁴Through Thy precepts I gain
discernment; therefore I hate every
false way.

Nun

- ¹⁰⁵Thy word is a lamp^w to my
feet and a light to my path.^x
¹⁰⁶I have sworn^y and have confirmed
it, that I will observe Thy righteous
ordinances.
¹⁰⁷I am afflicted exceedingly;^z
revive me, O LORD, according to
Thy word!
¹⁰⁸Accept, I beseech Thee, the freewill
offerings^a of my mouth, O LORD,
and teach me Thine ordinances.
¹⁰⁹My life is continually in danger,^b
yet I do not forget Thy Law.

- ¹¹⁰The wicked have laid a snare^c
for me, yet I have not strayed from
Thy precepts.
¹¹¹Thy testimonies are my heritage for
ever; they are the joy of my heart.
¹¹²I have set my heart^d on practicing
Thy statutes for ever, even to
the end.

Samekh

- ¹¹³I hate waverers,^e but Thy Law
I love.
¹¹⁴Thou art my hiding-place and my
shield; I hope in Thy word.
¹¹⁵Depart^f from me, you evildoers, that
I may keep the commandments of
my God.
¹¹⁶Uphold me according to Thy word,
that I may live; let me not be put
to shame with my expectation!
¹¹⁷Hold me up, and I shall be safe
and shall have respect for Thy
statutes continually.

o) Indicating its everlasting, unchanging character.

p) By giving way to despair and then forsaking God. q) A firm and earnest resolve.

r) Watching for a chance to trip him. s) A strong figure for "constantly."

t) Aged men — wise by fruitage of long experience.

u) Hebrew: "palate" — as the seat of the sense of taste. v) First mentioned in Genesis 43:11.

w) The lamp, or lantern, was held low to throw its light on the steps. x) Or a sun by day.

y) A solemn resolve or public announcement.

z) Reference to his earnest wrestling to hold on to his faith in God.

a) A sacrifice of gratitude, beyond any requirements of the ceremonial law.

b) Hebrew — "My soul is continually in my hand."

c) The peril referred to in vss. 23, 51, 61, 69, 85, 95, etc.

d) With all holy resolves and persuasions.

e) Those who are inconstant — whose heart is not wholly with God — "doubters," "sceptics," "double-minded men." f) "Go away, it is quite useless to tempt me."

- ¹¹⁸Thou dost reject all those who stray from Thy statutes, for their own lying deceives them.
¹¹⁹Thou hast destroyed all the wicked of the earth like dross;^h therefore I love Thy testimonies.
¹²⁰My flesh shudders in awe of Thee; I fear in the presence of Thy judgments.

Ayin

- ¹²¹I have practiced justice and righteousness; leave me not to those who would oppress me.
¹²²Be suretyⁱ for Thy servant for good; let not the arrogant oppress me.
¹²³My eyes grow dim, watching for Thy salvation and for Thy righteous utterance.
¹²⁴Deal with Thy servant according to Thy lovingkindness,^j and teach me Thy statutes.
¹²⁵I am Thy servant.^k Give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies.

- ¹²⁶Time is ripe for the LORD to take action;^l they have violated Thy law.^m
¹²⁷Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold, yes, above fine gold.
¹²⁸Therefore I esteem fair all Thy precepts regarding everything; I hate every false way.

Pe

- ¹²⁹Thy testimonies are marvelous;ⁿ therefore my soul keeps them.
¹³⁰The opening up^o of Thy words gives light; it supplies understanding to the simple.
¹³¹I opened my mouth wide and sighed,^p because I yearned for Thy commandments.
¹³²Turn Thou to me and have mercy on me, as is Thy way^q with those who love Thy name.
¹³³Order^r my footsteps in Thy word;

and do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.

- ¹³⁴Redeem me from the oppression of man, and I will keep Thy precepts.
¹³⁵Make Thy face shine^s upon Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes.
¹³⁶Tears run from my eyes like water brooks,^t because men do not keep Thy law.

Tsadhe

- ¹³⁷Thou art righteous, O LORD, and Thy judgments are fair.^u
¹³⁸Thou hast appointed Thy testimonies in righteousness and in great faithfulness.
¹³⁹My zeal has consumed me because my adversaries have forgotten what Thou hast spoken.
¹⁴⁰Thy word is well tested;^v therefore Thy servant loves it.
¹⁴¹I am insignificant^w and despised, yet I do not forget Thy precepts.

- ¹⁴²Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,^x and Thy law is truth.
¹⁴³Distress and anguish have found me, yet Thy commandments are my enjoyments.
¹⁴⁴Thy testimonies are righteous for ever; grant me understanding and I shall live.

Qoph

- ¹⁴⁵I cried out with all my heart;^y answer me, O LORD! I will keep Thy statutes.
¹⁴⁶I cried out to Thee, "Save me, for I keep Thy statutes."
¹⁴⁷I was up before dawn and cried, "I am trusting in Thy promise."^z
¹⁴⁸My eyes waited for the night watches, that I might meditate on Thy word.
¹⁴⁹Hear my voice according to Thy lovingkindness; O LORD, revive me, according to Thine ordinances.

h) By the fire of judgments.

i) A guarantee of eventual deliverance and prosperity. j) Tempering His judgments.

k) So would lay claim upon Thy help. l) Intervene with His divine judgments.

m) See Ezra 10:18; Nehemiah 13:4-7.

n) Far exceeding human conception, supplying ever new instructions. o) See Luke 24:27, 32.

p) As one suffering from burning heat, longing for some cool spring of water, or some fresh breeze to fan his brow. q) According to divine custom.

r) Take the rule and management of them. s) With the smiles of gracious approval.

t) A strong practical expression. Most easterners shed tears more copiously than we westerners do u) Or, "all expressions of Thy will." v) Tried to the uttermost. w) Held in little esteem.

x) An absolute, perfect righteousness. y) With the prayer of the earnest heart.

z) God's words of promise and consolation.

¹⁵⁰Those draw near^a who follow wickedness; they are far from Thy law.

¹⁵¹Thou art near,^b O LORD; all Thy commandments are truth.

¹⁵²From of old^c I have known from Thy testimonies that Thou hast established them for ever.

Resh

¹⁵³Look at my affliction, and deliver me; for I do not forget Thy word.

¹⁵⁴Plead my cause and redeem me; revive me according to Thy word.

¹⁵⁵Salvation is far from the wicked; for they do not seek Thy statutes.

¹⁵⁶Great is Thy compassion, O LORD; revive me according to Thine ordinances.

¹⁵⁷My persecutors and adversaries are many; yet I have not deviated from Thy testimonies.

¹⁵⁸When I observed the treacherous, I was grieved, because they do not respect Thy word.

¹⁵⁹See how I love Thy precepts; revive me, O LORD, according to Thy lovingkindness.

¹⁶⁰Thy word all together is truth;^d everyone of Thy righteous ordinances has everlasting vitality.

Shin

¹⁶¹Princes are persecuting me without reason, but my heart stands in awe^e before Thy word.

¹⁶²I rejoice at Thy word as one who finds great beauty.

¹⁶³I hate, I despise falsehood;^f but I love Thy Law.

¹⁶⁴I give Thee praise seven times a day^g because of Thy righteous judgments.

¹⁶⁵Great peace have they who love Thy law; no stumbling block is in their path.

¹⁶⁶I am looking for Thy salvation,

O LORD, and I have practiced Thy commandments.

¹⁶⁷My soul has kept Thy testimonies; I dearly love them.

¹⁶⁸I have observed Thy precepts and testimonies, for all my ways are plain before Thee.

Tav

¹⁶⁹May my cry^h come before Thee, O LORD; grant me understanding according to Thy word.

¹⁷⁰May my petition come before Thee; deliver me according to Thy promise.

¹⁷¹My lips shall run over with praise,ⁱ for Thou shalt teach me Thy statutes.

¹⁷²My tongue^j shall sing of Thy word, for all Thy commandments are fair.

¹⁷³Let Thy hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen Thy precepts.

¹⁷⁴I long for Thy salvation, O LORD; Thy law is my delight.

¹⁷⁵Let my soul live and praise Thee; let Thy judgments help me.

¹⁷⁶I have strayed like a lost sheep; seek Thy servant, for I have not forgotten Thy commandments.

A Cry of Distress Because of Oppressive Neighbors

A Song of Ascents^k

120 In my distress I cried to the LORD,

and He answered me.

²Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.

³What shall He give you?

What in addition shall He do to you, O you deceitful tongue?

⁴Sharp arrows^l of the mighty, with coals of broom tree!

⁵Woe is me, for I lodge near Meshech;^m

I dwell beside the tents of Kedar!ⁿ

⁶My soul has lived long enough with those who hate peace.

a) As with hostile intent. b) Nearer than my foes.

c) For a long time; therefore, a thoroughly established conviction.

d) The aggregate of all the individual precepts of God's word from A to Z.

e) I dread desecration of Thy law far more than the force of prince or potentate.

f) All kinds of falseness and deception. g) Figure of speech for "constantly throughout the day."

h) A mournful, supplicating cry. i) Of thankfulness and reverent trust.

j) The instrument of spoken praise.

k) Psalms 120-134 are the Songs of Degrees or Ascents, used as the worshippers approached Jerusalem from many lands, and were climbing hills and finally temple steps.

l) Such as warriors use. m) Between the Black and Caspian Seas.

n) One of the predatory hordes roaming the Arabian desert.

I am for peace; but when I speak,
they are for war.

The Consolation of Divine Protection
A Song of Ascents

121 I raise my eyes toward the hills.^o
Whence shall my help come?
My help comes from the LORD, who
made heaven and earth.
He will not allow your foot to slip;
your Keeper will never slumber.
Behold, the Keeper of Israel will
neither slumber nor sleep.^p

⁵The LORD is your Keeper;
he LORD is your shade at your right
hand.
The sun shall not smite you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all
harm;^q
He will preserve your soul.
The LORD will shield your
going out and your coming in
from now on for evermore.

Memories of a Returning Pilgrim
A Song of Ascents; of David

122 I was glad^r when they said
to me,
'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'
Our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem!

³Jerusalem is built as a city
which is bound together;^s
whither the tribes go up,
he tribes of the LORD,
is enjoined upon Israel,
o give thanks to the name of the
LORD.

For there seats are placed for
judging,
he seats of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the peace^t of Jerusalem!
May those who love you prosper!

⁷May peace be within your walls,^u
and prosperity in your palaces!
⁸For the sake of my brothers and
companions,
I will now say, "Peace be within you!"
⁹For the sake of the house of the
LORD our God,
I will seek your good.

Prayer for Divine Aid in Distress
A Song of Ascents

123 Toward Thee I raise my
eyes,
O Thou, enthroned in the heavens!^v
²Behold, as the eyes of servants
look to the hand^w of their master,
as the eyes of a maid to the hand of
her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God
until He has mercy upon us.
³Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have
mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of
contempt.
⁴Our souls have had more than enough
of the scoffing by those who are at
ease,
and of the disdain of the arrogant.^x

The Lord the Deliverer of His People
A Song of Ascents; of David

124 If it had not been for the
LORD who was on our side,^y
let Israel now say —
²if it had not been the LORD
who was on our side,
when men rose up^z against us,
³then they would have swallowed us
up alive,
when their anger burned against us.
⁴Then the waters would have
overwhelmed us,
the stream passing over our soul;
⁵then the proud waters^a would have
passed over our soul.
⁶Blessed be the LORD,

o) District around Jerusalem; Mounts Zion and Moriah were sacred peaks.

p) Language of firm, unquestioning confidence.

q) Whatever bodily harm may come, the soul is safe with Him.

r) Overjoyed, a sense of inner glee. s) As a closely knit unit. t) The sign of prosperity.

u) Wall and trench round it, your bulwarks.

v) Unmoved by the excitements and troubles of men.

w) Easterners prefer silence — often indicated their wishes merely by movements of the hand.

x) Self-complacent ones, who disregard God's law. y) Ever ready to help in time of need.

z) In active efforts to destroy. a) Added epithet denotes the insolence of the enemies.

who gave us not as a prey to their teeth.^b

⁷Our soul has escaped^c as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

⁸Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.^d

The Lord the Protector of His People

A Song of Ascents

125 Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,^e which cannot be shaken but abides^f for ages.

²As there are mountains around Jerusalem, so the LORD is around His people from this time forth and for evermore.

³For the scepter of wickedness shall never rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous stretch forth their hands to iniquity.

⁴Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in their hearts.

⁵But as for those who turn aside^g to their crooked ways, the LORD will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. Peace be upon Israel!^h

The Lord the Restorer of His People

A Song of Ascents

126 When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion, we were like those who dream.ⁱ

²Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

³The LORD has done great things for us, for which we are glad.

⁴Restore our fortunes, LORD, as the streams^j in the Southland.

⁵They who sow in tears^k shall reap with joy.

⁶He who goes forth weeping,^l carrying seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, carrying his sheaves.^m

The Lord the Homemaker for His People

A Song of Ascents; of Solomon

127ⁿ Unless the LORD builds the house,^o

their labor is futile who build it. Unless the LORD preserves the city, the sentry watches in vain.

²It is useless for you to be early in rising while being late^p in sitting up, eating the bread of toil; for^q He gives to His loved ones sleep.

³Behold, children are a legacy from the LORD; the fruit of the womb is His reward.

⁴As arrows in the hand of a mighty man,^r

so are the children of one's youth.^s

⁵Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them.^t

They shall not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies in the gate.^u

b) Figure of a wild beast. c) The Hebrew expresses the deep joy felt at the escape.
d) During the twenty-three hundred bombings of the Island of Malta in World War II, as the people gathered for prayer, this was their favorite psalm. e) Emblem of permanency.
f) Hebrew: "sits." g) Bend their crooked paths.
h) All psalms were sung, but these fifteen songs served especially those worshipers whose greatest hope and consolation was their covenant God, on whom they could depend no matter what befell them. i) Could not at once receive such joyful news as true.
j) Which are restored and filled with heavy rains. k) Indicating the anxiety of the exiles.
l) At every step, because he must sow all he can spare.
m) Genuine believers in God are bound to be optimistic.
n) The pivotal psalm of the songs of ascents.
o) Or, found a family. p) Lengthening the natural day to accomplish more. q) Or "so."
r) The hunter, called "a mighty man" [Gen. 10:9], carries arrows which he shoots forward, making his effort felt where he does not personally contact. So worthy children live nobly after their parents are gone. s) Born in his early manhood.
t) Symbol of abundant resources for the battlefield of life.
u) Such fathers become leaders in their city.

*The Lord the House Keeper of
His People*

A Song of Ascents

128 Blessed is every one who
reveres the LORD,
who walks in His ways.^v
²Because you shall eat the product of
your hands,^w
happy shall you be, and it shall be
well with you.
³Your wife will be as a fruitful vine^x
inside your house;
your children like olive plants^y
surrounding your table.

⁴Truly, thus shall the man be
rewarded who reveres the LORD.
⁵The LORD bless you from Zion,^z
so you may see the good of Jerusalem^a
all the days of your life;
⁶so you may see your children's
children.
Peace be upon Israel!

The Cry of the Persecuted People

A Song of Ascents

129 "Many a time they have
oppressed me from my
youth,"^b
let Israel now say;
²"Many a time they have oppressed me
from my youth,
but they have not prevailed against me.
³The plowmen plowed^c upon my back;
they made long their furrows."

⁴The LORD is righteous;
He has completely severed the cords^d
of the wicked.

⁵May all who hate Zion
be put to shame and turned backward.
⁶Let them be as the grass upon the
housetops,^e
which withers before it grows up,

⁷with which the reaper does not fill
his hand
nor the binder of sheaves his bosom.
⁸Neither do the passers-by say:
"The blessing of the LORD be upon
you;
we bless you in the name of the
LORD."^f

A Sinner's Cry for Forgiveness of Sin

A Song of Ascents

130 Out of the depths^g I cry to
Thee, O LORD;
²LORD,^h hear my voice;
let Thine ears be attentive to the
voice of my supplications!
³If Thou, LORD, shouldst keep in mind
our iniquities,ⁱ who could stand?^j
⁴But there is forgiveness^k with Thee,
in order that Thou mayest be revered.

⁵I am waiting for the LORD; my
soul is in expectation,
and in His word do I hope.
⁶My soul is looking for the LORD
more than watchmen for the morning;^l
yes, more than watchmen for the
morning.
⁷O Israel, hope in the LORD!
For with the LORD there is loving-
kindness,
and with Him is abundant redemption.
⁸He Himself will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

*The Lord the Satisfaction of
His People*

A Song of Ascents of David

131 O LORD, my heart is not
haughty,^m
nor are my eyes disdainful;ⁿ
neither do I concern myself in great
matters,
nor in things too wonderful for me.

v) See Psalm 1:1 for a description of the person who abstains from breaches of the prohibitory commandments of the Decalogue and performs the positive order.

w) The products of our labor. x) Usual emblem of fruitfulness.

y) Emblem of vigorous, healthy, and joyous life.

z) The earthly dwelling place and throne of God.

a) Welfare of the family and the welfare of the state are indissolubly linked.

b) Egyptian bondage.

c) A figure of scourging — for another use of the figure, see Jer. 26:18; Mic. 3:12.

d) By which the ox was yoked to the plough — also a general image of slavery.

e) On ill-compacted, flat, eastern roofs, grass is often found springing into short-lived existence.

f) Customary salute to reapers. See Ruth 2:4.

g) Of misery and deep waters of overwhelming affliction. h) Hebrew: *adonai*, or Sovereign LORD.

i) Strictly watch, and keep in memory in order to punish.

j) Endure their unforgiven continuance. k) Just what man needs.

l) As do sentinels and sleepless sufferers.

m) Humility properly regarded as the crown of virtues.

n) As those of the Pharisee in Luke 18, looking down on others.

²Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul,
like a weaned child^o with his mother;
like a weaned child is my soul within me.^p

³O Israel, hope in the LORD,
from this time forth and for evermore.

The Lord the Trust of His People

A Song of Ascents

132 O LORD, remember David
for all his difficulties;

²how he swore^a to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One of

Jacob:

³"Surely I will not enter the tent of
my house,

nor lie down on my bed;

⁴I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,

⁵until I find a place^r for the LORD,
a tabernacle for the Mighty One of

Jacob."

⁶We heard of it in Ephrathah^s
and found it in the field of the forest.^t

⁷Let us go to His dwelling;
let us worship at His footstool!^u

⁸Arise,^v O LORD, go into Thy resting
place,

Thou, and the ark of Thy strength.

⁹Let Thy priests be clothed with
righteousness,^w

and let Thy saints shout for joy.

¹⁰For Thy servant David's sake
turn not away the face^x of Thine
anointed.

¹¹The LORD swore to David in truth —
He will never retract it:^y

Of the fruit of your body will I
set upon your throne.

¹²If your children will keep My
covenant
and My testimony which I shall teach
them,

their children shall sit upon your
throne for ever.

¹³For the LORD chose Zion and
cherished
it for His dwelling place.

¹⁴This is My resting place for ever;
here will I dwell, for I have desired it

¹⁵I will abundantly bless her provision
I will satisfy her poor with bread.^z

¹⁶Her priests also I will clothe with
salvation;

her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

¹⁷There will I make the horn^a of
David to bud;

I have ordained a lamp^b for My
anointed.

¹⁸His enemies I will clothe with sham
but upon himself shall his crown
shine.

Brotherly Love

A Song of Ascents of David

133 See, how good and how
pleasant it is

for brothers to live harmoniously
together!^c

²It is like the precious oil upon the
head,^d

flowing down upon the beard, Aaron
beard,

flowing down upon the edge of his
garments;

³like the dew^e of Hermon, that falls
upon the mountains of Zion!

For there the LORD commanded the
blessing,
even life for evermore.

The Lord, the Rest of His People

A Song of Ascents

134 Come! Bless the LORD, all
you servants of the LORD,
who stand nightly^f in the house of the
LORD.

o) One who has ceased fretting after its mother's milk.

p) This soul is unwilling to depart from God. q) Or, firmly resolved.

r) A settled resting place.

s) One of the names of Bethlehem — no record that the ark was temporarily settled there.

t) The Hebrew for forest is *ja-ar*; so this may refer to Kirith-Jearim, where the ark of the covenant remained for many years [I Sam. 7:1; II Sam. 6:4].

u) As the LORD dwells above, the cover of the ark, the mercy seat, is regarded as His footstool.

v) Usual word on moving the ark; see Num. 10:35.

w) White clothing as the symbol of righteousness. x) Sign of rejecting a petition.

y) From vs. 11 to the end, we find God's promise to David.

z) A sign of national prosperity. a) Symbol of dominion. b) Also denotes "progeny."

c) Harmony in the godly home as they jointly worship God; harmony among the tribes of Israel who come from far and near to worship unitedly at His temple.

d) See Exod. 29:7; Lev. 8:10; 21:10; the flowing of the ointment, diffusing fragrance all over the body. e) Symbol of life. f) As night watchmen.

- ²Lift up your hands^g to the sanctuary;
bless the LORD!
³Bless the LORD out of Zion, the
Maker of heaven and earth!

*The Lord the Object of His
People's Praise*

135 Praise the LORD!
Praise the name of the LORD;
praise Him, O you servants of the
LORD,^h

- ²you, who are standing in the house of
the LORD,
in the courtsⁱ of the house of our God!
³Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good;
make melody to His name, for it is
sweet!
⁴For the LORD has chosen Jacob for
Himself,
and Israel for His own possession.

- ⁵As for me, I know^j that the LORD
is great,
and that our LORD is above all gods.
⁶Whatever the LORD desired, that has
He done
in heaven and in earth, in the seas and
in all deeps.

- ⁷[He it is] who causes the vapors^k to
rise from the ends of the earth;
who makes lightnings for the rain;^l
who brings forth the wind out of His
treasuries;

- ⁸who smote the first-born of
Egypt, both man and beast;
⁹who sent signs and wonders^m in the
midst of you, O Egypt,
upon Pharaoh and all his servants;
¹⁰who smote many nations and slew
mighty kings,
¹¹Si-hon king of the Amorites, Og king
of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of Canaan;
¹²who gave their land for a heritage,
a heritage to Israel His people.

- ¹³Thy name, O LORD, is forever;
Thy renown, LORD, from generation
to generation.
¹⁴For the LORD will vindicate the cause
of His people,
and will have compassion on His
servants.ⁿ

- ¹⁵The idols of the nations are gold and
silver, the work of human hands.
¹⁶Though they have a mouth, they do
not speak;

- though they have eyes, they do not
see;

- ¹⁷though they have ears, they do not
hear;

- there certainly is no breath in their
mouth.

- ¹⁸Those who make them become like
them, as does everyone who trusts in
them.

- ¹⁹O house of Israel, bless the LORD!
O house of Aaron, ²⁰bless the LORD!
O house of Levi, bless the LORD!
You who revere the LORD, bless the
LORD!^o

- ²¹The LORD be blessed from Zion,
He who dwells at Jerusalem!
Hallelujah!

*God's Faithful Provision for
His Covenant People*

136 Give thanks to the LORD, for
He is good, for His covenant
love is everlasting.^p

- ²Give thanks to the God of gods, for
His covenant love is everlasting.

- ³Give thanks to the LORD of lords, for
His covenant love is everlasting;

- ⁴to Him who alone works great
wonders, for His covenant love is
everlasting;

- ⁵who with wisdom made the heavens,
for His covenant love is everlasting;

- ⁶who spread out the earth above the

g) In the attitude of prayer. This marks the completion of the fifteen Songs of Degrees. Vss. 1 and 2 seem to have been sung by the pilgrims as their greetings to the priests, and vs. 3 the response of the priests with their blessing.

h) The writer knew the Scriptures well and quoted aptly. Vs. 6 is from Ps. 115: 3; vs. 8 from Ex. 13:15; vs. 13 from Ex. 3:15; vs. 14 from Deut. 32:36; vss. 15-18 from Ps. 115:4-8.

i) The enclosed space before the sanctuary. j) A firsthand religious experience.

k) Hebrew: "things lifted up," clouds rather than fogs.

l) To accompany rain, with its beneficent influence.

m) Miraculous judgments, no mere wonders, but tokens of divine will.

n) We always have God to fall back on; He is there, mindful of us.

o) Praise Him appreciatively to the nth degree.

p) This refrain resembles the congregational response of a litany. It is repeated throughout the psalm to emphasize that each redemptive or creative deed of God is a manifestation of His covenant love [hesed]. The Psalm is especially adapted to use by a choir in the Temple worship.

waters, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 7who made the great luminaries, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 8the sun to rule by day, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 9the moon and the stars to rule by night, for His covenant love is everlasting;^q
 10to Him who smote Egypt in their first-born, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 11and brought Israel out of their midst; for His covenant love is everlasting;
 12with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, for His covenant love is everlasting;^r

13to Him who divided the Red Sea in two,^s for His covenant love is everlasting;
 14and led Israel through the midst of it, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 15tossed Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 16and led His people in the wilderness, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 17to Him who smote great kings, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 18and slew famous kings, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 19Sihon, king of the Amorites, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 20and Og, king of Bashan, for His covenant love is everlasting.

21He granted their land as a possession,^t for His covenant love is everlasting;
 22as a possession to Israel, His servant, for His covenant love is everlasting.
 23In our humiliation He remembered us, for His covenant love is everlasting;
 24and freed us from our adversaries, for His covenant love is everlasting;^u

25bestowing food on all mankind, for His covenant love is everlasting.
 26Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His covenant love is everlasting.

Captive Israel Longs to Return and See Zion Avenged

137 By the rivers of Babylon,^v there we sat down and wept as we remembered Zion.

2On the willows in the midst of her we hung up our harps.
 3Our captors asked us there for the words of a song; our tormentors [asked for] a song of mirth, "Sing us one of Zion's songs."

4How can we sing a song of the Lord in the land of strangers?
 5If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill;
 6let my tongue cleave to my palate, if I fail to remember you,
 if I fail to exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy!

7Remember, O Lord, the Edomites who said in the day of Jerusalem, "Lay her bare, lay her bare down to her foundations!"

8O daughter of Babylon, you devastator, blessed be he who will pay back to you the recompense for what you did to us!
 9Blessed [be] he who will seize your evil children and dash them against the rock!^w

Praise to the Lord for His Gracious Deliverance
 A Psalm of David

138 I will praise Thee, O Lord, with all my heart; in the presence of the gods^x I will sing praise to Thee.

2I will bow down toward Thy holy temple and praise Thy name because of Thy covenant love and faithfulness,

q) God in nature meant much in Hebrew worship. r) The Hebrew learned his history.

s) North and south of their passageway. t) The extra gift east of the Jordan.

u) When repentant they turned to God.

v) That is, during the captivity of the Jews in Babylon. This would date the composition of the psalm around 570 B.C. During this exile, Israel's only hope lay in God's promise of restoration [cf. Jer. 25:12].

w) Alluding to the horrors usually accompanying the conquest and sack of ancient cities.

x) The gods of the heathen, unable to work redemption and judgment such as Jehovah wrought.

for Thou hast magnified Thy word
above all Thy name.^y
³In the day when I called Thou didst
answer me,
and didst encourage me with strength
in my soul.
⁴All the kings of the earth shall praise
Thee, O LORD,
when they have heard the words of
Thy mouth;
⁵they shall sing of the LORD's dealings,
for great shall be the glory of the
LORD.
⁶Though the LORD is exalted, He
looks upon the lowly;
but the haughty man He notes from a
distance.
⁷When I walk through the midst of
trouble, Thou bringest me through
alive;
against the wrath of my foes, Thou
dost stretch forth Thy hand,
and Thy right hand saves me.
⁸The LORD will fulfil His purpose on
my behalf;
O LORD, Thy covenant love is
everlasting.
Do not forsake the works of Thy
hands!

*God's Omniscience, Omnipresence, and
Omnipotence Toward Us*

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

139 Thou hast searched^z me,
LORD, and Thou knowest
me.^a

²Thou hast me in mind when I sit
down and when I rise up;
Thou discernest my thoughts from
afar.
³Thou hast traced my walking and my
resting,
and art familiar with all my ways.
⁴For there is not a word on my tongue,
but Thou, LORD, knowest it perfectly.^b

⁵Thou hast closed me in behind and
in front,
and hast placed Thy hand upon me.

⁶[This is] a knowledge too
wonderful for me,
too inaccessible for me to reach.

⁷Where can I escape Thy Spirit,
or where can I flee from Thy
presence?

⁸If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there;
if I make the underworld my couch,
then Thou art there!

⁹If I were to take the wings of the
dawn
and dwell in the remotest part of the
sea,

¹⁰even there Thy hand would lead me
and Thy right hand would take hold
of me.

¹¹If I should say, "Surely the darkness
will cover me,"
then the night [would become] light
around me;

¹²[for] even darkness does not hide
from Thee,
but night is as bright as day;
darkness is the same as light [to Thee].

¹³Thou didst possess my inward
parts and didst weave me in my
mother's womb.

¹⁴I praise Thee because I have been
fearfully and wonderfully made;
marvelous is Thy workmanship, as my
soul is well aware.^c

¹⁵My bones were not hidden from
Thee when I was made in secrecy
and intricately fashioned in utter
seclusion.^d

¹⁶Thine eyes beheld my unformed
substance,
and in Thy book all was recorded and
prepared day by day,
when as yet none of them had being.

¹⁷How precious to me are Thy
thoughts, O God!

y) Or else, "Thy promise". God had given David a promise [that his dynasty would abide forever in Christ (II Sam. 7:13, 16)], which surpasses everything by which He has hitherto established a reputation and memorial for Himself.

z) "X-rayed me," would be today's equivalent.

a) This Hebrew verb *vada*, "Know," often implies favorable acquaintance, [Ps. 1:6; Amos 3:2] or, taking notice of someone or something, with a view to rewarding the faithful and punishing the disobedient.

b) When everyone else misunderstands and misjudges, God and God alone knows better, and He cares. There is no loftier and truer appreciation of God's gracious presence than this psalm.

c) Man, the crowning work of creation, not only as a spirit but also in body. All so true to the findings of today's physiology! d) Literally, "in the lowest parts of the earth."

How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸If I tried to count them, they would
be more numerous than the sand;
when I awake, I am still with Thee.

¹⁹If Thou, O God, wouldst slay the
ungodly,
then would bloodguilty men depart
from me!

²⁰Those who speak of Thee with
crafty malice
exalt themselves as Thy foes to
no avail.

²¹Shall I not hate those, O LORD, who
hate Thee?

And am I not grieved with those that
rise up against Thee?

²²I hate them with a complete hatred;
they have become my own enemies.^e

²³Search me, O God, and know
my heart!

Test me and know my thoughts!

²⁴See whether there is any baneful
motive within me,
and lead me on the everlasting way!^f

The Deliverance of Believers from Persecutors

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David

140 Deliver me, O LORD, from
wicked men;
protect me from men of violence, who
²in their hearts devise evil plots, and
constantly stir up warfare.

³They have sharpened their tongue
like a serpent's;
adder's venom is under their lips. *Selah*

⁴Keep me, O LORD, from the
hands of the wicked;
protect me from violent men who have
plotted to trip my feet.

⁵Conceited men have hidden a snare
for me,
and have stretched out the cords of a
hunting net at the wayside,
planting traps for me. *Selah*

God Delivers from Persecution and Sin

⁶I said to the LORD, "Thou art
my God!

Give ear, O LORD, to my voice of
supplication!"

⁷Jehovah^g LORD, the strength of my
salvation,
Thou hast shielded my head in the day
of battle.^h

⁸O LORD, do not grant the desires of
the ungodly,
nor promote their schemes lest they
exalt themselves. *Selah*

⁹Upon the heads of those who
encircle me,
may the mischief of their own lips
come down!

¹⁰May coals of fire be dropped upon
their heads,
or let them be cast into trenches,
unable to rise!

¹¹Let not the slanderer be established
in the land;
let punishment speedily overthrow the
violent man!

¹²I know that the LORD will maintain
the cause of the afflicted
and the rights of the poor.ⁱ

¹³Surely the righteous^j will praise
Thy name;
the upright shall dwell in Thy
presence.

A Prayer for Deliverance from Sin and Sinners

A Psalm of David

141 I call upon Thee, O LORD;
hasten to me!

Hear my voice as I cry out to Thee!

²Let my prayer be prepared as an
incense offering before Thee,
the lifting up of my hands as the
evening sacrifice.

³Set a guard at my mouth, O LORD;
keep watch over the door of my lips.

⁴Let not my heart incline to evil
so as wickedly to busy myself with evil

e) This is no expression of personal spite, but the psalmist has so completely identified himself with God's cause that he grants no quarter to sin. Whenever ancient Israel leaned toward God's enemies, they themselves were so compromised that they joined the heathen in opposition against God. Not until Christ's advent and the impartation of His divine nature by the Holy Spirit, could men learn to love God's enemies — in the holy way in which God Himself loves them.

f) These last two verses will enrich our lives until the final day, if we master and daily use them prayerfully.

g) LORD where the Hebrew text has *Yahweh* [Jehovah], the covenant name of God. But where the covenant name comes right before the Hebrew word for LORD [*Adonai*], it seems best to revert to "Jehovah." h) "In the day of weapons."

i) This term [*ani*, "poor" or "afflicted"] implies a believer who is persecuted and downtrodden because of his loyalty to God. This is a key term in the Psalms. j) See note on p. 637.

deeds, with men who practice iniquity;

I will not eat of their dainties.

⁵Let a righteous man^l smite me; it is kindness.

Let him reprove me; it is oil for my head, which my head shall not refuse;

for I will still pray in the face of their wickedness.

⁶When their judges are hurled down along the sides of a rock, then they will listen to my words, for they are pleasant.

⁷As when a man plows and breaks open the earth, so our bones have been strewn about at the grave's opening.^k

⁸For my eyes are towards Thee, O Jehovah LORD; in Thee I have taken refuge; do not pour out my life.

⁹Keep me from the trap they have set for me, and from the snares of those who practice iniquity.

¹⁰Let all the ungodly together fall into their own nets, while I myself pass safely by.

The Only Savior from Destructive Foes
A Meditation of David. A Song of Praise when He Was in the Cave^l

142 To the LORD I cry out with my voice;
to the LORD I lift up my voice imploring mercy.

²I will pour out my grief before Him; I will set forth my trouble before Him.

³When my spirit within me weakens,
Thou art aware of my path,
how men have concealed a trap for me in the way by which I walk.

⁴I look to the right and I watch.
There is no one who cares about me.
My every refuge has disappeared; no one seeks my welfare.^m

⁵I cry out to Thee, O LORD, [and] declare,
"Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

⁶Listen to my cry of entreaty, for I have been brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me.

⁷Lead out my soul from its prison, that I may praise Thy name.
May the righteous throng around me, because Thou dealest kindly with me."ⁿ

A Penitential Cry for Help

A Psalm of David

143 O LORD, hear my prayer; listen to my supplications; in Thy faithfulness and in Thy righteousness answer me.

²Do not enter into judgment with Thy servant, for no man living is righteous^o in Thy sight.

³For the enemy has hunted after my soul, and has trampled my life to the ground;
he has made me dwell in dark hiding places,

like those who have long been dead.

⁴My spirit is losing hope; my heart within me is numbed with dismay.

⁵I recall the former days and think about all Thy dealings;
I meditate upon the works of Thy hands.

⁶I stretch out my hands toward Thee; my soul thirsts for Thee like parched land.^p

Selah

j) This term [*tsaddiq*, "righteous"] when applied to human beings implies a believer who is justified by faith and is walking sincerely with the LORD, not a person who has attained sinlessness. The psalmist recognizes with Paul that "there is none righteous, no not one" [cf. Ps. 14:1; 53:1; 143:2]. See note on Ps. 146:8.

k) Though godly men have died at the hands of the wicked, yet their bodies shall be turned up out of the soil at the Resurrection, as the ploughshare exhumes what is buried beneath the surface of the ground.

l) Almost certainly the Cave of Adullam, in which David hid from Saul [I Sam. 22].

m) Literally, "for my soul"; but *nephesh* ["soul"] often signifies "personal interest" or even "life."

n) This prayer was answered; enough fighting men joined David there to form the nucleus of a mighty army [I Sam. 22].

o) This word *sadaq*, "righteous," "just," is often used as the technical term for that litigant in a court action who is found to be innocent of the crime charged or who is in the right as regards the point in controversy. David recognizes that no man is good enough to be saved, but that justified believers ["the righteous" or *tsaddiqim*] are sinners saved by grace.

p) Because of a parching drought.

⁷Answer me quickly, LORD, [for]
my spirit is pining away!
Do not hide Thy face from me,
lest I become like those who descend
to the pit.
⁸In the morning proclaim to me Thy
covenant love,
for I have put my trust in Thee.
Make me understand the way I
should go,
for I lift up my soul to Thee.^a
⁹Deliver me from my foes, O LORD,
for to Thee have I fled for hiding.

¹⁰Teach me to carry out Thy good
pleasure,
for Thou art my God; may Thy good
Spirit lead me on level ground.^r
¹¹For the glory of Thy name, O LORD,
preserve my life;
in Thy righteousness remove my soul
from distress.
¹²In Thy covenant love mayest Thou
silence my foes
and destroy all those who oppress my
soul, for I am Thy servant.

A Song of Confidence

A Psalm of David^s

144 Blessed be the LORD, my
Rock,
who teaches my hands to wage war,
and my fingers to do battle;
²my Covenant Love, my Fortress, my
lofty Stronghold, my Deliverer,
my Shield in whom I have taken
refuge,
and the One who subdues my people
under me.

³LORD, what is man, that Thou
takest notice of him,
or the son of man, that Thou
coniderest him?

⁴Man is like a breath;
his days are like a passing shadow.
⁵O LORD, bow down Thy heavens
and descend;
touch the mountains so that they
smoke!
⁶Flash forth the lightning and scatter
them;^t
shoot forth Thine arrows and confound
them.
⁷Extend Thy hand from on high;
rescue and deliver me from the many
waters,
from the power of the aliens' children.
⁸For they have each one spoken
falsehood,
and have extended their right hand
for fraudulent oaths.

⁹O God, I sing to Thee a new
song;
on a ten-stringed harp I sing psalms
to Thee
¹⁰who grantest victory to kings,^u
and who savest Thy servant David
from the sword of evil.^v
¹¹Save me and rescue me from the
hand of aliens,^w
who have with their mouth spoken
falsehood,
and with their right hand have sworn
deceitfully.

¹²Our sons then are^x like plants,
raised to full size in their youthful
vigor;
our daughters like sculptured corner
pillars^y
after a palatial pattern; ¹³our granaries
filled with provisions of every kind;
our sheep multiplying by the thousands
and tens of thousands in our
pastures;
¹⁴our oxen well burdened, and no

q) This Hebrew idiom implies: "I have directed my desire toward Thee," "I have centered my yearning in Thee."

r) In contrast to a dark and perilous mountain path, the phrase might be rendered, "the land of righteousness."

s) A dubious tradition connects this psalm with David's victory over Goliath. The resemblances to Ps. 8 [cf. 144:3 and 8:4], Ps. 18 [cf. 144:1 and 18:2, 34; also 144:2 and 18:47], and Ps. 39 [cf. 144:4 and 39:5, 6] serve to confirm Davidic authorship.

t) The proud foes of God's people. u) By the sovereign working of God behind the scenes.

v) An ancient tradition refers this sword of evil to Goliath. We understand this "sword of evil" more generally to be the sword engaged in the service of evil.

w) Such as Doeg, the Edomite [1 Sam. 21:7; 22:7-16].

x) There is no copulative verb in the Hebrew of this clause, so we translate these all as statements of present fact rather than of a desired future state of affairs.

y) Or, on the basis of well-attested practices in the Near East, beautifully carved, inlaid or painted corners in a wealthy home.

disaster* or loss [of fruit] or cry of distress in our city squares.

¹⁶Blessed is the people which is in such a state!

Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord!

Praise to God All-Bountiful

A Praise Song of David^a

145 I will exalt Thee, my God and King;

I will bless Thy name for ever and ever.

²Every day will I bless Thee, and praise Thy name for ever and ever.

³Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;

His greatness is unsearchable.

⁴One generation shall extol Thy works to the following one, and set forth Thy mighty acts.

⁵I will dwell on the glorious splendor of Thy majesty, and on the records of Thy wonders.

⁶Men shall speak of the might of Thine awe-inspiring deeds, and as for Thy greatness, I will recount it.

⁷They will pour forth a recital of Thy great goodness, and sing aloud of Thy righteousness.^b

⁸The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in covenant love.

⁹The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

¹⁰All Thy works shall praise Thee, LORD, and Thy saints shall bless Thee.

¹¹They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom and tell of Thy might,

¹²that they may make known to the children of men His feats of power, and the majestic glory of His kingdom.

¹³Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endures through all generations.

¹⁴The LORD supports all those who fall, and lifts up all those bowed down.

¹⁵The eyes of all look expectantly to Thee, for Thou art ever giving them their food at the proper time.

¹⁶Thou art ever opening Thy hand to satisfy the desire of every living creature.^c

¹⁷The LORD is just in all His ways, and gracious in all His works.

¹⁸The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to those who call upon Him sincerely.

¹⁹He fulfills the desire of those who revere Him; He hears their call for help and saves them.

²⁰The LORD protects all those who love Him, but He will destroy all the ungodly.

²¹My mouth shall utter the LORD's praise, and all mankind shall bless His holy name for ever and ever.^d

*God the Only Helper;
the Compassionate Deliverer*

146 Hallelujah!^e Praise the LORD, O my soul!

²I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God as long as I have being.

³Put not your trust in nobles,^f in a child of Adam,^g in whom is no salvation.

⁴When his breath departs he reverts to his earth, and in that day his plans go to ruin.

⁵Blessed is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,

z) "Breath" [perets], usually of a city wall, but applicable figuratively to any grave calamity.

a) This is an acrostic psalm but with the letter nun [n] missing.

b) Through this psalm, prayer to God and testimony about Him repeatedly interchange, which is not unique; Ps. 23 is typical. c) Vss. 15 and 16 furnish a helpful "grace" at the table.

d) The formula, "Bless His holy name for ever and ever," occurs with slight variations at the end of other groups of Davidic psalms — the closing verse of Ps. 41, 72, 89, and 106.

e) *Jah* or *Yah* is a shorter form of *Yahweh*, the covenant name of God, which we usually render LORD; so we may translate this phrase, "Praise the LORD!"

f) Primarily: voluntary donors, benefactors.

g) Although the Hebrew word *Adam* actually means "of the ground" or "from the ground," the reference here is either to Adam as an individual or to man in the generic sense.

whose hope is in the LORD his God,
 6the Maker of heaven and earth, the
 sea and all that is in them;
 who keeps faith forever;^b

7who administers justice on behalf of
 the oppressed; who gives bread to
 the hungry —

the LORD, who loosens the chains of
 those who are bound.

8The LORD opens the eyes of the
 blind;

the LORD lifts up those who are bowed
 down;

the LORD loves the righteous.¹

9The LORD protects the immigrants;¹
 He relieves orphans and widows,
 and He reverses the path of the
 ungodly toward ruin.

10The LORD shall reign for ever, your
 God, O Zion,
 from generation to generation.

Hallelujah!

*Jehovah Praised as Restorer
 and Defender*

147 Praise the LORD! For it is
 good to sing praise to our
 God,

for it is a delight; the song of praise
 is so befitting.

2The LORD is building Jerusalem,
 [and] is gathering the exiles of Israel.

3It is He who heals the brokenhearted,
 and binds up their wounds.^k

4He determines the number of the stars,
 and assigns their names to them all.¹

5Our LORD is great and mighty in
 strength;

His understanding is unlimited.

6The LORD brings relief to the humble,
 [and] brings down the ungodly to the
 ground.

7Sing to the LORD with
 thanksgiving;

sing praise to our God on the harp.

8[It is He] who covers heaven with
 clouds,
 who prepares rain for the earth, and
 causes grass to sprout on the hills.^m
 9He gives the cattle their feed,
 and the young ravens that for which
 they cry.

10His delight is not in the
 strength of the horse,ⁿ
 neither does He take satisfaction in
 the legs of a man;

11[but] the LORD takes satisfaction in
 those who revere Him,
 those who place their hope in His
 covenant love.

12Extol the LORD, O Jerusalem!
 Praise your God, O Zion,

13for He has strengthened the bars of
 your gates,
 and has blessed your sons in your
 midst.

14He appoints peace^o in your
 boundaries,
 and satisfies you with the choicest of
 the wheat.

15He issues His orders to the earth;
 His word speeds swiftly on its way.

16He bestows snow like wool,
 and scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

17He hurls down His ice in fragments;¹
 who can withstand His cold?

18He issues His order and makes them
 melt.

He causes His wind to blow;
 then flow the waters.

19He announces His word^a to Jacob,
 His statutes and ordinances to Israel.

20He has not dealt so with any nation
 nor do they know His ordinances.
 Praise ye the LORD!

Let All Creation Praise God for Life

148 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD
 from the heavens,
 praise Him in the heights!

h) This word *emeth* is closely related to the word for "faithfulness" [*emunah*] and here connotes promise keeping and covenant faithfulness in His providential sustaining of the created universe.
 i) Those justified by grace through faith stand in sincere covenant relationship to God. Cf. Gen. 15:6; Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5, 17, 19; 130:3; Hab. 2:4. In each of these passages occurs this same word, *tsaddiq* ["righteous"] — the righteousness of God, imparted to the repentant, sincere believer, and finding expression through his yielded life. Cf. note at Ps. 140:13.

j) Hebrew *gerim* or "immigrants," those who dwell in a country not their own. They did not enjoy the full citizenship rights in the land of their adoption and could be oppressed or defrauded without much protection. But they were under the special protection of God, along with the similarly defenseless widows and orphans.

k) Our Great Physician in the Old Testament. 1) As their Creator and Owner.

m) Which no human hand has planted. n) In which warriors put their trust.

o) "Peace" [*shalom*] is accusative of manner: "He appoints your boundary with peace."

p) As hailstones.

q) God's grace in giving Israel His special revelation, over and above what He grants through nature.

²Praise Him, all His angels!
 Praise Him, all His hosts!
³Praise Him, sun and moon!
 Praise Him, all you radiant stars!
⁴Praise Him, heavens of heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens!
⁵Let them praise the name of the
 LORD,
 for it was He who commanded and
 they were created,
⁶He established them for ever and
 ever,
 and gave a decree that shall never pass
 away.

⁷Praise the LORD on earth,
 you sea monsters and all you ocean
 depths,
⁸fire and hail, snow and fog,
 you windstorm carrying out His orders,
⁹you mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars,
¹⁰you wild beasts and all cattle,
 creeping creatures and the winged
 birds,
¹¹you kings of the earth and all
 peoples,
 you princes and all judges of the earth,
¹²you young men and maidens,
 you old and young together, ¹³let them
 praise the name of the LORD;
 for His name alone is supreme!
 His majesty is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴He has raised up a horn^a for
 His people,
 a song of praise for all His godly ones,
 for the children of Israel, the people
 who are close to Him. Hallelujah!

God's People Rejoice in His Victory
149 Hallelujah! Sing to the
 LORD a new song,
 His praise in the congregation of the
 godly!

²Let Israel rejoice in his Maker,^t

let the children of Zion exult in their
 King.
³Let them praise His name with
 processional;
 let them sing praise to Him with
 timbrel and harp.
⁴For the LORD takes pleasure in His
 people,
 and adorns the humble^u with salvation.

⁵Let the godly rejoice in this
 honor;^v
 let them shout for joy on their beds.^w
⁶Let their throats [voice] hymns of
 adoration to God,
 with the two-edged sword in their
 hands,
⁷to bring retribution upon the nations
 and to rebuke the peoples,
⁸to bind their kings with fetters
 and their nobles with iron handcuffs,
⁹thus inflicting upon them the
 judgment decreed,
 to the glory of all His godly ones.
 Hallelujah!

The Completing Glorification
150 Praise ye the LORD! Praise
 God in His sanctuary;
 praise Him in His mighty firmament!^x
²Praise Him for His mighty deeds;
 praise Him according to His excelling
 greatness!

³Praise Him with the trumpet
 blast;
 praise Him with lyre and harp!
⁴Praise Him with timbrel and
 processional;^y
 praise Him on stringed instruments
 and flutes!
⁵Praise Him with clashing cymbals;
 praise Him with loud clanging cymbals!
⁶Let everything that has breath^z
 praise the LORD!
 Praise ye the LORD!^a

r) The music of the spheres. Do we hear it? The sacred poet did.

s) He has furnished them with power, prosperity, and pre-eminence; note Zacharias' song [Luke 1:69]. t) God had made them a nation, as well as having created each of them.

u) This is a standard term [anawim, "bowed over" or "bowing over"] designating the people of God who suffer oppression because they deny self-pride and self-interest, putting first their loyalty to God.

v) The honor which God bestows on them by delivering them — the "salvation" mentioned in vs. 4.

w) On the same beds on which they had wept out their laments during their days of oppression.

x) "The firmament established by His strength"; literally, "the firmament of His strength."

y) This word connotes a whirling or circular kind of dance performed by separate individuals, not by dancing partners or the like. z) "Every breath of life" [neshamah].

a) This concluding psalm answers four questions: Where, why, how, and by whom, is God to be glorified?

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

1 THE PROVERBS^a OF SOLOMON^b SON
of David,
king of Israel: ²To gain wisdom^c
and instruction,^d
to understand discerning words,
³to receive the instruction of prudence,
right, justice, and uprightness;
⁴to give insight^e to the simple,^f
to the young man knowledge and
discretion.

⁵A wise man will hear and increase
his learning.

A man of understanding will attain to
leadership,^g

⁶to understand a proverb and a figure,
the words of the wise and their
enigmas.^h

⁷Reverenceⁱ of the LORD is the
beginning of knowledge;
but foolish men despise wisdom and
instruction.

⁸My son,^j heed the instruction of your
father

and reject not your mother's teaching;
⁹for they are a fair garland upon
your head

and adornments for your neck.

¹⁰My son, if sinners entice^k you, do
not consent.

¹¹If they say, "Come with us; we will
lie in wait for blood;
we will ambush the innocent without
cause;

¹²we will swallow them like the
dead-realm,
and whole, like those going down
into the pit;

¹³we shall find all sorts of valuable
things

and we shall fill our houses with spoil;
¹⁴throw in your lot with us; all of us
shall have one purse"—

¹⁵My son, do not walk in the way
with them;

keep your feet from their path:^l

¹⁶for their feet run to evil and they
hurry to shed blood.

¹⁷For in vain the net is spread in the
sight of any bird;

¹⁸but these lie in wait for their own
blood;

they ambush their own lives.^m

¹⁹So is the way of each one destroying
for plunder;

it takes away the life of its followers.

²⁰Wisdomⁿ cries aloud in the street;
in the market places she lifts her voice;

²¹at the noisy intersections she calls;

a) The Hebrew word *Nisble*, "Proverbs," applies to a comparison. Bible proverbs are *wise sayings*, varying from moral maxims to the lengthy discourses of ch. 1-9.

b) Solomon is the principal author. Other inspired writers contributed, see 30:1; 31:1.

c) Wisdom is *practical, moral intelligence*, in harmony with the principles by which God runs the universe. d) From root "to chastise" so as "to instruct."

e) From root "to make naked," hence to see basic issues. f) One "wide open" to every opinion.

g) From root "to steer." h) "Involved terminology."

i) The theme emphasizes obedience to God and urges honoring parental teaching. j) "My pupil."

k) This is the verb from which "simple" of v. 4 is derived: "attempt to make a simpleton of you."

l) Two reasons for rejecting their offer: They are doing evil to others [v. 16], and they bring evil upon themselves [17-19].

m) Even a silly bird knows better than to approach a trap he sees being set; yet these sinners set a trap and fall in it themselves. The verbs in v. 18 are the same as in v. 11.

n) Wisdom is here personified.

in the entrances of the city gates^o
 she speaks her words:
 22^pHow long, O simple ones, will you
 love being simple?
 How long will scoffers delight in their
 mocking
 and fools despise knowledge?
 23^qTurn to my reproof!
 Look, I will pour out my spirit for you;
 I will disclose my words to you.
 24^rBecause I besought and you refused,
 I stretched out my hand and no one
 responded,
 25^sand you have treated all my counsel
 lightly,
 would have none of my reproof,
 26^tI also will laugh at your calamity;
 I will deride when terror comes to you,
 27^uwhen terror strikes you like a storm,
 and your calamity hits like a
 whirlwind,
 when distress and despair come
 upon you.

28^vThen they will beseech me, but
 I will^w not answer;
 they will seek me diligently, but
 will not find me.^x
 29^yBecause they despised knowledge,
 and did not choose
 reverence for the LORD,
 30^zwould have none of my counsel,
 scorned all my reproof,
 31^atherefore they will eat of the fruit
 of their way,
 will be sated with their own counsel.
 32^bFor the waywardness^c of the
 simple brings their death
 and the self-assurance of fools their
 destruction.
 33^dBut the one listening to me will
 dwell secure,
 will be quiet without dread of
 calamity."

2 MY SON, IF YOU WILL ACCEPT MY
 words,
 and store up my commandments
 within you,

2^eso that you make your ear attend to
 wisdom,
 and your heart reach out for
 discernment;
 3^fyes, if you beseech understanding,
 and lift your voice for discernment;
 4^gif you seek her as silver,
 and search for her as for hidden
 treasures;
 5^hthen you will understand reverence
 of the LORD
 and find the knowledge of God.
 6ⁱFor the LORD gives wisdom;
 from His mouth come knowledge and
 discernment.
 7^jHe has stored up sound wisdom^k for
 the upright;
 He is a shield to those walking in
 integrity,
 8^lthat He may guard the paths of
 justice;
 for He protects the way of His saints.^l

9^mThen you will understand right,
 justice
 and uprightness, every good road;
 10ⁿFor wisdom will enter into your
 heart;
 knowledge will be pleasant to your
 soul;
 11^odiscretion will protect you;
 discernment will guard you,^u
 12^pto deliver you from the way of evil,
 from men speaking perverted^v
 things,
 13^qwho leave the paths of uprightness
 to walk in the ways of darkness;
 14^rwho delight in doing evil, and exult
 in evil's perversity;^w
 15^swhose ways are crooked and their
 roads meandering.

16^tTo deliver^x you from the loose^y
 woman,
 from the wanton^z woman with her
 flattering words,
 17^awho forsakes the husband of her
 youth

o) In whose shade the elders sit.

p) Wisdom is here personified, a foreshadowing of the Word, the Son of God, but not identified with Him, for 8:22 tells a beginning, such as is not ascribed to the Son of God.

q) The penitent may be forgiven, but he must face the consequences of his sin, that the lesson may be learned, II Sam. 12:10.

r) Literally "turning"; see v. 23. They had turned the wrong way.

s) "Wisdom that results in successful living."

t) From root, "to love, desire," hence those loving and loved of God.

u) Compare with v. 8. God protects by giving man wisdom to protect himself.

v, w) "Upside-down." See Isa. 29:16 — topsy-turvyness. x) See v. 12.

y, z) Hebrew — alien or foreign, referring to female spies or foreign agents.

and forgets the covenant^a of her God;
¹⁸for her house sinks down to death;
 her roads to the shades;^b

¹⁹none going to her return, nor
 reach the ways of life.
²⁰So^c you may walk in the way of
 good men
 and keep the paths of the righteous.
²¹For the upright will inhabit the
 land
 and men of integrity remain in it;
²²but the wicked will be cut off from
 the land,
 and the treacherous plucked up
 from it.

3 MY SON, DO NOT FORGET MY
 teaching;
 let your heart keep my commandments;
²for length of days and years of life
 full of peace will they add to you.
³Let not lovingkindness and
 faithfulness leave you;
 bind them about your neck,^d
 write them on the tablet of your heart,
⁴thus finding favor and ideal
 understanding
 in the sight of God and of man.
⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart
 and lean not on your own
 understanding;
⁶in all your ways acknowledge^e Him,
 and He will direct^f your paths.
⁷Be not wise in your own eyes;
 revere the LORD and depart from evil;
⁸it will be healing to your body^g and
 nourishment to your bones.

⁹Honor the LORD with your
 substance
 and with the first fruits of all your
 income.
¹⁰So shall your barns be filled with
 plenty
 and your vats overflow with new wine.
¹¹Despise not, my son, the disci-
 pline^h of the LORD
 nor loathe His reproof;
¹²for whom the LORD loves He
 corrects,ⁱ

as a father the son in whom he
 delights.
¹³Blessed is the man who has found
 wisdom,
 the man who obtains understanding;
¹⁴for her profit is better than that of
 silver
 her increase superior to fine gold.
¹⁵She is more valuable than jewels;
 all desirable things are not comparable
 to her:
¹⁶Length of days is in her right hand,
 riches and honor in her left;
¹⁷her ways are pleasant ones, peaceful
 all her paths.
¹⁸She is a tree of life^j to those laying
 hold of her,
 making happy each one holding
 her fast.

¹⁹The LORD by wisdom founded the
 earth;
 by understanding He established the
 heavens;
²⁰By His knowledge the deeps pour
 forth,
 and the skies distil the dew.

²¹My son, let them not leave your
 sight:
 keep sound wisdom and discretion,
²²for they shall be life to your soul
 and an ornament to your neck.
²³Then you will walk your way
 confidently
 and will not stumble;
²⁴when you lie down it will not be
 in dread;
 for when you lie down your sleep
 will be sweet.
²⁵Fear not sudden terror,
 the stormy blast^k of the wicked when
 it comes;
²⁶for the LORD will be in your inward
 parts^l
 keeping your foot from being caught.
²⁷Hold back no benefit from those
 entitled^m to it,
 when it is in the power of your hand
 to perform.
²⁸Say not to your neighbor, "Go and
 come back

a) Marriage vows. b) Inhabitants of Sheol.
 c) Continues thought of vv. 11, 12, 16: how discretion and discernment protect. Positive aspect
 emphasized here. d) As you would a signet. e) Lit. "know." f) Lit. "make straight."
 g) "Navel," the vital center of the body's being before birth. h) "Instruction" [by chastisement].
 i) "Reproves by punishment." j) See Gen. 2:9. Repeated in Prov. 11:30, 13:12, 15:4.
 k) See 1:27. l) God will be within us, a force to aim and practice right. m) Lit. "its owners."

and tomorrow I will give"; when you already have it.
²⁹Do not devise harm against your neighbor,
 for trustingly he lives beside you.
³⁰Strive not with a man without cause, when he has done you no wrong.
³¹Do not envy a violent man, nor choose any of his ways;
³²for an abomination to the LORD is the perverse,
 but His intimate counsel is with the upright.
³³The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked,
 but the dwelling of the righteous He blesses.
³⁴As for scorners, He scorns them, but to the humble He gives grace.
³⁵The wise will inherit honor,ⁿ but fools carry away shame.^o

4 HEAR, O SONS, THE INSTRUCTION of a father;
 listen carefully to gain insight.
²Since I give you good doctrine^p do not forsake my teaching.
³For I was once a son with my father,^q tender and the only one in the sight of my mother,
⁴and he taught me, saying to me:
 "Let your heart hold fast my words;
 keep my commandments and live.
⁵Get wisdom, get understanding;
 forget not, neither turn away from the words of my mouth.
⁶Do not forsake her and she will protect you;
 love her, and she will guard you.
⁷The beginning of wisdom is: Get^r wisdom!
 and in every gain^s get understanding.
⁸Exalt her and she will lift you up;
 she will bring you honor when you embrace her.
⁹A fair garland she will place on your head,

bestow upon you a glorious crown."
¹⁰Hear, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many.
¹¹In the wise way I have directed you; I have led you on straight roads.^t
¹²When you walk, your step will not be hindered;
 and if you run, you will not stumble.
¹³Hold fast to instruction, do not let go;
 guard her, for she is your life.
¹⁴Enter not the path of the wicked, nor continue in the way of evil men.
¹⁵Avoid it; do not go on it; turn from it, and pass on;
¹⁶for they sleep not unless they do evil;
 their sleep is taken away unless they cause stumbling.
¹⁷For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.
¹⁸But the path of the righteous is like the dawning light^u
 shining brighter, brighter until the full-orbed day.^v
¹⁹The way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
 they know not at what they stumble.
²⁰My son, listen to my words; incline your ear to my sayings;
²¹let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart;
²²for they are life to those finding them
 and healing to all their flesh.
²³Above all that you guard, watch over your heart,^w
 for out of it are the sources of life.
²⁴Put away from you a crooked mouth, and put far from you perverse lips;
²⁵Let your eyes look forward
 and your gaze straight ahead of you.^x
²⁶Consider well^y the path for your feet
 and all your ways will be sure.
²⁷Turn not to the right or to the left;
 keep your foot away from evil.^z

n) From root, "to be heavy."

o) From root, "to be light" [of no consequence]. Such fools heap shame upon themselves.

p) "What is received."

q) We may here picture king David instructing his son Solomon. The father had many sons, but the mother, Bathsheba, thought of Solomon as her only son.

r) Of primary importance in obtaining wisdom is the *determination* to acquire it. s) "Getting."

t) Or "roads of uprightness." u) Lit. "light of brightness."

v) Lit. "the establishment of the day" [noon]. w) Hebrew equivalent of mind.

x) In contrast to v. 24. y) Lit. "weigh," before starting journey.

z) From wrong paths pull back the one foot there. When both are there, advice will do little good.

5 MY SON, LISTEN TO MY WISDOM;^a
 1incline your ear to my discernment;
 2that you may protect discretion;
 that your lips may guard knowledge.
 3For the lips of a loose^b woman drop
 honeyed words^c
 and her palate^d is smother than oil;
 4but in the end she is bitter as
 wormwood,
 sharp as a devouring^e sword.
 5Her feet go down to death; her steps
 take hold of hell.
 6The path of life she does not
 consider;^f
 her paths meander, but she knows
 it not.
 7Now, my sons, listen to me,
 and depart not from the words of my
 mouth.
 8Keep your feet far from her;
 do not go near the door of her house;
 9lest you give your honor to others,
 and your years to the merciless;
 10lest aliens take their fill of your
 wealth,
 your labors go to a foreign house
 11and you moan when your end comes,
 when your flesh and body are
 consumed,
 12and you exclaim, "Alas, I have hated
 discipline,
 and my heart despised reproof;
 13I have not listened to the voice of
 my teachers,
 nor inclined my ear to my instructors;
 14I was almost in utter ruin
 in the midst of the congregation and
 assembly."
 15Drink waters from your own cistern,^g
 running water out of your own well.
 16Should your springs^h be dispersed
 abroad,
 your courses of waterⁱ in the streets?
 17But let them be only your own,
 and not those of aliens, too.
 18Let your own fountain^j be blessed;
 derive delight from the wife of your
 youth;
 19a lovely hind, a graceful doe,

let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
 be always infatuated with her love;
 20for why, my son, should you be
 infatuated with a loose woman,
 and embrace the bosom of an outsider?
 21For directly before the eyes of the
 LORD are a man's ways,
 and all his paths are well considered.^k
 22His own iniquities seize the wicked,
 and he is held fast by the ropes of
 his own sin.
 23He dies for lack of discipline;
 but with the magnitude of his folly
 he is infatuated.^l

6 MY SON, IF YOU HAVE BECOME
 surety^m for your neighbor,
 if you have struck handsⁿ for another,^o
 2you have been snared by the words
 of your mouth,
 by the words of your mouth you have
 been caught^p—
 3do this at once, my son, and deliver
 yourself,
 for you have come into the hand of
 your neighbor:
 Go, humble yourself; beg of your
 neighbor desperately,^q
 4permit no sleep to your eyes nor
 slumber to your eyelids;
 5deliver yourself as a captured gazelle,
 as a bird from the hand of the fowler.
 6Go to the ant, you sluggard, consider
 her ways, and be wise;
 7who, having no chief, official, or ruler,
 8provides her bread in the summer,^r
 gathers her food in the harvest.
 9How long will you lie down, O
 sluggard?
 When will you get up from your
 sleep?
 10"Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
 a little folding of the hands^s to rest"—
 11and your poverty will come upon
 you as a bandit,
 your want like an unyielding warrior.
 12A worthless man, a wicked man,
 is he who walks with a crooked^t
 mouth,

a) The only time in the book that "my" is added to "wisdom." b) See 2:16.

c) Lit. "drop honey." d) Her talk. e) Lit. "a sword of mouths."

f) See 4:26 for the same verb. g) Essentially, stay faithful to your own wife.

h, i) Figurative of offspring; children.

j) Your wife. k) See v. 6. l) Blind to his real situation.

m) "Interchanged with."

n) "Made a pledge." o) Or "for a stranger."

p) Such business transactions were of a speculative nature. q) To release you.

r) Many Palestine farmers set fire to all ant hills near their threshing floors.

s) For an afternoon siesta. t) See 4:24.

¹³winking his eyes, shuffling his foot, signaling with his fingers.^u

¹⁴With perversity in his heart, devising evil continually, he sows discord.

¹⁵Therefore suddenly will his calamity come; in a moment will he be broken and there will be no healing.

¹⁶There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven^v that are an abomination to Him:

¹⁷haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands shedding innocent blood,

¹⁸a heart devising wicked schemes, feet quick to run to evil,

¹⁹a false witness breathing out lies, and he who is sowing discord among brothers.^w

²⁰Keep, my son, the commandment of your father, and do not neglect the teaching of your mother;

²¹bind them upon your heart always; fasten them around your neck.

²²When you are walking about, it will lead you;

when you are lying down, it will watch over you;

and when you awake, it will speak to you.

²³For to you the commandment is a lamp, the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline a way of life

²⁴to keep you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of an unfamiliar woman.^x

²⁵Do not lust for her beauty in your heart;

neither let her eyelashes captivate you;

²⁶for a harlot seeks only for a loaf of bread,^y

but another man's wife stalks a priceless soul.

²⁷Can a man carry fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned?

²⁸Or can a man walk on hot coals

and his feet not be scorched?

²⁹So is he who visits his neighbor's wife;

whoever touches her will not go unpunished.

³⁰A thief is not despised if he steals to satisfy his vital need when he is hungry;

³¹nevertheless, when caught, he must restore sevenfold;

he must give all the substance of his house.^z

³²He who commits adultery is lacking in sense;

he who does it is destroying himself;

³³wounds and dishonor he will find, and his disgrace will not be wiped away.

³⁴For jealousy rouses a strong man's anger;

in the day of vengeance he will not spare.

³⁵He will not regard any ransom^a — not accept, when you multiply bribes.

7 MY SON, KEEP MY WORDS and store up my precepts within you.

²Keep my precepts and live and my teaching as the pupil of your eye.

³Bind them upon your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

⁴Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your close friend;

⁵to keep you from the unknown woman,

from the female stranger with flattering words.

⁶For at the window of my house I looked out through my lattice

⁷and I saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths a senseless young man.

⁸Passing along the street near her corner,

he takes the way to her house,^b

⁹in the twilight,^c in the evening,

u) He says one thing with his mouth, another with his gestures.

v) Seven are mentioned here and many more are implied.

w) See v. 14. Of all that the LORD hates, the "sower of discord" is the worst.

x) Making conversation foreign to the character of Israel's revealed religion.

y) The verb is lacking in the Hebrew.

z) Although sympathized with he must still pay the consequences.

a) As was done in the case of the thief. b) Not knowing the danger.

c) Lit. "cool." A cool breeze starts in the East just about the time of sunset.

in the middle^d of the night, in the darkness.^e

¹⁰And look, a woman comes to meet him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty mind.^f

¹¹She is loud and lewd; her feet do not stay in her own house;

¹²now in the street, now in the market places,

near every corner she sets her ambush.

¹³So she catches him and kisses him; with a hardened^g face she says to him:

¹⁴"Sacrifices of peace offerings I owed; today I paid my vows;^h ¹⁶thereforeⁱ I come out to meet you, to seek your face; and I have found you.^j

¹⁶I have decked my couch with coverings, colored sheets of Egyptian linen.

¹⁷I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

¹⁸Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning;

let us delight ourselves with love,

¹⁹For my husband is not at home;

he has gone on a distant journey;

²⁰a bag of money he has taken with him;

at full moon he will come home.^k

²¹By her sophistries she draws him away;

with the flattery of her lips she entices him.

²²Suddenly he goes after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter,^l

as in fetters a fool to his punishment,^m

²³till an arrow strikes his liver;

as a bird hastening to the snare,ⁿ

for he does not know that it will cost his life.

²⁴Now therefore, my sons, listen to me;

listen to the words of my mouth:

²⁵Let not your heart incline toward her ways;

do not stray upon her paths,
²⁶for many victims she has brought down;

a great multitude are her slain.

²⁷Her house is the way of Sheol, descending to the chambers of death.

8 DOES NOT^o WISDOM CALL AND discernment utter her voice?

²On the top of the heights along the way,

at the crossroads^p she takes her stand;

³beside the gates, in front of the town, from the portals' entrance she cries out;

⁴"To you, O men, I call;

my voice is directed to the sons of men.

⁵O simple ones, learn to get insight.

O fools, make your mind understand.

⁶Hear, for I will declare noble things, from my lips things that are right.

⁷For my mouth shall utter truth;

wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

⁸All the words of my mouth are in righteousness,

there is nothing twisted or crooked in them;

⁹they are all clear to him who is discerning

and right to those finding knowledge.^q

¹⁰Take my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.

¹¹For wisdom is better than jewels, all desirable things are not comparable to her.

¹²I, wisdom, dwell with insight, I find out knowledge through deliberating.

¹³Reverence of the LORD is hatred of evil.

Pride, arrogance, an evil way and a perverse mouth I hate.

¹⁴I have counsel and sound wisdom, I am understanding,^r power is mine;

¹⁵by me kings reign

and rulers decree righteously;^s

¹⁶by me princes rule

and all noble judges of the earth.

d) Translated "apple" in v. 2 for the pupil is in the middle of the eye. e) He loiters for hours.

f) She pretends love for all, but she loves no one. g) Lit. "she hardened her face."

h) See Lev. 7:15ff. The sacrificer must eat the meat that day or the next, so she has plenty of good food to offer him.

i) Her first approach is to tempt him with food. She needs a companion with whom to enjoy it.

j) Now it is flattery; he is the man of her dreams.

k) So they will not be surprised by his unexpected return.

l, m) Reluctantly, but not completely aware of the danger.

n) He now quickens his pace as he yields to her charms.

o) In contrast with the unknown woman. p) Lit. "at the house of the paths."

q) Truth is quickly perceived by those who are sincerely seeking it, when it is proclaimed to them.

r) Understanding and wisdom are identical. s) Lit. "right."

¹⁷I love those loving me; those diligently seeking me will find me.^t
¹⁸Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness;^u
¹⁹my fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my increase than choice silver.
²⁰In the way of righteousness I walk firmly in the midst of the paths of justice,
²¹in order to bestow^v real substance^w upon those loving me, and I will fill their treasuries.

²²The LORD made me in the beginning of His way,^x before His works of old; ²³I was poured out^y from ages past, from the beginning, before the earth was. ²⁴When there were no depths, I was born; when there were no springs abundantly flowing; ²⁵before the mountains settled down. I was brought forth before the hills; ²⁶when the earth and the field were yet unmade as well as the first dust particles of the world. ²⁷When He^z established the heavens, there was I;^a when He inscribed a circle upon the face of the deep, ²⁸when He made firm the skies from above, when the fountains of the deep were given their force, ²⁹when He gave to the sea its bounds, that the waters should not transgress His spoken word,^b ³⁰then I was beside Him, a master builder;^c I was daily full of delight, ³¹rejoicing before Him all the time, rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth, for my delight was with the sons of men.

³²Therefore^d now, O sons, listen to me; for happy are those who keep my ways. ³³Hear instruction, be wise, and

do not refuse it. ³⁴Happy is the man listening to me, watching daily at my gates, keeping watch at my doorposts. ³⁵For the one finding me finds life, and wins approval from the LORD. ³⁶But the one missing^e me does violence to his own soul; all those hating me love death.

9 WISDOM HAS BUILT HER^f HOUSE, she has hewn out her seven pillars,^g ²she has slaughtered her meat,^h she has mixed her wine, she has also prepared her table;ⁱ ³she has sent forth her maidens; she calls upon the top of the high places of the city: ⁴"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" As for the one lacking understanding,^j she says to him: ⁵"Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mixed. ⁶Quit the company of the simple and live; walk in the way of understanding. ⁷He who corrects a scorner heaps abuse upon himself, and he who reproves a wicked man gets bruises in return.^k ⁸Do not reprove a wise man and he will love you; ⁹reprove a wise man and he will become yet wiser; teach a righteous man and he will add to his grasp of things. ¹⁰Reverence for the LORD is the beginning^l of wisdom and knowledge of the Most Holy^m is understanding. ¹¹For by me your days will be multiplied, the years of your life increased.ⁿ ¹²If you are wise, you benefit yourself,^o and if you scorn, you alone will bear it."^p

¹³A foolish woman is noisy; being simple^q she knows nothing. ¹⁴She sits at the door of her house, on the seat

t) Life's dearest prize is within reach of everyone.

u) These do not naturally go together, but wisdom will make it possible to combine them.

v) Or "cause to inherit."

w) "Being," "existence," hence, "possessions," "substance." Compare our term "real estate."

x) His way of creation. y) From the LORD Himself? z) The LORD.

a) Compare these verses with John 1:1ff., but here wisdom is feminine in gender, and comes into being. Although vitally related, *logos* [word] and *chokmah* [wisdom] cannot be equated without doing violence to the eternal pre-existence of the Christ. b) Lit. "his mouth." See Gen. 1:9. c) See S. of Sol. 7:1. Or "young child." See Lam. 4:4. The verbs that follow usually apply to children's play or laughter [as the name Isaac from this root]. When applied to adults they usually describe frivolous merrymaking. Here they describe unusual joy and happiness.

d) Since she enjoys such an ancient and intimate relationship with God, and has always been devoted to their welfare. e) Or "sinning against."

f) In contrast to the alien woman who misuses her husband's house. See 7:19.

g) Seven is the number of perfection. Wisdom's house has perfect support, for it is resting upon the complete truth of God. h) See 7:14. i) See Ps. 23:5. j) Lit. "heart."

k) Lit. "his blemishes."

l) A different word from that in 1:7. "Wisdom" is also substituted for "knowledge."

m) Lit. "holy ones." Perhaps a plural of majesty.

n) Note the place of individual choice in increase of life. o) Lit. "you are wise for yourself."

p) "You hurt no one except yourself." q) Lit. "wide-openness."

in the high places of the city, ¹⁵to call to those passing by her way, to those going straight on their paths: ¹⁶"Whoever is simple let him turn in here!"^r

As for the one lacking in understanding, she says to him: ¹⁷"Stolen waters are sweet; secret bread is pleasant."

¹⁸But he does not know that ghosts^s are there; her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

10 A WISE SON MAKES HIS FATHER glad, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

²Treasures of wickedness bring no profit, but righteousness saves from death.^t

³The LORD does not let the soul of the righteous go hungry, but He frustrates^u the desire of the wicked.

⁴Always poor is he who works with an indolent hand, but the hand of the diligent brings wealth.

⁵He who gathers during the summer is a prudent son, but a son who sleeps during harvest acts shamefully.

⁶Blessings are upon the head of the righteous,^v but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

⁷The memory of the righteous^w continues a blessing, but the name of the wicked shall rot.

⁸The wise of heart accepts commandments, but the prating^x fool will fall headlong.

⁹He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who takes a crooked course will be found out.

¹⁰He who winks with his eye^y causes heartache, and a prating fool will fall headlong.^z

¹¹The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.^a

¹²Hatred stirs up contentions, but love covers all transgressions.^b

¹³On the lips of the discerning one wisdom is found, but a rod is for the back of one devoid of understanding.^c

¹⁴Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish hastens ruin.

¹⁵The wealth of the rich man is his fortress; the ruin of the poor is their poverty.

¹⁶The labor of the righteous is for life; the increase of the wicked is for sin.

¹⁷He who heeds instruction is on the way of life, but he who neglects reproof goes astray.^d

¹⁸He who hides hatred has lying lips^e and he who spouts forth slander is a fool.^f

¹⁹Among a multitude of words transgression is not missing, but he who restrains his lips is prudent.

²⁰The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value.

²¹The lips of the righteous nourish many, but the foolish perish from lack of understanding.

²²It is the blessing of the LORD that brings riches and toiling will add nothing to it.^g

²³To a fool doing wickedness is sport, just as wisdom is to a man of understanding.

²⁴What the wicked fears will come upon him, but the desire of the righteous will be granted.

²⁵When the whirlwind passes over, the wicked is no more but the righteous has an enduring foundation.

²⁶As vinegar to the teeth and as smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy one to those who send him.

²⁷Reverence for the LORD adds days,^h but the years of the wicked will be shortened.

²⁸The hope of the righteous is gladness, but the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing.

r) See v. 4.

s) Lit. "shades." See note on 2:18. t) Not only in a spiritual way; it lengthens life on earth.

u) "Thrusts away" just when they think it is within their grasp.

v, w) A singular noun. "Wicked" is plural. The righteous are in the minority.

x) "Foolish of lips." y) See 6:13.

z) Repeated from v. 8. The emphasis on malicious behavior is hurt to others, and with it idle talk to oneself. a) See v. 6. b) That is, overlooks them.

c) The course of one is self-directed, the other must be driven by discipline.

d) Thus missing the path of life.

e, f) Deceit can take two forms, either to conceal the truth or to utter falsehood.

g) Not that one should not toil, but rather that unless God blesses, all toil is in vain.

h) Lengthens life.

²⁹The way of the LORD is a stronghold to the upright, but ruin to workers of iniquity.

³⁰The righteous will never be moved, but the wicked shall not stay in the land.

³¹The mouth of the righteous blossoms forth with wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be eliminated.¹

³²The lips of the righteous know what delights others, but the mouth of the wicked is perverse.¹

11 DECEITFUL SCALES ARE AN abomination to the LORD, but an accurate weight is His delight.^k

²Pride comes, and then shame, but wisdom is with the humble.

³The integrity of the upright guides them, but the glibness of the treacherous destroys them.

⁴Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.¹

⁵The righteousness of the blameless makes straight his way, but by his own wickedness the wicked falls.

⁶The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the treacherous are trapped by their own greediness.

⁷When a wicked man dies, so does expectation perish; yes, the hope of his strength dies out.^m

⁸The righteous is delivered from trouble, and the wicked takes his place.

⁹With his mouth the profane man destroys his neighbor, but the righteous are delivered by their knowledge.

¹⁰In the prosperity of the righteous the city rejoices, and there is joy when the wicked perish.

¹¹By the blessingⁿ of the upright a city is advanced, but by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.

¹²He who despises his neighbor lacks good sense and a man of understanding will hold his peace.

¹³He who is a habitual talebearer

betrays confidence,^o but he who is trustworthy^p keeps a matter hidden.

¹⁴Where there is no leadership^q the people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.

¹⁵Certain calamity comes to him who is surety for a stranger, but he who hates suretyship is secure.

¹⁶A gracious woman gets honor, while violent men gain wealth.

¹⁷A kindly man does himself good, but a troublemaker hurts himself.

¹⁸The wicked gets deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness gets a sure reward.^r

¹⁹Surely righteousness brings life, but he who pursues evil brings about his own death.

²⁰Those who are evil-minded are an abomination to the LORD but those who are wholehearted in their ways^s are His delight.

²¹Be assured,^t the evil man will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will escape.

²²Like a gold ring in a swine's snout, so is^u a beautiful woman who neglects good taste.

²³The righteous desire only good, while the wicked can expect only wrath.

²⁴There is one who gives liberally, yet he grows richer,^v and one who withholds what he should give,^w and suffers want.

²⁵The charitable soul will be enriched,^x and he who waters, will himself be watered.

²⁶The people will curse the man who holds back the grain,^y but a blessing will be on the head of the one selling it.

²⁷He who diligently seeks good finds favor, but evil comes to him who searches for it.

²⁸He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a fresh leaf.

i) "Cut off."

j) The righteous man works for harmony and good will; he has the making of a good speaker, of an interesting converser; but the wicked stirs up discord.

k) God takes a personal interest in the honesty of business transactions.

l) A clear conscience has victory in it. m) Lit. "perishes." n) His good influence.

o) Or "reveals a secret." p) Lit. "faithful of spirit." q) See note on 1:5.

r) Rarely does it look that way; instead, to be perfectly honest often seems a handicap; but there is a stimulus in it which no ill-gotten gain can match. s) "Wholehearted of way."

t) "Hand to hand," "agreed."

u) "Like . . . so is" are added to clarify the meaning. The Hebrew leaves to the reader the supplying of the words of comparison. They are not in the Hebrew itself. v) "Increases."

w) "What is right." x) "Will be made fat." y) In time of famine to inflate the price.

²⁹He who troubles his own house will inherit wind, and the foolish shall be a servant of the wisehearted.

³⁰The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and a wise man wins friends.^z

³¹Behold, the righteous will be repaid on the earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!

12 WHOEVER LOVES DISCIPLINE loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is like a cow.^a

²A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but He condemns the man who devises evil.

³A man will not be established in wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved.

⁴A wife with strength of character^b is a crown to her husband,^c but she who acts disgracefully is rotteness in his bones.

⁵The thoughts of the righteous are reliable, but the suggestions^d of the wicked are deceptive.

⁶The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright delivers them.^e

⁷The wicked are overthrown and are no more,^f but the house of the righteous shall stand.

⁸For his common sense a man is commended, but a man with twisted thoughts^g shall be despised.

⁹Better is he who is lightly esteemed, but has a servant, than he who boasts of himself, and lacks bread.

¹⁰A righteous man understands the needs^h of his livestock, but even the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

¹¹He who tills his ground will have his fill of bread, but he who follows vain pursuits is lacking in sense.

¹²The wicked man desires the booty of evil men, but the root of the righteous bears fruit.ⁱ

¹³An evil man is ensnared by the

transgression of his lips, but the righteous comes forth from trouble.

¹⁴From the fruit of his words a man is well satisfied, and the work of a man's hands will come back to him.

¹⁵The way of the foolish is right in his own eyes, but the wise listens to advice.

¹⁶As for the foolish, his displeasure is known at once,^j but the discerning man ignores an insult.

¹⁷He who speaks truth gives correct evidence, but a false witness practices deception.

¹⁸Some speak rashly like the piercing of a sword, but the tongue of the wise heals.

¹⁹Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue only for the wink of an eye.

²⁰Deceit is in the heart of those who plan evil, but those who plan good have joy.

²¹No harm befalls the righteous, but the wicked are filled up with trouble.

²²Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.

²³A man of insight conceals his knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

²⁴The hand of the diligent will rule, but the slack hand will be forced to serve.^k

²⁵Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a kind word makes it glad.

²⁶The righteous seeks guidance from his friend, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

²⁷A slothful man will not roast his prey,^l but the possessions of the diligent man are precious.

²⁸Life is in the way of the righteous, a pathway where there is no death.^m

13 A WISE SON ACCEPTSⁿ HIS FATHER'S correction, but a scorner does not listen to rebuke.

²From the fruit of his mouth a man

z) Lit. "takes souls." a) As stupid. b) "A wife of strength."

c) This word in its primary sense means "master," which throws light on the early concept of the marriage relationship. d) Or, "attempts at leadership." See note on 1:5.

e) The upright defend the innocent victims of the wicked. f) "Are not." See Gen. 5:24.

g) Or, "distorted of mind."

h) "Knows the soul of"; only one who knows God can understand his neighbor.

i) The Hebrew has only "the root of the righteous gives." The sense is that the wicked always wants what belongs to somebody else, the righteous earns his own living.

j) Lit. "on the day," "at the time." And this because, like a child, he thinks aloud.

k) "Under tribute." l) Or, "hunt."

m) This is one of the few assertions of immortality in the Old Testament, and the only certain one in the Book of Proverbs. n) The verb is absent in the Hebrew.

will eat bountifully, but the desire of the treacherous is for violence.

³He who guards his mouth controls himself, but he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

⁴The soul of the lazy one craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is well supplied.

⁵A righteous man hates a lying word, but a wicked man acts odiously^o and shamefully.

⁶Righteousness guards him who is blameless in the way, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

⁷There is one who considers himself^p rich, yet has nothing; and one who considers himself^a poor, yet possesses great wealth.

⁸His riches are a ransom for a man's life, but the poor do not even hear a rebuke.^r

⁹The light of the righteous dances, but the lamp of the wicked is put out.

¹⁰Only through pride comes contention, for wisdom is with those who take advice.

¹¹Wealth acquired rashly dwindles away, but he who gathers by labor⁸ increases.

¹²Hope drawn out makes the heart sick, but a longing come true is a tree of life.

¹³He who despises the Word is in debt toⁱ it and he who reveres the commandment will be rewarded.

¹⁴The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life to deliver from the snares of death.^u

¹⁵Ideal understanding lends attractiveness, but the way of the treacherous is rugged.

¹⁶Every person of insight acts with forethought,^v but a fool displays his folly.

¹⁷An unreliable messenger precipi-

tates trouble, but a faithful envoy brings healing.

¹⁸Poverty and shame will be for him who refuses instruction, but the one listening to reproof will be honored.

¹⁹Longing fulfilled is sweet to the soul, thus it is an abomination to fools to give up evil.

²⁰He who walks with wise men will be wise,^w but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

²¹Calamity pursues sinners, but prosperity rewards the righteous.

²²A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children,^x but the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

²³Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor, but it is swept away for lack of justice.

²⁴He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to chasten him.^y

²⁵The righteous eats to satisfy his need,^z but the wicked's stomach never has enough.^a

14 A WISE WOMAN BUILDS HER own house, but a foolish one with her own hands tears it down.

²He who walks in his uprightness reveres the LORD, but he who is perverse in his ways despises Him.

³In the mouth of the foolish man lies a rod for his pride, but the lips of the wise preserve them.

⁴Where there are no oxen, the stable is clean, but much increase comes by the strength of the ox.^b

⁵A faithful witness will not lie, but a false witness breathes out falsehoods.^c

⁶Should a scorner seek wisdom, it is not for him;^d but for the discerning knowledge is readily acquired.

o) Lit. "causes a bad smell."

p, q) Or, "makes himself" - the poor person with great thoughts and the wealthy person whose thinking is limited to his own immediate interests.

r) The rich man's offense is often exaggerated to get his money. s) Lit. "by hand."

t) He has broken his covenant pledge to the LORD; he has defaulted in his obligation.

u) i.e., "fatal snares." v) Lit. "knowledge."

w) Conversing personally with a noble character; also reading the works of splendid writers, certainly of the sacred writers.

x) Not merely material wealth, but their exemplary and enriching lives.

y) Lit. "seeks him with chastening." z) Lit. "soul." a) "Is always lacking."

b) One has less work with no oxen, but also less income. So where few worshipers attend church, it is easier for the janitor, but how about the church's impact on the community?

c) Repeated from 6:19.

d) He lacks the prerequisite - reverence for the LORD. He does not love it for its own sake.

⁷Leave the presence of a man who is a fool, for you will not discern words^a of knowledge there.

⁸The wisdom of the man of insight is in his anticipating his way, but the folly of fools is deceiving.

⁹The bond^c between foolish men is guilt, but between the upright it is good-will.

¹⁰The heart knows its own bitterness, and no stranger can intermingle with its joy.

¹¹The house of the wicked shall be overthrown, but the tent of the upright shall prosper.

¹²There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way of death.

¹³Even in laughter the heart may be sad and joy may eventuate in grief.

¹⁴The perverse man will get filled up on his own ways, and the good man gets satisfaction from his.

¹⁵The simple believes every word, but the man of insight makes sure where he is going.

¹⁶A wise man is cautious and avoids misfortune, but a fool parades himself and feels confident.

¹⁷He who is quick-tempered acts foolishly,^e and a man who plans wickedness is hated.

¹⁸The simple have folly for their portion, but people of insight have knowledge for a crown.

¹⁹Evil men shall bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

²⁰Even by his neighbor the poor is spurned, but the friends of the rich man are many.

²¹He sins who despises his neighbor,^h but happy is he who is gracious to the humble.

²²Do they not go astray who plot mischief? Loyal love and stability are for those who plan good.

²³In all toil there is profit, but mere talk leads only to want.¹

²⁴The crown of the wise is their wealth (of wisdom), but the folly of fools is still folly.

²⁵A faithful witness delivers souls, but he who breathes out lies is a betrayer.

²⁶In reverence for the LORD one has strong confidence and for his children there shall be a refuge.

²⁷Reverence for the LORD is a fountain of life to deliver from the snares of death.¹

²⁸In the multitude of people is a king's glory, and in a lack of people lies the ruin of a prince.

²⁹He who is slow to anger is of great understanding, but whoever is hasty of spirit exalts folly.

³⁰A relaxed^k mind makes for physical health; but passion is rottenness to the bones.

³¹He who oppresses the poor insults his Maker, and he who is kind to the needy honors Him.¹

³²The wicked is overthrown by his mischief-making, but the righteous, while dying, has confidence.^m

³³In the heart of a man of understanding wisdom quietly rests, but she must make herself known to the inner self of fools.ⁿ

³⁴Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.^o

³⁵The king's favor is toward the servant who deals wisely, but his wrath is evidenced toward him who acts shamefully.

15 A PLEASANT ANSWER TURNS away wrath, but a harsh word arouses anger.^p

²The tongue of the wise makes knowledge attractive, but the mouth of fools gushes forth with folly.

³The eyes of the LORD are in every place, observing the evil and the good.

⁴A soothing tongue is a tree of life, while perversity in it breaks down the spirit.

e) Lit. "lips." f) "Interpreter," "intermediary."

g) Most of us regret occasions when we failed to control our temper, for it hurt ourselves and others. h) For instance, the Pharisee in the temple, but he is not unique.

i) Not what he says but what he does is the measure of a person. j) Cf. 13:14.

k) Free from tension. l) For he co-operates with God.

m) This passage certainly seems to imply life after death for the righteous.

n) Wisdom must clamor loudly before being recognized by fools.

o) A national maxim every citizen does well to make his own.

p) Another maxim for daily behavior, to be practiced.

⁵The foolish rejects his father's correction, but he who remembers reproof is prudent.

⁶In the house of the righteous is great treasure, but the income of the wicked is freighted with trouble.

⁷The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but not so the mind of fools.

⁸The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.^a

⁹The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who seeks after righteousness.

¹⁰There is severe discipline for him who forsakes the way, and he who hates reproof will die.^r

¹¹Sheol^s and Abaddon^t lie open before the LORD, how much more the hearts of the sons of men!

¹²A scorner does not like to be rebuked, so he will not go to the wise.

¹³A happy heart makes the face look sunny; but in grief of heart the spirit is broken.^u

¹⁴The heart of a discerning person seeks knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish feeds on folly.

¹⁵All the days of the poor are unfortunate, but the glad-hearted has a continual feast.^v

¹⁶Better a little with reverence for the LORD than great treasure and lamentation with it.

¹⁷Better a vegetable meal where love is, than a fattened ox^w and hate with it.

¹⁸A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but one slow to anger quiets contention.

¹⁹The sluggard's path is like a growth of thorns,^x but the way of the upright is leveled.^y

²⁰A wise son makes his father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother.

²¹Folly is joy to one who lacks sense, but a discerning man takes a straight course.^z

²²For lack of advice plans go wrong, but with many counselors they are accomplished.

²³What joy to a man is the answer of his mouth; for how good is a word at the right time!

²⁴The path of life leads upward for the wise, that he may avoid Sheol below.^a

²⁵The LORD tears down the house of the proud, but He protects the boundaries of the widow.

²⁶Wicked thoughts are an abomination to the LORD, but kindly words are pure.^b

²⁷He who plunders for profit troubles his own house, but the one who hates bribes will live.

²⁸The mind of the righteous ponders before answering, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil things.

²⁹The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.

³⁰The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report nourishes^c the bones.

³¹The ear that listens to the reproof of life will stay among wise men.^d

³²He who ignores correction despises himself, and he who listens to reproof acquires intelligence.

³³Reverence of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, for before honor must be humility.

16 ORDERLY THINKING^e BELONGS to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.^f

²All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the LORD^g weighs the spirits.

³Roll your work onto the LORD and your plans will be achieved.

⁴The LORD has made everything for His purpose, even the wicked for the day of calamity.

q) Another way of saying that obedience is better than sacrifice.

r) They are doomed to get discipline the hard way. s, t) Synonyms for the grave.

u) In joy one naturally shares with others, but in grief he is more likely to retreat within himself, causing an impossible burden. v) Even though poor. w) Served as juicy steaks.

x) He imagines it so. y) The way of the righteous is cleared for his coming before he arrives.

z) Lit. "makes his going straight."

a) The righteous is moving away from the grave rather than toward it, as most men do.

b) Are recognized as coming from a pure heart. c) Lit. "fattens."

d) Who will furnish the reproof. e) Lit. "orderly arrangement of the mind."

f) Man can think logically, but only God can teach him how to say it most effectively, especially on the spur of the moment. g) Note the frequency of the name of God in vv. 1-9.

⁵Every one proud of heart is an abomination to the LORD; be assured^a he will not go unpunished.

⁶By loyal love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, but turning from evil is through reverence for the LORD.¹

⁷When the ways of a man please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

⁸Better is a little with righteousness by fair means than a large income without justice.

⁹A man's mind plans his road, but the LORD directs his steps.¹

¹⁰A godly decision is on the lips of the king; in judgment his mouth does not sin.^k

¹¹The balance and scales of justice are the LORD's, and all the weights in the bag are His work.¹

¹²To do wickedness is an abomination to kings, for the throne is established by righteousness.

¹³Righteous lips are a delight to a king and he loves him who speaks what is right.

¹⁴The wrath of a king is a messenger of death, but a wise man will appease it.

¹⁵In the light of a king's face is life, and his favor is as showers of spring.

¹⁶How much better to get wisdom than gold, as understanding is rather to be chosen than silver.

¹⁷The highway of the upright turns away from evil, and he who guards his life takes heed to his way.

¹⁸Before destruction comes pride, and before a fall a proud spirit.^m

¹⁹It is better to be humble in spirit among the poor, than to divide the plunder with the proud.

²⁰He who acts wisely concerning the Word will find good, and happy is he who trusts in the LORD.

²¹The wise in heart will be called a discerning man, and pleasant speech will increase learning.ⁿ

²²Prudence is a fountain of life to its possessor, but folly is the chastisement of fools.

²³The mind of the wise teaches his mouth and adds learning to his lips.

²⁴Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.^o

²⁵There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.^p

²⁶A worker's appetite works for him, for his mouth urges him on.^q

²⁷A worthless man plots harm, and his speech is like a searing flame.

²⁸A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates familiar friends.^r

²⁹A man of violence entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good.

³⁰He who winks his eyes to plan perverse things, pinching his lips,^s brings harm to pass.

³¹A hoary head is a crown of glory: it is found in the way of righteousness.^t

³²Better is he who is slow to anger than the mighty hero, and he who rules his spirit than he who captures a city.

³³The lot is cast into the lap, but from the LORD is its every decision.^u

17 BETTER IS A DRY MORSEL WITH quiet than a house full of feasting^v with strife.

²A slave who acts wisely will rule over the son who acts shamefully, and he will share the inheritance with the sons.^w

³The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests hearts.^x

⁴An evildoer listens to wicked lips,

h) See 11:21. i) Only by a walk with God can man turn from evil.

j) Man must do the stepping and should plan which way to go, but always with God in mind, for He has a plan with us and a task for us; He also supplies the strength to walk. See Jer. 10:23.

k) He is not true to his divine anointing if he acts otherwise.

l) Let the king remember this, lest he think he is God.

m) The world says, "Have self-confidence." His word teaches, "Trust in God, then advance confidently." n) Make others more amenable to learning.

o) Not flattering but encouraging words. p) Identical with 14:12.

q) That we must work to keep body and soul together God in His goodness has turned into a blessing. r) Gossip is from the devil; it always hurts.

s) Pretending to leave something damaging unsaid. t) Since long life is a blessing of God. u) God has much more to do with our biography than we take for granted. Look back over your life and see what critical moves were not your own idea. v) Lit. "sacrifices of strife."

w) Joseph and Daniel are outstanding examples. x) And we are in His crucible.

and a liar pays attention to a vicious tongue.^y

^bHe who mocks the poor insults his Maker, and he who rejoices at another's calamity will not go unpunished.

^cGrandchildren are the crown of old age, and the glory of children is in their fathers.

^dExcellent speech is not suitable in a fool, much less deceitful speech in a prince.

^eA bribe is a precious stone in the eyes of the one receiving it; whatever he turns to, he causes to succeed.^z

^aHe who covers an offense seeks love, but he who brings up a matter again, alienates a close friend.

^bA rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.

^cA wicked man seeks only rebellion; but a stern messenger will be sent against him.

^dRather a man should encounter a bear robbed^a of her cubs, than a fool in his folly.

^eWhoever returns evil for good, calamity will not leave his house.^b

^fThe beginning of strife is like letting out water; so quit before the quarrel breaks forth.

^gHe who judges the wicked to be righteous and he who judges the righteous to be wicked, even both are an abomination to the LORD.

^hWhy is this — a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, when he has no capacity?^c

ⁱA friend is perpetually friendly, and a brother is born for adversity.^d

^jA man without good judgment is he who makes an agreement, becoming surety in the presence of his neighbor.

^kHe who loves transgression loves strife, and he who opens wide his mouth^e seeks destruction.

^lThe man of a crooked mind does

not find prosperity, and he who has a perverted tongue tumbles into trouble.

^mHe who fathers a fool, it is grief to him; yes, the father of a fool is joyless.

ⁿA cheerful heart makes a good cure,^f but a broken spirit makes the bones dry up.

^oA wicked man accepts a personal bribe to pervert the ways of justice.

^pWisdom is before the eyes of the discerning man,^g but the eyes of the fool are upon the ends of the earth.^h

^qA foolish son is grief to his father and bitterness to her who bore him.

^rTo impose a fine on the righteous is not good, nor to flog noble men for their uprightness.

^sHe who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who is calm of spirit is a man of understanding.

^tEven a fool when he is silent is thought to be wise,ⁱ and he who keeps his lips closed is considered intelligent.

18 HE WHO WILFULLY SEPARATES himself seeks his own desire and breaks out against all sound wisdom.

¹A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own opinion.

²The wicked brings contempt with him^j and with disdain brings reproach.^k

³The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream.^l

⁴It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, to deprive a righteous man of justice.

⁵The lips of a fool lead to strife, and his mouth calls for a beating.

⁶A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul.

⁷The words of a gossip are tempting morsels, and they go down into the inner parts of the body.

y) Not only is the slanderer doing wrong, but also the one who listens to him.

z) In order to keep the bribe. This is sarcasm. No genuine success can result. a) Lit. "bereaved."

b) He perpetuates unpleasant relationships. c) Lit. "mind."

d) A brother may help in the hour of need; the friend is always there.

e) Lit. "makes high his opening." f) Up-to-date therapy, unsurpassed.

g) She is his one pursuit, immediately perceived and grasped.

h) The fool has some far-off objective he never reaches.

i) Who of us does not regret the occasion when he did not practice this hint?

j) Contempt for others. k) Against himself.

l) The more one concentrates in his thinking, the more fresh ideas present themselves.

⁹Also, he who is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.^m

¹⁰The name of the LORD is a strong tower; into it runs the righteous and cannot be touched.ⁿ

¹¹The rich man's wealth is his strong city and as a high^o wall — so he thinks.

¹²Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but before honor goes humility.

¹³He who answers before he hears, it is folly to him and reproach.

¹⁴A man's spirit will endure sickness,^p but a broken spirit who can carry?

¹⁵A discerning mind gets knowledge and the ear of the wise seeks information.^q

¹⁶A man's gift makes room for him^r and brings him before great men.

¹⁷He who states his case first seems right until another comes to examine him.

¹⁸The lot puts an end to disputes and separates powerful men.^s

¹⁹A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and quarrels are as bars of a castle.^t

²⁰With the fruit of his mouth a man's stomach is filled; with the increase of his lips he will be satisfied.^u

²¹Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

²²He who has found a wife has gained a goodly portion, and obtains favor from the LORD.

²³The poor use entreaties, but the rich answer roughly.

²⁴A man has many friends^v for companionship,^w but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.^x

19 BETTER IS THE POOR MAN WHO walks in integrity than a fool who is perverse of lips.

²Even as it is not good to be ignorant, so he who hurries his feet misses the mark.^y

³The foolishness of man ruins his affairs, but his heart is resentful toward the LORD.^z

⁴Wealth adds many friends, but as for the poor, his only friend leaves him.

⁵A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will not escape.

⁶Many will entreat the favor^a of a generous man, and everyone is the friend of the man who gives gifts.

⁷All the brothers of the poor despise him, how much more do his friends go far from him! He pursues them with words,^b but they are gone.^c

⁸He who gains wisdom loves his own life; he who maintains insight finds success.

⁹A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will perish.

¹⁰Luxury is not fitting for a fool, much less for a slave to rule over princes.^d

¹¹It is prudent for a man to restrain his anger; it is his glory to overlook an offense.^e

¹²A king's anger is like the roaring of a lion, but his favor is as dew upon the grass.

¹³A foolish son is a calamity to his father, and the quarreling of a wife is as a constant dripping of water.

¹⁴House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

¹⁵Laziness makes one sleep heavily; an idle person will suffer hunger.

¹⁶He who keeps the commandments keeps his own soul, but he who despises His way shall die.

¹⁷He who is gracious to the poor is lending to the LORD; He will repay him for his benevolent action.

m) Not producing is next to destroying. n) Above the danger.

o) The rich man thinks he is protected, but the righteous actually is.

p) The will to live when there is something to live for.

q) With few available writings, most information came by ear.

r) Money helps to pave the way to temporal success.

s) Who are about to fight. The result brings harmony. t) Preventing entry.

u) Good speech is profitable. v) Lit. "a man of friends." w) Lit. "to act as companions."

x) Which has been found supremely true of Jesus.

y) Or "sins." The contrast is between those who do not know and those who only think they know.

z) When he can find no one else to blame for his failure then, instead of blaming himself he is likely to find fault with God. a) "Smooth the face." b) Of entreaty. c) His friends.

d) The fool certainly and the slave probably does not have the ability to spend or to direct profitably. e) Lit. "to pass over."

¹⁸Discipline your son, for there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction.^f

¹⁹A man of great wrath must bear his penalty, for if you deliver him, you must do it again.

²⁰Hear advice and accept instruction, that you may be wise the rest of your days.

²¹Many schemes are in a man's mind, but the counsel of the LORD will stand.^g

²²What is desired in a man is steadfast love, for better is a poor man than a liar.

²³Reverence for the LORD leads to life; he who remains satisfied with that will not be visited by harm.

²⁴The sluggard buries his hand in the dish and will not even bring it back to his mouth.

²⁵Strike a scorner, and the simple will become prudent; and when a discerning man is reproved, he will gain knowledge.^h

²⁶A son who slanders his father and drives out his mother acts shamefully and disgracefully.

²⁷Cease, my son, to hear instruction only to stray from the words of knowledge.

²⁸A worthless witness scoffs at justice and the mouth of the wicked swallows iniquity.

²⁹Judgment is ready for scorners and flogging for the back of fools.

20 WINE IS A SCORNER, STRONG drinkⁱ a brawler, and whoever gets drunk^j is not wise.

²The fury of a king is like the roaring of a lion; he who makes him angry endangers his own life.^k

³It is an honor for a man to keep away from strife, but every foolish man will be quarreling.

⁴In the autumn the sluggard will

not plow; he will search at harvest time and have nothing.

⁵Planning in a man's mind is deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

⁶Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but who can find a faithful man?

⁷He who walks righteously in his integrity — how happy are his children after him!

⁸A king who sits on the throne of judgment winnows all evil with his eyes.

⁹Who can say, "I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin?"

¹⁰Diverse weights and diverse measures^l are both alike an abomination to the LORD.

¹¹Even a child reveals himself by his acts, whether what he does is pure and right.^m

¹²The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the LORD has made them both.ⁿ

¹³Be not overfond of sleep lest you come to poverty; keep your eyes open and have plenty of food.

¹⁴"Bad! Bad!" says the buyer;^o but when he goes his way, then he boasts.

¹⁵There is gold and a mass of costly stones, but the understanding lips are a precious jewel.

¹⁶Take the man's garment who is surety for a stranger, and hold him in pledge when he is surety for foreigners.^p

¹⁷Sweet to a man is food gained by deceit, but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel.

¹⁸Every plan is confirmed by counsel, and thus by wise guidance you carry on war.

¹⁹He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with him who opens wide his lips.

²⁰He who curses his father or his

f) A boy is never hopeless; his ruin is not inevitable.

g) "Man proposes, but God disposes."

h) A discerning man needs only a verbal reproof. The scorner will profit from no amount of discipline, but he can be made an object lesson to help teach the immature [simple].

i) Fermented from fruits other than grapes, such as dates and pomegranates. j) Lit. "staggers."

k) "Sins against his own soul."

l) Pound and pound; bushel and bushel. Some unscrupulous merchants used one size for buying and another for selling. m) So, as Jesus put it, "By their fruits you shall know them."

n) God made us so that we may daily increase our knowledge and understanding.

o) The buyer wants to make the seller feel that the sales price is too high.

p) For that man will financially be bankrupt.

mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.

²¹An estate may be obtained hastily at the beginning, but its end will not be blessed.

²²Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the LORD and He will save you.^a

²³Diverse weights are an abomination to the LORD, and false scales are wrong.

²⁴A man's steps are ordered by the LORD; how then can a man understand his way?^r

²⁵It is a snare for a man to say rashly, "It is holy," and after vows to consider more thoroughly.^s

²⁶A wise king winnows the wicked and drives the wheel over them.^t

²⁷The spirit^u of man is a lamp of the LORD, searching out all the inward parts.

²⁸Lovingkindness and faithfulness preserve the king, and his throne is upheld by justice.

²⁹The glory of young men is their strength, and the attractiveness of old men is their gray head.

³⁰Blows that wound cleanse away evil, and are strokes that reach the innermost parts.

21 THE HEART OF THE KING IS AS streams of water in the hand of the LORD; wherever He wills, He turns it.

²Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs hearts.^v

³To practice righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.^w

⁴Haughty eyes, a lustful^x heart and the tilling of the wicked are sin.^y

⁵The plans of the diligent lead only to plenty, but every one who is hasty comes only to want.

⁶The getting of riches by a lying

tongue is a fleeting vapor, a pursuit of death.

⁷The violence of the wicked snares them, for they refuse to act with fairness.

⁸The way of some men is perverse and wrong,^z but as for the pure, his work is right.

⁹It is better to live in the corner of a housetop than to share a house^a with a contentious woman.

¹⁰The soul of the wicked desires evil; his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

¹¹When the scorner is punished, the simple become wise; when one is considerate of the wise man, he acquires knowledge.^b

¹²The righteous man deals considerately with the house of the wicked; the wicked are tumbled into ruin.^c

¹³He who closes his ears to the cry of the poor will himself also cry and not be heard.

¹⁴A gift in secret quiets anger, and a present in the bosom calms fury.

¹⁵The doing of justice is a joy to the righteous, but to the workers of iniquity it is a calamity.

¹⁶A man who strays from the way of prudence will find rest in the assembly of the dead.^d

¹⁷He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

¹⁸The wicked is a ransom for the righteous and the treacherous for the upright.^e

¹⁹It is better to live in a desert land^f than with a contentious and fretful woman.

²⁰Desirable treasure and oil are in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man devours them.

²¹He who follows after righteousness and loving-kindness finds life, righteousness and honor.

q) Exemplified so perfectly when David refused to put Saul out of the way, I Sam. 26:8-10.

r) He must receive help from God, who will direct his steps, although he may never completely understand the way. s) The man rashly dedicates something to God before he counts the cost.

t) As was done in threshing. u) Lit. "life-breath," see Gen. 2:7. v) Compare 16:2.

w) So said God's prophet [I Sam. 15:22], and the scribe to Jesus [Mark 12:33].

x) Lit. "broad," with unlimited desire. y) Because not for a God-honoring purpose.

z) Lit. "foreign," contrary to what should characterize them.

a) Lit. "than a house of a companion."

b) The ignorant are moved by fear, but the wise by concern for others.

c) See 25:21-22. His thoughtfulness accentuates the evil of his neighbor. d) Lit. "shades."

e) God sees to it that ultimately right triumphs over wrong; hence the godly, too, triumph over the ungodly, whatever appearances may suggest otherwise. f) Where no one else lives.

²²A wise man scales the city of the mighty and brings down the stronghold in which they trust.

²³He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

²⁴Proud, haughty, "scorner" is his name, who acts with arrogant pride.

²⁵The desire^g of the sluggard slays him, for his hands refuse to work;

²⁶all day long he feels greedy; but the righteous gives^h and does not hold back.

²⁷The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent!

²⁸A false witness will perish, but a man who listens faithfully will be at liberty to speak.ⁱ

²⁹A wicked man has an impudent face, but as for the upright, he ponders his ways.

³⁰There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, there is no counsel against the LORD;^j

³¹The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

22 A GOOD NAME IS TO BE CHOSEN rather than great riches and loving favor than silver and gold.

²The rich and the poor meet together — the LORD is Maker of them all.^k

³A prudent man sees danger and hides himself, but the simple continue on and suffer for it.

⁴The results of humility^l — reverence for the LORD — are riches, honor and life.

⁵Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will go far from them.

⁶Educate a child according to his life requirements; even when he is old he will not veer from it.

⁷The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender.

⁸He who sows injustice will reap

nothing, and the rod of his fury will fail.

⁹He whose eye is generous^m will be blessed, for he gives food to the poor.

¹⁰Cast out the scorner and strife will go out, and contention and abuse will cease.

¹¹He who loves purity of heart and whose speech is pleasant will have the king as his friend.

¹²The eyes of the LORD protect knowledge, and He turns aside the words of the treacherous.

¹³The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside; I will be slain in the streets!"ⁿ

¹⁴The mouth of strange women is a deep pit; he who is cursed of the LORD falls into it.

¹⁵Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

¹⁶He who oppresses the poor to make gain for himself, or he who gives to the rich,^o surely he will suffer want.

¹⁷Incline^p your ear and listen to the words of the wise; apply your mind to know them;

¹⁸For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you; if all of them are ready upon your lips.

¹⁹That your trust may be in the LORD I have informed you this day, even you.

²⁰Have not I written for you previously of counsels and knowledge, ²¹so that I might make you know certainty, even the words of truth, that you might return words of truth to those who send you?

²²Do not rob the poor because he is poor, nor oppress the afflicted in the gate; ²³for the LORD will plead their cause and He will take the life of those killing them.

²⁴Do not associate with one given to anger, and with a wrathful man do not keep company, ²⁵lest you learn his ways and get yourself in a snare.

g) He desires only the fruit, not the labor.

h) The sluggard waits for life to come to him; the righteous gives himself to life unsparingly.

i) He will not be interrupted in his testimony. j) None that prevails.

k) We are all horn equal before God. l) True humility will lead a man to revere God.

m) Lit. "good." n) He always finds an excuse for his laziness.

o) Gives a bribe. A man must be scrupulous both in how he makes and how he uses his money.

p) A new section begins here, resembling chapters 1-9.

²⁶Be not among those who give pledges, who are securities for debts; ²⁷if you do not have the means to pay, why should your bed be taken from under you?^q

²⁸Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.^r

²⁹Do you see a man skilful in his work? Before kings he will stand; he shall not stand before the undistinguished.

23 WHEN YOU SIT DOWN TO EAT with a ruler, consider well what is before you ²and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite;^a ³do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food.

⁴Do not toil to get wealth; surrender that personal ambition.^t

⁵Do your eyes light on it? But it is gone; for riches surely take wings like an eagle that flies heavenward.

⁶Eat not the bread of him whose eye is selfish,^u neither desire his delicacies; ⁷for as one who inwardly figures the cost,^v so is he; "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you;^w ⁸you will vomit up the bit you have eaten, and spoil your compliments.^x

⁹Do not speak to the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

¹⁰Remove not the ancient landmark, and the fields of the fatherless do not enter, ¹¹for their Redeemer is mighty; He will defend their cause against you.

¹²Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge.

¹³Withhold not correction from a child; if you beat him with a rod, he will not die;^y ¹⁴beat him with a rod, and you will deliver his soul from

Sheol. ¹⁵My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will rejoice, mine too; ¹⁶yes, my soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right. ¹⁷Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue^z in the reverence of the LORD all the day; ¹⁸for surely there is a future^a and your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁹Hear, my son, and be wise and direct your heart in the way. ²⁰Be not among winebibbers, among gluttonous eaters of flesh; ²¹for the drunkard and the glutton^b will be poverty-stricken, and drowsiness^c will clothe a man with rags. ²²Heed your father who begot you and despise not your mother when she is old. ²³Buy the truth and do not sell it, along with wisdom, instruction, and understanding.^d

²⁴The father of the righteous will gladly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will find joy in him; ²⁵let your father and mother find joy; let her who bore you rejoice. ²⁶My son, give me your heart and let your eyes delight in my ways. ²⁷For a harlot is a deep pit; an alien woman is a narrow well;^e ²⁸she also lies in wait like a robber and increases the treacherous among men.^f

²⁹Who has sorrow? Who has woe? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who feels hurt without cause? Who has bloodshot eyes? ³⁰They who tarry long over wine, they who go to sample mixed wine.^g ³¹Look not upon wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup,^h when it goes down smoothly. ³²In the end it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. ³³Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind will utter upside-down things; ³⁴yes, you will be as one who lies down in the heart of the sea, or as one who lies down upon the top of a mast. ³⁵"They struck me; I did not feel it! They beat

q) To this day good people have regretted putting down their names as security, for it ruined them financially. r) The landmarks showed the bounds of one's property; to move them involved theft. s) Lit. "if you are the owner of desire." To "put a knife to the throat" is an Eastern expression meaning to put restraint on one's appetite. t) Lit. "desist from your own understanding."

u) Lit. "evil," the opposite of the "generous [good] eye," cf. 22:9. v) Of the food he is serving. w) He hopes you will refrain.

x) When you try to compliment your host you will choke on the words.

y) The correction will prevent his death. See v. 14.

z) The verb supplied to clarify the sense. The Hebrew lacks a verb. a) Lit. "an afterwards."

b) Note how drunkenness and gluttony are kindred sins, both intemperate.

c) The result of excessive indulgence. d) Though it cost you to secure it, share it with others.

e) Therefore difficult to escape from.

f) She not only is wicked but leads the innocent into crime.

g) See 9:2. We might paraphrase: "they who go to sample cocktails."

h) "When it gives its life in the cup."

me; I did not know it! When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."¹

24 BE NOT ENVIOUS OF EVIL MEN
nor desire to be with them;

²for their minds devise violence, and their lips speak mischief.

³By wisdom is a house built and by understanding it is established;

⁴for by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

⁵A wise man is strong,¹ and a man of knowledge adds to his strength;^k

⁶for by wise guidance you will wage your war, and there is victory in a multitude of counselors.

⁷Wisdom is too high for the foolish; in the gate he opens not his mouth.

⁸He who plans evil will be called a mischief-maker.

⁹Folly's schemes are sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to men.

¹⁰If you faint in the day of adversity,¹ your strength is small.^m

¹¹Deliver those who are being taken to their death; and from those staggering toward slaughter will you withhold yourself?

¹²If you say, "See, we did not know this," does not the One who weighs hearts perceive it? And He who watches over the soul, does He not know and shall He not repay each man for his deeds?

¹³My son, eat honey, for it is good and its drippings are sweet to your taste; ¹⁴know that wisdom is thus to one's soul; if you have found it, then there will be a future and your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁵Lie not in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; do no violence to his home; ¹⁶for the righteous may fall seven times and yet arise, but the wicked stumbles headlong in adversity.

¹⁷When your enemy falls, do not rejoice, and when he stumbles, let not your heart be glad; ¹⁸lest the LORD see it and it appear wrong in His eyes, and

He turn away His wrath from him.

¹⁹Fret not yourself^a because of evil-doers, neither be envious of the wicked; ²⁰for there will be no future for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will burn out.

²¹My son, revere the LORD and the king; do not mingle with those who are given to change;^o ²²for their calamity will arise suddenly and who knows the ruin that will come to them both?

²³To^p have respect of persons^q in judgment is not good.

²⁴Peoples will curse and nations abhor him who says to the wicked, "You are righteous." ²⁵But those who rebuke the wicked will find delight, and a good blessing^r will come upon them.

²⁶To give the right answer is like a kiss on the lips.

²⁷Prepare your work outside and get it ready for yourself in the field; afterwards, then, build your house.

²⁸Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause, for would you deceive with your lips? ²⁹Say not, "As he did to me, so I will do him; I will repay a man according to his deeds."

³⁰I passed by the field of a lazy man, by the vineyard of a man who lacked understanding; ³¹and, see, it was completely overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. ³²So I looked and took it to heart; I observed and received instruction. ³³"Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest"^s — ³⁴and your poverty will come upon you as a bandit, your want like an unyielding warrior.

25 THESE ARE ALSO PROVERBS OF Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied:

²It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; it is the glory of a king to search one out.^t ³The heavens for height and the earth for depth and there is no searching^u out the mind of a king. ⁴Take away the dross from sil-

i) The drunkard is determined to start another round of drinking, for thus he momentarily escapes reality. j) "In strength." k) "Strengthens power."

l, m) A play on words: "tsarah . . . tsar." n) "Do not make yourself hot." See Pr. 37:1.

o) Those who frequently change allegiance.

p) The following is probably another collection of proverbs.

q) "Recognition of faces" — discrimination. r) "Blessing of good."

s) See 6:10f. The Hebrew varies slightly. t, u) A play on words.

ver and a vessel will result^v for the smith. ⁶Take away the wicked from before the king and his throne will be established in righteousness.

⁶Do not put yourself forward in the presence of the king and do not stand in the place of great men; ⁷for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than that you should be put lower in the prince's presence, as your eyes have seen.^w

⁸Do not go out hastily to strive, else what will you do in the outcome when your neighbor puts you to shame? ⁹Argue your cause with your neighbor, but do not reveal the secret of another;^x ¹⁰lest the one hearing you put you to shame, and your ill repute never cease.

¹¹Like apples of gold in settings of silver, so is a word spoken at the right moment.^y

¹²Like a gold ring and an ornament of gold, so is a wise reprover for a listening ear.

¹³Like the cold of snow in the day of harvest,^z so is the faithful messenger to the one who sends him; for he refreshes the soul of his master.

¹⁴Like clouds and wind when there is no rain, so is a man boasting of a false gift.

¹⁵When one is slow to anger, a ruler is persuaded, and soft speech will break a bone.

¹⁶Have you found honey? Eat only what you need,^a lest being filled with it, you vomit it up.

¹⁷Let your foot be rarely in your neighbor's house, lest he become weary of you and hate you.

¹⁸As a scattering club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow, so is a man bearing false witness against his neighbor.

¹⁹Like a broken tooth or a foot out of joint, so is trust in a faithless man in a time of adversity.

²⁰Like one who takes off a garment

on a cold day, or like vinegar upon soda, so is a singer of songs to a heavy^c heart.

²¹If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; ²²for live coals you will heap upon his head, and the Lord will reward you.

²³The north wind brings forth rain, and a concealed^d tongue an angry face.

²⁴It is better to live in the corner of a housetop than to share a house with a contentious woman.^e

²⁵As cold waters to a weary soul, so is good news from a far country.^f

²⁶Like a trampled fountain or a polluted spring, so is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

²⁷To eat much honey is not good, nor for men to seek their own glory.^g

²⁸Like a city whose wall is broken down, so is a man whose spirit is without restraint.

26 AS SNOW IN SUMMER AND AS rain in harvest, so a place of honor is not fitting for a fool.

²As a sparrow wanders and a swallow flies about, so an unjustified curse does not alight.^h

³A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools.

⁴Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you, too, be like him.

⁵Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.ⁱ

⁶He cuts off his own feet and drinks poison^j who sends a message by the hand of a fool.

⁷As the legs of a lame man hang useless, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.^k

⁸Like one binding a stone in a sling is he who gives honor to a fool.^l

⁹As a thorn that goes up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

v) "Come forth." w) As our Lord suggested in His parable [Luke 14:7-11].

x) Do not draw outsiders into the dispute. y) Lit. "upon its revolvings."

z) Which relieved the intense heat. See II Kings 4:18f. a) Lit. "eat your sufficiency." c) "Bad."

d) Talking behind one's back. e) See 21:9. f) Especially to one far away from home.

g) Lit. "glory, their glory."

h) "Come." Another reading is, "...curse comes to him [the one who makes it]."

i) Size up him and the occasion and respond accordingly. j) "Violence."

k) He applies it wrongly, l) It is put out of commission.

¹⁰A master performs all things, but he who hires a fool, hires a passer-by.^m

¹¹As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.

¹²Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

¹³The sluggard says, "There's a lion in the road! There's a lion in the streets!"ⁿ ¹⁴As the door turns on its hinges, so does a sluggard on his bed.

¹⁵The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; it tires him to return it to his mouth.^o ¹⁶The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who answer^p with intelligence.

¹⁷Like him who catches a dog^q by the ears, so is he who, passing by, involves himself in a quarrel not his own.

¹⁸Like a madman who hurls firebrands, arrows and death,

¹⁹so is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, "Was I not joking?"

²⁰For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer,^r contention ceases. ²¹As charcoal to hot embers, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man for keeping a strife aflame.

²²The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body.^s

²³Fervent lips and a wicked heart are like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross.^t

²⁴He who hates, pretends with his lips, but he harbors deceit within; ²⁵when he speaks pleasantly, do not trust him, for there are seven abominations in his heart; ²⁶though his hatred is hidden by deceit, his wickedness will be revealed before the congregation.

²⁷He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it come back upon him.^u

²⁸A lying tongue hates those it crushes, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

27 DO NOT BOAST ABOUT TOMORROW for you do not know what a day will bring forth.^v

²Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.^w

³A stone is heavy and sand is weighty, but the offenses of a fool are heavier than both.

⁴Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

⁵Better a rebuke revealed than love concealed.^x

⁶Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

⁷He whose appetite is satisfied disdains^y a honeycomb, but to him who is hungry everything bitter is sweet.

⁸Like a bird who wanders from her nest, so is a man who wanders from his place.

⁹Oil and perfume make the heart rejoice, as does the pleasantness of a friend's suggestions from the heart.^z

¹⁰Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend, and go not to your brother's house in the day of your trouble. Better a neighbor who is near than a brother who is far away.

¹¹My son, be wise, and make my heart rejoice, that I may answer him who reproaches me.^a

¹²A prudent man sees evil and hides himself, but the simple go on and are punished.^b

¹³Take the man's garment who is surety for a stranger, and hold him in pledge who is surety for an alien woman.^c

¹⁴He who blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, will have it reckoned to him as a curse.

¹⁵A constant dripping on a rainy day and a contentious woman are alike; ¹⁶to restrain her is like restraining the wind; the oil^d of his right hand betrays him.^e

m) "Those who pass by." n) A variant of 22:13. o) A variant of 19:24.

p) Lit. "return." This could be a reference to eating as in v. 15.

q) Dogs were not domestic pets, but ran wild. r) No gossip, we would say.

s) The same as 19:8. t) Gives the appearance of genuine solid silver.

u) If dug or rolled for another. v) A figure of giving birth. w) Beware of autobiographies.

x) There is partial rhyming in the Hebrew, a rare occurrence. y) "Tamples."

z) "Advice of soul." a) The teacher's one defense - the success of his students.

b) Almost identical with 22:3. c) Similar to 20:16.

d) The oil was perfumed, its perfume fills the place. e) Lit. "calls."

¹⁷Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens the face of another.^f

¹⁸He who watches over the fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who protects his master will be honored.

¹⁹As in water face answers to face, so the heart of one man answers to another.

²⁰Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, even as a man's eyes are never satisfied.

²¹The crucible is for silver, and the furnace for gold, and a man is tested by what he praises.^g

²²Though you crush the fool in a mortar with a pestle among the crushed grain, yet his foolishness will not leave him.

²³Know thoroughly the condition of your flocks;^h keep your mind on your herds; ²⁴for riches are not forever — and is a crown from generation to generation?ⁱ ²⁵The grass appears, yes, the tender grass is seen, when the herbage of the mountains has been gathered in.^j ²⁶The lambs are for your clothing; the goats furnish money for a field.^k ²⁷There will be enough goats' milk for your food, for the food of your household, and a living for your maidens.^l

28 THE WICKED FLEE WHEN THERE is no one pursuing, but the righteous are as fearless as a young lion.

²When a land transgresses, it has many rulers; but when there is a man of discernment and knowledge,^m stability continues on.

³A poor man who oppresses the weak is like a cloudburst that leaves no nourishment.ⁿ

⁴Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law contend with them.

⁵Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand all about it.

⁶Better is a poor man walking in his integrity, than a perverse double-dealer,^o though he be rich.

⁷He is a discerning son who keeps the law, but a companion of gluttons puts his father to shame.

⁸He who augments his wealth by interest and increase,^p gathers it for him who is considerate of the poor.

⁹He who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

¹⁰The one who causes the righteous to go astray in an evil way shall fall into his own pit, but the blameless man^q shall gain a good heritage.

¹¹Wise in his own eyes is a rich man, but a discerning poor man sees through him.

¹²When the righteous rejoice, great is the glory; but when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.

¹³He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will receive mercy.

¹⁴Blessed is the man who is always reverent; but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

¹⁵Like a roaring lion or a prowling^r bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people.

¹⁶A prince who lacks understanding is cruelly oppressive, but he who hates covetousness will prolong his days.

¹⁷A man who is guilty of the blood^s of another, let him flee to the pit; let no one help him.

¹⁸Whoever walks wholeheartedly will be saved, but the perverse in his double-dealing will fall in a moment.^t

¹⁹He who tills the soil will have plenty of food, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

²⁰A faithful man will have great blessings, but he who chases wealth shall not escape the penalty.

²¹To show partiality is not good; yet

f) As for instance when matters are discussed from two different angles and are seen out of different experiences, so that both may learn.

g) "Is tested by his praise," for it reveals his own preferences.

h) There follows in the succeeding verses a picture of the advantages of agricultural life above those of the precarious riches and glory of city life.

i) Riches are not handed down many generations before they are squandered. Not so simple the rural homestead. j) As soon as one crop is harvested, another appears.

k, l) Rural economy is a stable one. It is self-sufficient. m) Lit. "knowing."

n) It is unexpected and takes men unawares. They are prepared to be exploited by those already in power. o) "Perverse in his two ways." p) Cf. Lev. 25:36. q) "Complete."

r) Hungry, searching for food. s) "Oppressed [laden] because of the blood." t) Lit. "in one."

for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.

²²He whose eye is evil hastens after wealth, but he does not know that want will come upon him.

²³He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue.

²⁴Whoever robs his father and his mother, and says, "It is not wrong," is the companion of one who destroys.

²⁵The greedy man stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the LORD will be enriched.

²⁶He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will escape.

²⁷He who gives to the poor will not lack, and he who hides his eyes^u will receive many curses.

²⁸When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous increase.

29 THE MAN WHO IS OFTEN REPROVED but stiffens his neck will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.

²When the righteous increase, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan.

³The man who loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, but he who associates with harlots wastes his substance.

⁴By justice the king makes his land secure, but one who must be bribed^v overthrows it.

⁵The man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net upon his steps.

⁶In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare, but the righteous man sings and rejoices. ⁷The righteous man knows the rights of the weak; the wicked man does not understand such knowledge.

⁸Scorners set a city aflame, but wise men turn wrath away.

⁹If a wise man argues with a foolish man, he^w only rages and laughs and there is no quiet.

¹⁰Bloodthirsty men^x hate the man of integrity, but the upright seek his life.^y

¹¹A fool gives full vent to his anger,^z

but the wise man, holding it back, quiets it.

¹²If a ruler listens to false suggestions all his officials will be wicked.

¹³The poor and the oppressor meet; the LORD gives light to the eyes of both.

¹⁴The king who judges the weak faithfully, his throne shall be established forever.

¹⁵The rod and reproof give wisdom, but an undisciplined child causes his mother shame.

¹⁶When the wicked increase, transgression multiplies, but the righteous will observe their fall.

¹⁷Correct your son and he will give you rest, yes, he will give joy to your soul.

¹⁸Where there is no vision^a the people run wild; but happy is he who keeps the law.

¹⁹By mere words a servant will not be corrected; although he understands, there will be no response.

²⁰Have you seen a man of hasty words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

²¹He who pampers his servant from a child, afterwards shall have him for a son.^b

²²A quick-tempered man stirs up strife, and a wrathful man abounds in wrong.

²³A man's pride will bring him low, but the lowly in spirit obtains honor.

²⁴The partner of a thief hates himself; he heard the curse,^c but says nothing.

²⁵The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD will be lifted up.

²⁶Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice due a man comes from the LORD.

²⁷An evil man is an abomination to the righteous, but a man of upright ways is an abomination to the wicked.

30 THE^d MAN SAYS TO ITHIEL, TO Ithiel and Ucal:^e

²Surely I am too stupid to be a man;

u) Acts as if he did not see the poverty. v) Lit. "man of offerings." w) The fool.

x) "Men of bloods." y) To preserve it. z) Lit. "sends forth all his spirit."

a) A term applied to the prophetic ministry. b) The servant will expect to be treated as a son.

c) Pronounced on the thief. d) Cf. Gen. 25:14. The Oracle of Agur, the son of Massa.

e) As names have meaning, this line may well be translated: "I wore myself out, O God, I wore myself out and, O God, I languish."

I am without human understanding.
³I have not learned wisdom, that I should possess knowledge of the Holy One.
⁴Who has ascended up to heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in his garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, or what is the name of his Son? Surely you know!^f
⁵Every word of God has been proven true;^g He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him;
⁶add not to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.

⁷Two things I have asked of Thee;^h deny them not to me before I die:
⁸remove falsehood and lying far from me; grant me neither poverty nor riches; feed me my portion of nourishment,
⁹lest I be full and deny Thee and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor, and steal, and violate God's name.ⁱ

¹⁰Do not slander a servant to his master, lest he curse you, since you are guilty.

¹¹There are those^j who curse their father and do not bless their mother.
¹²There are those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not washed from their own filth.^k
¹³There are those — how their eyes are lifted and their eyelids raised!^l
¹⁴There are those whose teeth are swords, whose teeth are knives, to devour the poor from off the earth and the needy from among men.

¹⁵The leech has two daughters: Give! Give! There are three things that are never satisfied,
¹⁶Four that say not, "Enough": Sheol, a barren womb, the earth over-thirsty for^m water, and the fire that never says, "Enough."

¹⁷The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the young vultures.

¹⁸There are three things which are

too wonderful for me, yes, four which I do not comprehend:
¹⁹the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maiden.

²⁰This is an adulterous woman's way: she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, "I have done no wrong."

²¹Under three things the earth trembles, under four that it cannot bear:
²²under a servant when he reigns; and a fool when he is filled with food;
²³under an unloved woman when she gets a husband; and a handmaid who succeeds her mistress.

²⁴There are four things that are small on the earth, but they are exceedingly wise:
²⁵The ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer;
²⁶the rabbits are but a feeble folk,ⁿ yet they make their homes in the rocks;
²⁷the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank;^o
²⁸the lizard^p you can take with your hands, yet it is found in kings' palaces.

²⁹There are three things that are stately^q in their tread;^r yes, four that are stately in their stride:^s

³⁰the lion, which is mightiest of the beasts, and turns not away from any;
³¹the fighting cock;^t the he-goat; and the king accompanied by his army.

³²If you have played the fool in exalting yourself, or if you have devised evil, put your hand to your mouth;^u
³³for the churning of milk brings forth butter, and the wringing^v of the nose^w brings forth blood; so the churning of anger^x brings forth strife.^y

31 THE WORDS OF KING LEMUEL the lesson which his mother taught him.
²What, my son? And what, O son of my womb? What, O son of my vows?
³Do not give your strength to women, nor your ways to

f) Cf. Job, ch. 38ff.

g) "Tried," as a metal in furnace, coming out unalloyed. Therefore accept revelation instead of following after speculation. h) The prayer follows. i) "Lay hold of."

j) "A generation," "a class." k) Lit. "dung." l) Haughty and disdainful of others.

m) "That is not satisfied with." n) "A people not mighty." o) "Go out dividing," cf. Joel 2:2ff.

p) Or "spider." q) Lit. "cause to be good." r) "Step." s) "Going."

t) Lit. "girded of loins." LXX Syr Tg: "cock."

u) Let it go no farther. Certainly do not brag about it. v) "Churning."

w, x) From the same Hebrew root.

y) Strife will not arise without artificial stimulation. Most people desire peace more than war.

what destroys kings. ⁴It is not for kings, Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for rulers to desire strong drink; ⁵lest they drink and forget what is decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted. ⁶Give strong drink to him who is perishing and wine to the bitter of soul; ⁷let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more. ⁸Speak up for the dumb,^z for the cause of those who are left desolate;^a ⁹speak up, judge righteously and defend the rights of the poor and needy.

¹⁰Who can find a wife with strength of character?^b She is far more precious than jewels. ¹¹The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will never lack profit. ¹²She does him good and not harm all the days of her life; ¹³she seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands; ¹⁴she is like the merchant ships; she brings her food from afar. ¹⁵She rises while it is yet night, and gives food^c to her household, even a portion to her maidens; ¹⁶she considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷She girds her loins with strength, and makes her arms strong.

¹⁸She sees that her merchandise is profitable; her lamp does not go out at night; ¹⁹she puts her hands to the distaff; she manipulates the spindle; ²⁰she opens her palm to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.^d ²¹She does not fear the snow for her household, for they are clothed with scarlet; ²²she makes herself coverings, her clothing is fine linen and purple. ²³Known in the gates is her husband,^e when he sits among the elders of the land. ²⁴She makes linen garments and sells them, and delivers sashes to the merchants. ²⁵Strength and dignity clothe her and she laughs at the future.^f ²⁶She opens her mouth with wisdom and gentle^g teaching is on her tongue. ²⁷She looks well to the ways of her household and eats no bread of idleness. ²⁸Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband, too, and he praises her: ²⁹"Many daughters have done nobly,^h but you transcend them all." ³⁰Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who reveres the LORD will be praised. ³¹Acknowledge the product of her hands; let her works praise her in the gates.

z) Dumb because of overwhelming grief or inability to argue a case.

a) Lit. "sons of passing away."

b) Lit. "strength." Cf. 12:4. This passage is an acrostic [vv. 10-31].

c) Lit. "prey." The result of her wise provision.

d) Vv. 19, 20 depict vividly her busy and helpful hands.

e) His wife has aided him toward his success.

f) "Latter day." She and her loved ones are prepared for it.

g) She is not domineering as such an energetic woman often is. h) "Have done strongly."

ECCLESIASTES

1 THE WORDS OF THE PREACHER,^a the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ²Futility of futilities, says the Preacher, futility of futilities, all is futile.

³What is the advantage to man in all his labor at which he toils under the sun? ⁴One generation goes and another generation comes, but the earth remains forever. ⁵The sun rises and the sun sets and breathlessly hurries to the place where it rises. ⁶Going to the south and circling to the north, the wind goes round and round; and the wind returns on its circuit. ⁷All the rivers flow to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the rivers flow, there they flow again. ⁸All things are unspeakably tiresome; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor does the ear get enough hearing. ⁹Whatever has been, that will be, and whatever has been done that will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has existed long ago in times past.^b ¹¹There is no remembrance of former times and furthermore, there will not be any remembrance of later things yet to take place on the part of those who are to come hereafter.

¹²I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem; ¹³and I applied my heart to seek and to search for wisdom in all that is done under heaven. This

is a trying task, which God gives to the sons of men to be afflicted in it. ¹⁴I saw all the things which were done under the sun and truly, all is worthlessness and chasing of wind. ¹⁵What is crooked cannot be straightened, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

¹⁶I said to myself, "Look at me, how I have increased and added wisdom more than all who ruled Jerusalem before me, and my heart has observed an abundance of wisdom and knowledge." ¹⁷I applied my heart to know wisdom and knowledge, madness and folly. I discovered that this, too, is chasing after wind. ¹⁸For in more wisdom is more vexation, and increasing one's knowledge increases one's distress.

2 I SAID TO MYSELF, "COME NOW AND I will test you in gladness; have a good time." But this also is worthless. ²Of laughter I said, "It is madness," and of amusement, "What does it accomplish?" ³I explored in my heart to stimulate my body with wine — while my heart was acting with wisdom — and to lay hold of frivolity, so that I might see what was good for man to do under the sun during his lifetime. ⁴I made me great works; I built houses for myself and I planted vineyards for myself; ⁵I laid out gardens and parks for myself and I planted in them fruit-trees of every kind. ⁶I made for myself pools of water to irrigate a plantation

a) A Greek translation of *Koheleth*, the Hebrew title which the author gives himself in v. 1. It means, "One who calls together an assembly," so that "Preacher" seems a suitable translation.
b) Whatever is "under the sun" is earthly, temporal; it passes. Then in some form or other, possibly in similar form, it is seen or heard or felt again.

of growing trees; ⁷I acquired male and female servants, and children^c were born to me in my house. My possessions, too, of herds and flocks became greater than those of all who had preceded me in Jerusalem. ⁸I also gathered for myself^d silver and gold and the treasures of kings and of provinces; I acquired singers, both men and women, and the delights of men — mistresses galore.^e ⁹So I became greater and wealthier than all who were before me in Jerusalem, while my wisdom continued with me. ¹⁰Whatever my eyes desired I did not deny them; I did not keep my heart back from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my toil and that much I got for all my toil. ¹¹I then turned to observe^f all the work which my hands had done, and the effort I exerted in doing it; and see, all was worthless, chasing after wind, and there was no gain under the sun.

¹²Then I turned to consider wisdom, madness and folly; for what can the man do who succeeds the king? Only what has already been done! ¹³Then I realized that as light is better than darkness, so wisdom is better than folly. ¹⁴The wise man has eyes in his head, and the fool walks in darkness; but I myself know that one fate overtakes them both. ¹⁵Then I said to myself, "What happens to the fool will also happen to me; why then have I acted so extremely wise?" And I said to myself, "This, too, is futile." ¹⁶For the wise man there is no more lasting remembrance than for the fool, inasmuch as in the coming days everything is forgotten — and the wise man dies along with the fool. ¹⁷I hated life because the work which was done under the sun seemed bad to me, for all is fruitless^g and chasing after wind.

¹⁸I hated all my toil at which I had labored under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man coming after

me; ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be a wise or a foolish man? Yet he will be master over all my possessions for which I labored and used my wisdom under the sun; this, too, is worthlessness. ²⁰So I came to the point where my heart despaired about all the work that I had done under the sun; ²¹for here is a man who toiled in wisdom, in knowledge and in skill, yet to a man who did not work for it must he leave his possession; this, too, is useless and a great misfortune.^h

²²For what does a man get for all his toil and for all his heart's striving with which he wears himself under the sun? ²³For all his days are full of pain and his task vexatious; even at night his mind has no rest. This also is emptiness. ²⁴There is nothing better for a manⁱ than to eat and to drink and to let his soul get enjoyment from his work.

This, too, I saw, came from the hand of God. ²⁵For who can eat with enjoyment apart from Him? ²⁶For to the man who pleases Him He gives wisdom, knowledge and joy;^j while to the sinner He commits the task of gathering and heaping, to give it to the one who pleases God. This, too, is profitless and chasing after wind.

3 FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS AN APPOINTED season, and there is a proper time for every project under heaven:^k

^{2a} a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to root up what is planted;

^{3a} a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to wreck, and a time to build;

^{4a} a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

^{5a} a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

c) "Children" — slaves born in his household.

d) All for himself. No wonder it failed to inspire him.

e) It would be error to consider this book a series of philosophical dissertations. The author tests by experience rather than by theorizing, and gives us the results of his findings. Thus far the author remains the center of interest. f) Considered.

g) Five expressions — worthless, useless, futile, fruitless and chasing after wind, all meaning the same thing, but the thought so repeated equals the assurance of an oath.

h) This is the essence of our Lord's parable of the rich fool, Luke 12:20, 21. God said, What you have gotten ready, whose is it to be?

i) Almost invariably the word "man" may well be "person," for it designates the human being.

j) God awards the good of life to the godly. k) God has ordained order, it is ours to observe it.

⁶a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to retain, and a time to throw
away;¹

⁷a time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to be silent, and a time to speak;

⁸a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.^m

⁹What benefit does the workman get
from that for which he wears himself
out? ¹⁰I have observed the employ-
ments in which God has granted men
to be engaged. ¹¹He has made every-
thing beautiful in its time; He also has
planted eternity in their heart,ⁿ with-
out man finding out the work that
God does from beginning to end.

¹²I have learned that there is noth-
ing better for them than to rejoice and
to do good all through life; ¹³then, too,
that if a man eats and drinks and sees
good in all his toil, — it is God's gift.

¹⁴I know that everything that God
does shall remain forever;^o nothing can
be added to it nor can anything be
taken from it. God did it so that they
should be reverent in His presence.

¹⁵Whatever exists has been long ago,
and whatever is to be has already
existed long ago, and God seeks out
what has passed by. ¹⁶Again I ob-
served under the sun the place of
judgment — there was wrong; and
the place of righteousness — there was
wickedness. ¹⁷I said to myself, "God
will judge the righteous and the
wicked,"^p for there is a time there for
every purpose and for every work." ¹⁸I
said to myself, "For the sake of men
God is testing them and causes them
to see that in themselves they are but
animals." ¹⁹For the fate of men and
of animals is the same; one dies as the
other; all have one breath and the ad-
vantage of men over animals amounts
to nothing; for all is uselessness. ²⁰All
go to one place; all are from the dust

and all return to the dust. ²¹Who takes
note that the breath of man goes up-
ward and the breath of animals goes
downward to the earth?^q ²²So I saw
that there is nothing better than that
a man should rejoice in his works, for
that is his portion. Who can bring him
to consider what shall be after him?

4 AGAIN I TURNED AND SAW ALL THE
oppressions that occur under the
sun, and there were the tears of the
oppressed, with none to comfort them;
and power in the hand of the oppressor,
but no one to sustain them. ²Then
I congratulated the dead, who have
long been dead, more than the living
who are still alive; ³but more fortunate
than both is he who has not yet been,
and has not yet viewed the wicked
deeds which are practiced under the
sun. ⁴Then I saw that all the toil and
skill in activities bring envy between
a man and his neighbor. This, too, is
futility and chasing after wind. ⁵The
fool^r folds his hands together and con-
sumes his own flesh. ⁶Better is a hand-
ful with rest, than both fists full of toil
and chasing after wind.^s

⁷Again I turned and saw uselessness
under the sun. ⁸There is an individual
and no one with him, neither son nor
brother, and no end to all his toiling.
His eyes are not satisfied with wealth
and (he never reflects), "For whom
am I working and denying myself en-
joyment?" This, too, is worthlessness
and a sorry situation.

⁹Two are better than one,^t because
they gain a good reward in their toil.
¹⁰For if they fall, the one will lift up
his companion; but woe to the one
alone who falls, when there is no other
to lift him up! ¹¹So if two lie together,
they keep warm; but how can one
alone keep warm?^u ¹²Although one

l) How difficult for most of us to follow!

m) To retrace these maxims frequently would aid us in wisdom.

n) One great reason for our lack of satisfaction lies in this innate sense of the eternity of the inner self, which no earthly things and doings can fully meet.

o) God alone can answer man's sense of the eternal.

p) Suffering under human unfairness, we can look to God to help us in the changing of situations, with the certainty that from Him we receive justice and mercy.

q) On a frosty morning on the farm it is a repeated item of interest to see the breaths of persons and of animals; the first going upward, the other downward, as "The Preacher" describes it. Perhaps he saw in it a hint of the ultimate destiny of the godly soul — heavenward.

r) "Fool" — stupid fellow; "eats his own flesh" — destroys himself.

s) One handful acquired at ease is better than two obtained by exertion, unless its results are worth-while. t) The practical virtue of co-operation.

u) The night's covering for the poor was their coat.

may prevail against him who is alone, yet two will hold out against him; and a threefold cord is not readily broken.^v

¹³Better is a youth poor and wise, than a king old and foolish, who no longer knows how to take advice; ¹⁴for the former comes from prison to be king, although in the other's kingdom he was born poor.^w ¹⁵I viewed all the living under the sun, following the youth, the second, who succeeded him. ¹⁶There was no end to all the people, all of whom he headed. But the ones after them will not rejoice in him. This too is futility and chasing after wind.

5 **GUARD YOUR FEET WHEN YOU GO** to the house of God;^x to be ready to listen is better than to give sacrifice like the fools, who do not know when they do wrong. ²Be not hasty with your mouth; and your heart — do not allow it to be hasty to utter a word before God; for God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.^y ³For a dream comes with many concerns, and the voice of a fool in many words. ⁴When you vow a vow to God do not delay in paying it, for He takes no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. ⁵It is better that you do not vow, than that you vow and not pay.^z ⁶Do not allow your mouth to cause you to sin, and do not say before His messenger that it^a is a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hand? ⁷For in many dreams and follies and many words — this remains:^b You shall revere God.

⁸If you observe the oppression of the poor and the seizure of justice and right, be not astonished at the matter; for a high official is guarded by a higher one and a higher one guards over them.^c ⁹After all, a king devoted

to the field is an advantage to the land.

¹⁰The lover of money shall not be satisfied with money, nor the lover of wealth with his gain;^d this, too, is futility. ¹¹With the increase of goods there is an increase of those consuming them, and what advantage is there to the owner, except that he sees it with his eyes? ¹²Sweet is the sleep of the toiler, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not let him sleep.^e

¹³There is a grievous trouble which I have seen under the sun — wealth retained by the owner to his own hurt. ¹⁴That wealth is lost in a bad venture, then he begets a son and has nothing at hand.^f ¹⁵As he came naked from his mother's womb so he shall return again as he came, and nothing shall he take for his labor that he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶This, too, is a grievous misfortune; in all points as he came so shall he go, and what profit did he get from wearing himself out for wind, ¹⁷all his days eating in darkness with plenty of grief, sickness and wrath?

¹⁸Note! What I myself have seen to be preferable and fair is to eat and drink and to find enjoyment in all his labor at which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹Further, every man to whom God has given riches and wealth and whom He has given power to enjoy them, to take his portion and to find enjoyment in his labor — that is the gift of God.^g ²⁰For he shall not often think of the brevity of his life, because God keeps his heart occupied in gladness.

6 **THERE IS AN ADVERSITY WHICH I** have seen under the sun and it is common among men: ²a man to whom God has given riches, wealth

v) Our "In unity there is strength."

w) There seems to be a reminder here of Joseph, who out of his prison became second to Pharaoh; yet later his virtues as the people's savior were forgotten.

x) Not merely within the house of worship but on the way to it reverence is expected, preparatory to the service. y) James devotes ch. 1:19-26 and 3:2-10 to the right use of words.

z) Best of all is to pledge and to pay; it helps us to strive toward a high goal. a) The vow.

b) "This remains" is not expressed but implied. c) And ruling all is God.

d) Both labor and capital witness to man's urge for more income.

e) "Abundance" — satiety. Overeating is no recent intemperance.

f) Or "There is nothing for him." Three generations from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves.

g) Rightly to enjoy living is in agreement with the will of our benevolent Father. There is something wrong with us either physically, mentally or spiritually if we fail to enjoy living, presuming we are free. And the first step is to see God as the Giver.

and honor, and he lacks nothing for himself of all that he might desire; yet God does not give him ability to enjoy it, but a stranger enjoys it — this is fruitlessness and it is a hurtful disease. ³If a man begets one hundred children and lives many years — however many the years may be — and his soul is not satisfied with good and furthermore he has no burial, I say that an untimely birth is better than he. ⁴For that comes in vain; in darkness it departs and in darkness its name is covered; ⁵it has neither seen nor known the sun; it has more rest than he.^h ⁶Even though he lives one thousand years twice over but experiences no enjoyment — do not all go to one place?ⁱ

⁷All the toiling of man is for his mouth, but the longing is not satisfied. ⁸For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? What is there for the poor who knows how to conduct himself among the living? ⁹Better is what the eyes see than the wanderings of desire; this, too, is futile and a striving after wind. ¹⁰Whoever he is, ere long his name is called; it will be known that he is human; he is not able to contend against Him who is stronger than he.

¹¹The more words, the more worthlessness; what advantage does man gain from them? ¹²For who knows what is good for man in the numbered days of his empty life which he spends as a shadow? For who can declare to man what shall be after him under the sun?^j

7 BETTER IS A GOOD NAME THAN GOOD OINTMENT.

Better is the day of death than the day of birth.^k

²Better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; for this is the destiny of all men, and the living should take it to heart.

³Better is sorrow than laughter; for by the facial sadness the heart is made glad.^l

⁴The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of gaiety.

⁵It is better to hear the reproof of the wise than to hear the song of fools.^m

⁶For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools; this, too, is emptiness.

⁷Surely, extortion maddens the wise man, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸Better is the completion of a thing than its beginning; better is the patient one than the haughty one.

⁹Be not hasty in your spirit to be offended; for resentment abides in the bosom of fools. ¹⁰Do not say, 'How is it that past times were better than these?' For you have not wisely raised this question.ⁿ ¹¹Wisdom is as beneficial as a legacy; an advantage to those who see the sun. ¹²For wisdom protects as wealth protects; but the advantage lies with knowledge. Wisdom preserves the lives of those who possess it.^o ¹³Consider the work of God, for who can make straight what He has bent? ¹⁴In the day of prosperity enjoy life, and in the day of adversity observe that God has made the one as well as the other, so that man may not uncover anything that will be after him.

¹⁵I have seen everything in the days of my unproductive existence. There is the righteous man who perishes in

h) The lot of the stillborn child is better because there is no awareness of missing so much.
i) To Sheol, the realm of the dead. There is not that distinction in the O.T. between heaven and hell, nor the expectation of a glorious hereafter that has come to believers with the resurrection of Christ and the N.T. teachings.

j) We have reason to thank God daily for our living hope because of our Redeemer who is preparing a place for us. This is a prominent feature of the Gospel, more certainty regarding the invisible than the visible future.

k) Oil is associated with birth; the certainty of accomplished things is preferable to an uncertain future, such as lies before the newborn. l) A good cry relieves emotional upheaval.

m) Criticism from a friend can be wholesome and even that of an opponent is usually worth consideration, because we are so imperfect and make so many mistakes. False prophets, who failed to warn the Hebrews, led them to their doom.

n) It is the present, not the past, that challenges our efforts.

o) Without wise use of it, a legacy is no blessing, while with the "know-how" a person is likely to get along without any monetary legacy.

his righteousness, and there is the wicked who prolongs his life in his wickedness. ¹⁶Be not over-righteous nor behave yourself over-wisely. Why should you destroy yourself?^p ¹⁷Do not abound in wickedness, nor play the fool. Why should you die before your time? ¹⁸It is well that you get hold of this, and from that do not withdraw your hand, for he who reveres God comes clear with both.^q ¹⁹Wisdom affords a wise man more power than ten city fathers. ²⁰For there is not one righteous man on earth who does good and never sins. ²¹Further, do not pay attention to everything that people say, lest you hear your servant curse you; ²²and you know well enough that in your heart you have cursed others.^r

²³All this I have tested from the viewpoint of wisdom; I said, "I will be wise," and it was far beyond me. ²⁴What exists is beyond reach and unfathomable; who can master it? ²⁵With all my heart I turned to know, to explore and to come to a wise conclusion, to realize that wickedness is foolishness and that folly is madness. ²⁶I found more bitter than death the woman who is snares and nets at heart and whose hands are chains. Whoever pleases God will escape her; but the sinner will be ensnared by her. ²⁷See, this is what I have found, says the preacher; step by step I searched for the conclusion. ²⁸What my heart sought continually, that I did not find; a man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I did not find. ²⁹Only see this, that I have found — God made man upright, but they have sought out many devices.^s

8 WHO IS LIKE THE WISE MAN AND who knows the true meaning of things? A man's wisdom brightens his face; the crudeness of his face be-

comes refined.^t ²Keep the command of the king, and that because of the oath of God.^u ³Do not hasten to leave his presence; do not mess with contrary matters, for he does as he pleases. ⁴Since the king's word prevails, who can say to him, "What are you doing?" ⁵Whoever observes the royal orders will experience no harm. The heart of the wise man knows time and procedure. ⁶For every interest there is a time and decision, since a person's trouble rests heavily upon him. ⁷Even as he does not know what shall be, who can declare to him when it will occur? ⁸As no one can be master over the wind to restrain the wind,^v so no one can prevail in the day of death. There is no furlough during battle; neither will wickedness liberate those who practice it.

⁹I considered all this and paid attention to all the work which was done under the sun — a time when man has the mastery over another to harm him. ¹⁰I saw how the wicked were buried, who had gone in and out from the holy place, and they were forgotten in the city as having behaved like that; this also is ineffective.

¹¹Where no sentence is speedily executed upon the criminal, there the heart of men is filled in them to do evil.^w ¹²Although the sinner commits evil a hundred times and his life is prolonged to him, even so I know that it will be well with those who revere God, who are in awe before Him. ¹³It shall not be well with the evildoer; he shall not prolong his days as a shadow,^x because he does not revere God.

¹⁴There is a fruitlessness that happens on earth. There are the righteous, who have allotted to them just as what happens to the wicked, and there are the wicked who have allotted to them

p) For two possible reasons — we may weigh matters too long without acting, and we may set standards for others which they will never reach.

q) Tackle your various tasks with God in view; then wisdom and power are yours.

r) Let us examine how much truth there is in gossip about us, examine ourselves rather than tracing the gossipers.

s) This is one of the few statements in the Bible regarding man's original innocence and his subsequent delinquency; although sin and salvation form its leading theme.

t) An observation verified around us if we, too, observe.

u) Our loyalty to the king, because he is the anointed of God.

v) Suggested by Jesus to Nicodemus, John 3:8.

w) Punishment for sin is so unlikely to happen, as the ungodly thinks of it, that he goes on sinning, unrestrained by any fears. x) A shadow that lengthens near sunset.

what happens to the righteous. I declare that this also is futility.^y ¹⁵And I praised enjoyment; for nothing is better under the sun than to eat, to drink and to rejoice; this shall accompany him in his work all the days of his life, which God gives to him under the sun.

¹⁶When I applied my heart to acquire wisdom and to see the activity taking place on the earth, that one neither by day nor by night sees himself sleeping, ¹⁷then I saw of all the work of God, that man is not able to discover the work which is done under the sun, for the sake of which a man labors to search but does not find it; even though a wise man thinks he knows, he shall not be able to find it.^z

9 FOR ALL THIS I TOOK TO HEART AND clearly understood, that the righteous and the wise and their activities are in the hand of God — love as well as hate.^a Man knows nothing of what lies before him.

²All things are alike for all; one fate for the righteous and for the wicked, to the good and the pure and to the impure; to the one who brings a sacrifice and to the one who sacrifices nothing. As fares the good, so the sinner; as the one swearing so the one who reveres an oath.^b

³This is the worst that happens under the sun,^c that one fortune comes to all. Human hearts are filled with evil; there is madness in their hearts while they live, and afterward there is their death. ⁴For the one who belongs among the living there is hope; a living dog is better than a dead lion.^d ⁵The living know that they shall die, but the dead do not know anything. Neither is there still a reward for them, since their memory is forgotten.

⁶Moreover their love, yes, their hatred, even their jealousy have long since vanished and no longer do they have a share in all that is taking place under the sun.

⁷Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already accepted your doings.^e ⁸At all times let your clothes be white, and let not oil on your head be lacking. ⁹Enjoy life with the wife you love all the days of the passing life which He grants you under the sun, all your unprofitable days; for that is your portion among the living and your labor in which you weary yourself under the sun. ¹⁰All that your hand finds you able to do, do it with your might; for there is neither work nor invention nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol, toward which you are moving.^f

¹¹I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to the clever, nor favor to the skilled, for time and chance encounter them all.^g ¹²For even man knows not his time; as fish caught in a treacherous net and as birds seized in a snare, even so are men trapped in a disastrous time, when it comes down on them suddenly.

¹³This, too, I saw of wisdom under the sun and it made a deep impression on me. ¹⁴There was a small city with few people in it and a great king attacked it, besieged it and built great bulwarks around it. ¹⁵They found in it a poor, wise man and he saved the city by his wisdom; but no one remembered that poor man. ¹⁶So I said, Better is wisdom than strength; nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not considered. ¹⁷Words of the wise, heard

y) The folly lies in the human conclusion that the good and the bad are in the same boat.

z) God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours, Isa. 55:8.

a) How insistently the author relates life to God; this is his great consolation; "I steadier step when I recall that when I slip, God does not fall."

b) The one swearing lightly, the other with awe. c) Between us here on earth.

d) This is a telling sentence for those of us who feel our inadequacies; we are alive; we may accomplish what the greatest thinkers and doers, now dead, cannot now accomplish on earth.

e) A benevolent Father gave us life to enjoy with others in fellowship with Him.

f) Confirming v. 5, that "now is the accepted time"; while alive on earth we shall apply the powers God gave us.

g) The question is not so much how excelling our powers are, but how well we use them — and what God's plans are with us.

quietly, are better than the shouts of a ruler among fools. ¹⁸Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.^h

10 DEAD FLIES PUTREFY THE PERFUMER'S OINTMENT;ⁱ

so a little folly outweighs an abundance of wisdom.

²A wise man's heart turns to the right; a fool's heart turns to the left.

³In whatever path a fool walks, he lacks sense;

he makes known to all that he is a fool.

⁴If a ruler's temper rises against you, do not resign your position, for composure may remedy serious mistakes.

⁶There is something amiss I have seen under the sun, indeed an error coming from the ruler:

⁶A fool, elevated to a high position, while the noble dwell in low places.

⁷I have seen servants on horses, and princes walking on foot as servants.^j

⁸He who digs a pit shall fall into it,^k and he who breaks through a wall shall be bitten by a serpent.

⁹He who removes stones shall be hurt by them, and he who splits logs is endangered by them.

¹⁰If an axe is dull and a man does not sharpen it, then he must exert more strength;^l but wisdom is an advantage for gaining success.

¹¹If the snake bites before the charming, then the charmer's skill does not benefit.^m

¹²The words from the mouth of the wise have a winning way,

but the lips of the fool engulf him.ⁿ

¹³The beginning of the words of his mouth is folly, and the end of his speech is perverse stupidity.

¹⁴The fool multiplies words; man does not know what is to be; who can tell him what will happen after his lifetime?

¹⁵The efforts of a fool weary him, for he does not even know the way to the city.^o

¹⁶Woe to you, O land, whose king is a child, and whose princes feast in the morning!

¹⁷Happy are you, O land, whose king is the son of a noble, and whose princes feast in due season, as stalwarts and not as drunkards.

¹⁸Through continual neglect the ceiling sinks, and because of slack hands the house leaks.

¹⁹People prepare a banquet for enjoyment, and wine cheers the living; but money has to bring about everything.

²⁰Even in your thoughts do not curse the king, nor in your bedchamber curse the rich.

For a bird of the heavens may convey your voice,^q and a winged creature may repeat your words.

11 CAST YOUR BREAD UPON THE WATERS, for you will find it after many days. ²Divide it into seven or even in eight portions, for you do not know what trouble there may be upon the earth.^r

³When the clouds are filled with

h) So, in spite of the world's ingratitude, the service of the wise remains worth-while.

i) A continuance of ch. 9, to contrast wise and foolish persons and their influence.

j) The harm of favoritism in government and of rejecting those most needed.

k) Retribution, the reaping of what we sow. Jacob's impersonation, Gen. 27:19-29, and Laban's similar trick, Gen. 29:20-25. l) For any work use the choicest instruments available.

m) Our locking the stable door when the horse has been stolen.

n) To talk constantly is evidence of a weak mind — thinking aloud as little ones do.

o) But Isa. 35:8 tells of a way in which fools do not err.

q) From which our saying, "A birdie told me."

r) Benevolent retribution such as brings enjoyment through the years.

rain, they empty themselves on the earth. If a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls there shall it lie.^a ⁴He who watches the wind shall not sow; he who studies the clouds shall not reap. ⁵Even as you do not know how the wind blows, or how the embryo develops in the womb of a pregnant woman, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything. ⁶In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening be not idle, for you do not know which shall prosper, this or that, or whether both shall have equal success.^t

⁷Sweet is the light, and it is pleasant for the eyes to sense the sun. ⁸Therefore, if a man lives many years and rejoices in them all, let him consider the days of darkness, for they will be many. All that comes is nothingness.

⁹Take pleasure, young man, in your youth and let your heart cheer you in your youthful days; follow the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes, but be aware that for all these God will call you to account.^u ¹⁰Banish grief from your mind and keep pain from your body, for youth and the dawn (of life) are transitory.

12 BE MINDFUL OF YOUR CREATOR in the days of your youth before the troubling days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I do not enjoy them." ²Before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds cumulate after the rain;^v ³in the day when the watchers of the house tremble,^w the strong men are bent,^x the grinders cease for

they are few,^y and those looking through the windows are darkened.^z ⁴When the doors to the street are shut;^a when the sound of the mill becomes low and one rises at the voice of a bird.^b When all the daughters of song are brought low,^c ⁶when one is afraid of what is high^d and there are terrors in the way; when the almond blossoms,^e the grasshopper is a burden^f and desire fails;^g for man goes to his eternal home and the mourners go about in the street.

⁶Before the silver cord is severed,^h the golden bowl shattered,ⁱ the pitcher broken at the fountain^j and the wheel broken at the cistern.^k ⁷Then the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.^l

⁸Futility of futilities, says the Preacher, all is futile. ⁹In addition to being wise, the Preacher taught the people knowledge, weighing and searching out; he made many proverbs. ¹⁰The Preacher searched to find words of delight, and to write correctly the reliable words of truth.

¹¹The words of the wise are like spurs, his collected sayings driven home like spikes, provided by one Shepherd. ¹²Furthermore, my son, be warned; there is no end to the making of many books, and much study is wearying to the body.

¹³To sum up the whole matter, all that was heard: revere God, and keep His commandments, for this is every person's duty. ¹⁴For God shall bring every work into judgment, even everything hidden, whether it be good or bad.^m

s) Certain events are unchangeable. The life hereafter is determined by our ways of living this side the grave.

t) Reasons can always be found to delay an enterprise; we must have faith, or we fail.

u) To live enjoyably, reckon with our wise, benevolent and mighty Father.

v) Vitality is lessening and infirmities increase. w) The lips. x) The legs. y) The teeth.

z) The eyes. a) The ears. b) Less sleep. c) Less voice, particularly for singing.

d) The heart is weaker and walking grows dangerous. e) The hair is grey.

f) There is loss of weight. g) Manly urge is gone.

h, i, j, k) Organs of digestion, of breathing, perhaps even of reasoning, are deteriorating; it is time to go home. l) God welcomes His worshiper to that home.

m) With God as the sovereign Lord and as the goal of life in view, it is well to read these twelve chapters again, marking the repeated conclusions that without God life would not be worth living.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

The Maiden to Her Lover

- 1** THE SONG OF SONGS,^a WHICH IS
Solomon's.
²Oh, that he would kiss me with the
kisses of his lips,
for your love is sweeter than wine!
³The savor of your ointments is
fragrant;
your name is as perfume poured out;
therefore do the maidens love you.
⁴Draw me after you; let us hasten;
The king^b has brought me into
his chambers;
we are glad and in you we truly
rejoice;
We prize your love more highly
than wine;
rightly do they^c love you.

The Maiden to the Daughters of Jerusalem^d

- ⁵Swarthy am I, but comely,
O daughters of Jerusalem;
Dark as are the tents of Kedar,^e
lovely as the curtains of Solomon.
⁶Do not look askance at me because I
am swarthy;
the scorching sun has tanned me.

The sons of my mother became
incensed with me,
and they put me to keeping the
vineyards,
But my own vineyard have I not
kept.

The Maiden to Her Distant Lover

- ⁷Tell me, you whom deep in my soul
I love,
where you pasture your flock,
where you have it lie down at
midday
for why should I be as a veiled
woman,^f
wandering among the flocks of your
companions?

The Reply

- ⁸If you do not know, thou fairest
among women,
then follow the footprints of the
flocks,
pasture your flocks near the tents
of the shepherds.

The Lover to His Loved One

- ⁹To a mare^g of Pharaoh's chariots^h
have I likened you, my loved one.

a) These Songs speak the love-language of a young woman and her lover. Their frankness and intimacy express the joyful exaltation of that love which sanctifies marriage. To the O.T. prophets and poets, the begetting and rearing of children was part of the divinely ordered life of the "male and female," whom God had created. This truth they voiced in glad and grateful song. If we enter into the spirit of these songs, our own lives may be chastened and exalted. No Jew younger than thirty was allowed to read this book. It was admitted into the canon of the O.T. because it was decided that it allegorizes the love of God for Israel. Hosea 2 and Ezekiel 23, are outstanding examples of it. The same symbolic thinking is expressed in Ephesians 5:23-33 concerning Christ and the Church.

b) "King" was a designation also for a bridegroom in West-Semitic and Jewish usage.

c) Cf. the closing clause in verse 3 and the reference in 6:8 to "maidens without number" who are part of the harem.

d) In 6:9 "daughters" is plainly used in parallelism with "queens and concubines," the royal harem. e) A well-known desert tribe living in black tents.

f) By Gen. 38:15 the habit of a harlot. g) A common comparison among desert riders.

h) A royal type as distinguished from lesser makes.

¹⁰How beautiful are your cheeks with
jeweled spangles,
your neck with strings of beads!
¹¹Circlets of gold, with studdings of
silver,
we shall make for you.

She Thinks Yearningly of Him

¹²As long as the king¹ was on his
couch,
my spikenard gave forth its
fragrance;
¹³My loved one is to me a bundle of
myrrh

lying between my breasts;

¹⁴He is to me a cluster of henna
of the gardens of Engedi.²

He Speaks of Her

¹⁵Ah, beautiful you are, my love,
beautiful you are;
your eyes are as doves.

In Her Heart She Answers Him

¹⁶Behold, you are beautiful, my loved
one,

you are very handsome.

Our leafy couch is luxuriant;

¹⁷the beams of our house are the
cedars,

its panels are the cypresses.

2 I AM A ROSE OF SHARON,^k A LILY
of the valleys.

He to Her

²As a lily among thistles, so is my love
among the daughters.

She to Him

³As an apple tree among the trees of
the wood,

so is my lover among the sons.

In his shadow I delight to sit,
and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

⁴He has brought me into the
banqueting hall,
and his banner over me¹ is love.

⁵Sustain me with dainties, refresh me
with apples,
for I am so lovesick.

⁶Let his left hand be under my head,
and let his right hand embrace me.

The Beloved Speaks of Her Lover

⁷I adjure you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,

by the gazelles of the mountains
and the hinds of the fields,
that you do not awaken nor stir up
love,

until love itself shall please.

Her Love Song to Him

⁸Listen, the voice of my beloved!
See! He comes bounding up the
mountains,
leaping over the hills.

⁹My beloved is like a gazelle or a
young hart;^m

here he is standing by our wall,
he is looking through the
windows,

he is peering through the
lattices.ⁿ

¹⁰My beloved sings, and he calls to me:
Arise, my love, my beauty, and come
along with me;

¹¹For lo! the winter is past,
the season of rain is over and gone.

¹²The flowers appear on the earth;
the season of singing has come;^o
the voice of the turtledove^p is
heard in our land.

¹³The fig trees are putting forth their
figs,

and the vines coming into blossom
are giving forth their fragrance.

Arise, my love, my beauty, and come
along with me.

¹⁴O thou, my dove, in the clefts of the
rock,

in the covert of the cliff,

Let me hear your voice, let me see
your face;

for your voice is sweet, and your
face is lovely.

A Chorus

¹⁵Catch for us the foxes, the little
foxes

j) Cf. 1:4 and the note there given.

j) A famous oasis, and one of the three major entrances to Judea from the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea country. k) The famously beautiful coast plains. l) Proclaiming me as his.

m) In his springing speed.

n) Proverbs 7:6 suggests that "looking through my lattice" was a natural part of everyday life.

o) Judges 21:19, 21 refers to a "feast of the Lord," "from year to year" with the "daughters of Shiloh" "in the dances" close to "the vineyards."

p) The turtledove is gentle, harmless, and innocent [Ps. 74:19; Jer. 8:7]. It came in the spring;

much used in offerings [Gen. 15:9; Lev. 1:14]. As a spring love-song these vss. 11-13 are un-

surpassed in all literature.

that are spoiling our vineyards;^q
for our vineyards are in bloom.

She Sings Again

¹⁶My beloved is mine, and I am his;
he is pasturing his flock among the
lilies.

¹⁷Until the day begins to cool
and the shadows lengthen,
turn, my lover, and be as a gazelle or
a young hart
upon the mountains that separate
us.^r

The Loved One Dreams of Her Lover

3 UPON MY BED AT NIGHT^s I SOUGHT
him whom my soul loves,
I sought him but did not find him;
I called him, but he did not answer.
²I shall arise now and go round about
the city
in the streets and the market places,
and I shall seek him whom my
soul loves.

I sought him, and I found him not.
³The watchmen that go about in the
city found me;

I said to them, "Have you seen him
whom my soul loves?"

⁴Scarcely had I left them when I
found him
whom my soul loves;
I laid hold on him and would not let
him go
until I brought him in to the home
of my mother,
into the chamber of her who
bore me.

The Beloved's Refrain

⁵I adjure you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
by the gazelles and the hinds of the
field,
that you do not awaken nor stir
up love
until it please.

The Lover's Arrival

⁶What is this coming up from the
desert

like columns of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and
frankincense,
with all fine powders of the
merchant?

⁷Behold, it is the litter of Solomon;
sixty warriors are around it
from among the heroes of Israel,
⁸all skilled with the sword and trained
to do combat.

Every man wears his sword upon his
thigh,

against dread dangers of the night.

⁹King Solomon made himself a litter
from the lumber of Lebanon.^t

¹⁰The pillars of it he made of silver,
the inlaid top he made of gold;
the seat of it was of purple, and
the inside lining
was a gift of love from the
daughters of Jerusalem.

¹¹Go forth, O you daughters of Zion,^u
and gaze upon king Solomon, upon
the crown
with which his mother crowned
him on his wedding day,
the day of his gladness of heart.

The Lover Sings His Loved One's Beauty

4 BEHOLD, YOU ARE FAIR, MY LOVE;
behold you are fair;
Your eyes are as doves behind your
veil,

Your hair as a flock of goats
trailing down Mount Gilead.^v

²Your teeth are as a flock of ewes
ready for the shearing,

all fresh from their washing.^w
They are in pairs, not one of them
is missing.

³Your lips are as a scarlet thread,
and your mouth is very comely.

q) Some regard this verse as a symbolic allusion to the rivals of the lover who are seeking to win the loved one for themselves.

r) Cf. vs. 8, "the mountains": the last word is uncertain. "Cut" or "divide" or "craggy" is the LXX.

s) In a dream. Cf. Gen. 37:5-10, 40:5-23; Matt. 2:12-20.

t) The cedars of Lebanon were far famed and highly prized: I Kings 5:6-11, used for building Solomon's temple; Ezra 3:7, for rebuilding the temple after the exile.

u) Zion is another name for Jerusalem and is so used nearly 150 times in the O.T. The term "daughters of Zion" usually refers to the women of the entire city.

v) Micah 7:14; Num. 32:1: a famous feeding ground "in the days of old." The goats of the region had shiny, black hair.

w) Washing sheep at shearing time was and is a widely spread custom. Cf. also 6:6. Cf. Isa. 1:18 "White... as wool."

SONG OF SOLOMON 4, 5

Your cheeks are as halves of a
pomegranate^x
gleaming behind your veil.
4Your neck is as a tower of David,
built to serve as an arsenal,^y
upon which there hang a thousand
shields
and all the armor of the mighty.
5Your breasts are as two fawns, twins
of a gazelle,
feeding among the lilies.
6Until the day breathes its evening
coolness^z
and the shadows lengthen and
disappear,
I shall hasten away to the mountain of
myrrh,
to the hill of frankincense.
7You are altogether fair, my love;
there is no blemish on you.

The Lover Calls and Extols Her

8With me from Lebanon, my bride,
with me from Lebanon, come!
Gaze from the summit of Amana,^a
from the top of Senir,
that is Hermon,^b from the dens of
lions,

from the mountains of the
panthers.^c

9You have ravished my heart, my
sister, my bride,
you have ravished my heart with
one glance of your eyes,
with a single bead of your
necklace.

10How sweet is your love, my sister,
my bride;

How much more delicious is your
love than wine;

and the fragrance of your
ointments
than all the rich spices.

11Your lips drop honey, my bride,
honey and milk are under your
tongue;

He Sings to Her of Her Beauty.

and the fragrance of your garments is.
like

the fragrance of Mount Lebanon.^d

12A garden you are, my sister, my
bride,

a garden walled in, a fountain well
sealed;

13A pomegranate orchard with precious
fruits,

a garden of henna with spikenard,

14spikenard and saffron, calamus and
cinnamon,

with all the trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes,^e with all the
chief spices.

15You are a garden fountain, a well of
living water,
flowing streams from Lebanon.

The Beloved Calls for Her Lover

16Awake, O north wind, and come,
you south wind,

blow you both upon my garden,^f
that its fragrance may be wafted
abroad.

Let my beloved come into his garden
and eat its choice fruits; they are
his.

The Lover to His Beloved

5 I HAVE COME TO MY GARDEN, MY
sister, my bride,

I gather my myrrh with my spices,

I eat honeycomb with my honey,^g

I drink wine with my milk.

A Welcome to the Lovers

Eat, friends! Drink, yes, drink
abundantly,

you, lover and beloved!

Her Dream Song

2I was asleep, but my heart was awake:
Listen! A sound! My lover is

knocking!

He pleads, "Open to me, my sister,
my love, my dove, my perfect one;

x) A highly prized fruit with rich coloring, much used in pictorial ornamentation.

y) The Hebrew word here translated "arsenal" is not found anywhere else. Ezek. 27:10, 11, indicates that the statement here suggests beauty. z) Cf. 2:17 for a similar statement.

a) One of the streams flowing eastward from the top of the Lebanon mountains [II Kings 5:17].

b) Mt. Hermon, the highest peak of the Lebanon mountains, was called Senir by the Amorites.

[Deut. 3:9]. c) Known in the Lebanon mountains.

d) The fragrance came from its cedars and balsam firs which grew in abundance. Hosea 14:6, 7 makes it the standard of fragrance. e) Some aloes wood is fragrant and produces aromatic resin.

f) The north wind came from the mountains and was cool. "The north wind drives away rain" [Prov. 25:23]. The south wind came from the desert and brought "scorching heat" [Luke 12:55. Cf. Eccles. 1:6].

g) Jonathan ate honey from a stick dipped in honeycomb [I Sam. 14:27].

for my head is wet with dew, and my
hair is drenched
with the dew of the night."^h

In Her Dream She Responds

⁸"I have put off my coat; why should
I put it on again;
I have washed my feet; why should
I soil them again?"

⁴My loved one put his hand on the
latch,
and my heart grew desirous of him;

⁵I rose to open to my loved one,
my hands both dripping with myrrh,
and my fingers dropping myrrh
on the handles of the bar.

⁶I opened to my beloved.
But my Beloved had turned away;
he was gone!

My soul had failed him when he
spoke.

I sought him, but I did not find
him,

I called him, but he did not answer.

⁷The watchmen, making the rounds
of the city, found me;
they struck me, they wounded me,
they stripped me of my mantle,
those guardians of the city
walls.¹

Her Appeal to Jerusalem's Maidens

⁸I adjure you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
if you find my lover, that you tell
him I am lovesick.

Their Reply

⁹What is your lover beyond any lover,
O you fair one among women?
What is your lover beyond any
lover,
that you do thus adjure us?

Her Description of Her Lover

¹⁰My lover is fair and ruddy,
the choicest among ten thousand.
¹¹His head is finest gold,
his locks are wavy, black as a raven.
¹²His eyes are like doves beside brooks
of water,
washed with milk and fitly set.
¹³His cheeks are like a bed of spices,
like banks of sweetest herbs;

his lips are lilies dropping liquid
myrrh.

¹⁴His hands are rods of gold, set with
gilded stones,
his body is as polished ivory,
overlaid with sapphires.

¹⁵His limbs are pillars of marble, set in
sockets of gold.

His stature is like Lebanon, as striking
as the cedars.

¹⁶His mouth is all sweetness, and he
is most lovely.

Such is my lover, and such is my
friend,

O daughters of Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Maidens

6 <sup>WHITHER HAS YOUR LOVED ONE
gone, thou fairest among
women?</sup>

Where has he hidden himself?
We would seek him with you.

The Beloved Answers

²My loved one has gone down to his
garden,

to the beds of the spices;
he has gone to feed in his garden
and there to gather some lilies.

³I am my beloved's, and my beloved
is mine;
he pastures his flock among the
lilies.

The Lover Praises His Beloved

⁴You are beautiful, my love, beautiful
as Tirzah,¹
lovely as Jerusalem;^k
captivating as an army with
banners.

⁵Turn your eyes away from me, for
they overcome me;

Your hair is like a flock of goats
moving down the trail of Gilead.¹

⁶Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
coming from their washing;
each is paired, not one of them is
missing.

⁷As the halves of a pomegranate,
so are your cheeks behind your veil.

⁸Sixty queens there are and eighty
concubines,

^h) Gideon squeezed a bowlful of water from a fleece of wool after it had been exposed to the dew overnight [Judg. 6:38]. ⁱ) They thought she was a wandering wanton.

^j) An ancient Canaanite city, taken by Joshua [Josh. 12:24]. It became the first capital of the northern kingdom [1 Kings 15:21, 33; 16:8, 15, 23].

^k) In Lam. 2:15, Jerusalem is referred to as the "perfection of beauty."

^l) Compare 4:1 above and its footnote.

and harem daughters beyond
number;

- ⁹My dove, my undefiled, stands out
alone;
she was an only one to her mother,
first choice of her who bore her;
The daughters saw her and called her
happy,
the queens and concubines, too,
and thus they praised her:
¹⁰"Who is this, who shines forth as
the morning dawn,
fair as the moon, radiant as the sun,
captivating as an army with
banners?"^m

The Maiden

- ¹¹I went down to see the nut garden
to see the green plants of the valley;
to see whether the vines already
had budded,
and the pomegranates had put
forth their bloom.
¹²Ere I was aware, my soul's fancy
seated me in a princely chariot of
my people.

Her Beauty as She Dances

- ¹³Turn you, turn, O maid of Shulem,
Turn you, turn, that we may gaze
upon you.
What do you see in the Shulammit
As she dances the Mahanaim
dance?ⁿ

The Lover Praises His Beloved

- 7** HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE YOUR FEET
in sandals,
O maiden of queenly form!
Your rounded thighs are a jeweled
chain,
the work of a master craftsman.
²Your navel is as a rounded bowl
in which mingled wine is never
lacking;
your belly as a heap of wheat, set about
with lilies.

- ³Your breasts are as two fawns, the
twins of a gazelle;
⁴Your neck is as a tower of ivory,
your eyes as pools in Heshbon by
the gate Bath-rabbim.^o

Your nose is as a tower of Lebanon,
looking down upon Damascus.

- ⁵Your head crowns you as Mount
Carmel;
your flowing locks are purple,
A king is caught in their tresses.^p

The Lover Praises His Beloved

- ⁶How beautiful you are, my love,
how lovely in that which delights!
⁷Your stature itself is a stately palm,
your breasts are as clusters of grapes.
⁸I said, I will climb into my palm tree,
I will take hold of the branches of it.
Your breasts shall be as clusters of
vines,
the fragrance of your breath as of
apples.

- ⁹The roof of your mouth is like red
wine^q

flowing down for my beloved with
smoothness,^r
moving gently over the lips of
those sleeping.^s

Her Call to Her Lover

- ¹⁰I belong to my beloved, and his
desire is for me.
¹¹Come, my beloved, let us go out into
the fields,
let us lodge among the hennas.^t
¹²Let us rise and go early to the
vineyards;
let us see whether the vines have now
budded,
whether the blossoms have already
opened
and the pomegranates are come
into flower;
there will I give you my love.
¹³The mandrakes^u give forth their
fragrance;

m) This comparison is unexpected, but it is the same wording as in 6:4 and is there in parallel with the idea of comeliness.

n) The Hebrew word is *Mahanaim*, according to II Sam. 2:8-10, the residence of Ishbosheth, son of Saul, when he became king over Gilead and other peoples. There David found refuge when he fled from Absalom [II Samuel 17:24, 27].

o) Mentioned only here; it was a gate of Heshbon, the home of Sihon, a king of the Amorites [Deut. 3:6; 4:46].

p) Because of their beauty. q) In Proverbs 23:21, "red wine" may go down "smoothly."

r) Apparently we should understand this line to mean "your kisses are as choice red wine."

s) The entire verse is difficult; for "lips of sleepers" the LXX and Syriac read "lips and teeth."

t) Cf. the same idea as 4:13.

u) Gen. 30:14-16 indicates that mandrakes were thought of as "love apples."

at our doors are all kinds of choice
fruits,
fresh and ripe they are, too, my
beloved;
all of these I have laid up for
you.

Her Tender Wish for Him

8 OH, THAT YOU WERE AS MY
brother,
who nursed at the breast of my mother!
Should I find you outside in the
open,
I would kiss you, and no one would
scorn me
2I should lead you and bring you to
the house of my mother,
and she would instruct me;^v
I should give you some spiced wine to
drink,
also the juice of my pomegranates.
3Oh, that his left hand were under my
head,
and with his right hand he would
embrace me.^w
4I adjure you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
that you do not awaken or stir up love,
until love itself so please.

She of Him

5aWho is this coming up from the
wilderness,
leaning closely upon the arm of her
lover?

He of Her

5bUnder the apple tree I awakened
you,^x
there your mother came to travail
with you,^y
there she came to travail, there
she bore you.

She to Him

6Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;^z

For love is mighty as death,
ardent love as demanding as Sheol.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a very flame of the LORD.

7Many waters cannot extinguish love,
nor can rivers drown it.
If a man should offer for love all the
wealth of his house,
it would be scornfully refused.

The Maiden's Brothers

8We have a little sister and she has no
breasts.^a
What shall we do for our sister
in the day she shall be spoken for?
9If she be a wall,^b
we will build for her a turret of
silver;
But if she be a door,^c
we will enclose her with boards of
cedar.

The Maiden's Answer

10I am a wall and my breasts are as its
towers;
I am in my lover's eyes as one finding
favor.
11Solomon had a vineyard in
Baal-hamon;^d
he entrusted the vineyard to keepers.
Each man was to bring for his share of
the fruit
a thousand pieces of silver.^e
12My vineyard, my own, lies before
me.
The thousand is yours, O Solomon,
and two hundred each to those
keeping the fruit.^f

Bride and Groom to Each Other

13O you who dwell in my gardens,
your companions listening to your
voice,
make me hear it, too.
14Come quickly, my lover, beloved,
and be like a gazelle,
or like a young hart upon mountains
of spices.

v) The LXX and the Syriac repeat here 3:4, "into the chambers of her who conceived me."
w) Cf. 2:6. x) Cf. 2:3 and 2:5 to see the meaning here.

y) Birth in the open was common at that time.

z) In Jer. 22:24 it is implied that a seal upon the hand is an almost inescapable declaration of an agreement that cannot be disregarded.

a) When young and undeveloped, as Ezekiel 16:7 makes clear. b) An unbroken wall.

c) A "door open to callers." d) A place nowhere else mentioned; location unknown.

e) According to Isaiah 7:23, a symbol of opulence.

f) One-fifth in cash, besides what they ate and drank from the vineyard and adjoining vegetable gardens; 20% was an ancient rate of interest in the Near East.

THE BOOK OF

ISAIAH

1 THE VISION OF ISALAH^a THE SON OF Amoz, which he saw concerning^b Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.^c

²Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the LORD speaks: I have nurtured and brought up children, but they have become rebellious against Me. ³The ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's feeding rack; [but] Israel does not understand; My people show themselves lacking in discernment.

⁴Alas! A sinning nation, a people loaded with iniquity, descendants of evildoers, corruptly-behaving children. They have forsaken the LORD; they have shown contempt for the Holy One of Israel; they have become utterly estranged.

⁵For what reason would you be punished again, seeing that you insist on increasing your apostasy?^d The whole head has become diseased, and the whole heart is faint. ⁶From the sole of the foot up to the head, there is nothing sound in it; only bruises, welts, and raw wounds; [these] have neither been pressed out, nor bandaged, nor softened with oil. ⁷Your country is

devastated; your cities have been burned with fire; as to your cultivated fields, in your very presence foreigners are plundering them. It is a devastation, as a demolishment by aliens. ⁸The daughter of Zion is left behind like a shanty in a vineyard, like a shack^e in the cucumber patch, like a besieged city. ⁹If the LORD of hosts had not kept alive the few survivors, we would have been like Sodom and similar to Gomorrah.

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

¹¹Of what significance to Me are your many sacrifices? says the LORD; I am wearied of whole burnt offerings of rams and with the fat of your fatted calves; and in the blood of young bulls, lambs, and he-goats, I find no delight.

¹²When you come to appear in My presence, who has demanded this from your hand: the trampling of My courts? ¹³Come no more with your meaningless offerings! Incense is abominable to Me; [likewise] the new moon and sabbath, the convoking of the assembly; I cannot endure iniquity and a solemn assembly! ¹⁴My soul hates your new moon festival and appointed

a) This verse serves as the title for the entire prophecy.

b) The central theme of this prophecy pertains to the people of God in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, which included much of Benjamin and Simeon; also many priests and Levites. All other nations and cities referred to by Isaiah are dealt with because of their relationship to Judah and Jerusalem.

c) These four kings ruled in succession over Judah in Jerusalem during the latter part of the 8th century, B.C.

d) As punishment brings no correction, why punish any more with the intent of sparing and correcting?

e) Temporary shacks were placed in or near vineyards, cucumber or melon patches to provide lodging for the fruit pickers. These were the center of bustling activity during the fruit picking season; once this was ended, the shacks and shanties remained in deserted silence.

seasonal feasts;^f they have become a burden on Me; I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁶When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yes, even though you multiply your prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. ¹⁶Wash yourselves! Purify yourselves! Remove the wickedness of your doings from before My eyes. ¹⁷Learn to do good! Seek justice; restrain the ruthless; protect the orphan; defend the widow.

¹⁸Come now, and let us adjudge^g the matter, says the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. ¹⁹If you become willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; ²⁰but if you refuse and are rebellious, you shall be annihilated by the sword,^h for the mouth of the LORD has spoken [it].

²¹How the faithful city has become a prostitute! She was filled with justice; righteousness did lodge in her, but now murderers! ²²Your silver has become dross; your choice liquor is diluted with water; ²³your princes are rebellious, the associates of thieves; they all are lovers of the bribe, and they continually chase after rewards. They do not protect the orphan, nor does the case of the widow come up before them.ⁱ

²⁴Therefore says the LORD, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: Alas! With vengeance will I relieve Myself of My foes; I will avenge Myself on My enemies; ²⁵for I will turn My hand against you, and I will burn away your dross as with lye, and I will remove all your alloy.^j ²⁶I will restore your judges as at first and your counselors as at the beginning. After that you will be called a stronghold of righteousness, the faithful city. ²⁷Zion

shall be ransomed by justice and her converts by righteousness; ²⁸but there shall be a crushing of the apostates and sinners together, and those who forsake the LORD shall be annihilated. ²⁹For you will be ashamed of the oak trees in which you take pleasure, and you shall blush because of the gardens which you have chosen.^k ³⁰For you will become like an oak tree shedding her withering leaves and like a garden in which there is no moisture; ³¹the strong will be like tow^l and his activity as a spark; and the two will burn together with no one to quench them.

2 THE WORD WHICH ISAIAH THE SON of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. ²It shall be in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be firmly established as the highest of the mountains and be raised above the hills, to which all the nations shall stream.^m ³Many peoples shall go and exhort, "Come! let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; so that He may teach us concerning His ways, and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion shall instruction go forth and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴He shall arbitrate between the nations and shall decide [disputes] for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any more.

⁵O house of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. ⁶Surely, Thou hast rejected Thy people, the house of Jacob, because they are influenced from the eastⁿ and by soothsayers like the Philistines, and they join^o hands with foreigners; ⁷their land is full of silver and gold, and there is no end to their chariots; ⁸their

f) The new moon feast was celebrated each month; the appointed seasonal festivals each year.
g) The LORD gives the sinner an invitation, which is also to be considered a command, to enter into judicial proceedings; He is not inviting the sinner to a discussion but to a court trial.

h) In Hebrew it reads, "you shall be made to eat the sword." Modern Arabs employ this same phrase for annihilation. i) The royal judges of the land refused to decide those cases fairly.

j) Alloy in the sense that it is a base substance, detracting from purity.
k) Trees were worshiped by many ancients at their "high places," in "vaulted chambers," and in attractive "gardens" assumed as sacred, but sensual [cf. Ezek. 9:4; 14:1 ff.; 23:1 ff.].

l) That portion of flax left after the linen substance has been removed.

m) In His spiritual world God makes water flow upward.

n) Omitted, yet clearly implied, the heathen customs of Assyria and Babylon.

o) Hebrew uses an idiom, "strike hands with," meaning to associate with and join in the activity of the foreigners, especially, trading with them.

land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their fingers have fashioned.⁹ Accordingly, man lowers himself, and even the more respectable man is brought down. Forgive them not!

¹⁰Enter into the rocks,^p and hide yourself in the dust away from the dread presence of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty. ¹¹The proud looks of man shall be brought low; the haughtiness of men shall be humbled, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. ¹²For the LORD of hosts has a day against all who are haughty and proud, and against all that lifts itself up, that it may be brought low; ¹³against all cedars of Lebanon, proud and lofty, and against all the oaks of Bashan; ¹⁴against all the high mountains and against all the elevated hills; ¹⁵against every high tower and against every fortified wall; ¹⁶against all the ships of Tarshish and all the pleasure yachts. ¹⁷Then will the pride of man be humbled, and the haughtiness of men will be brought low, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. ¹⁸As for the idols, every one shall vanish. ¹⁹For men will slink into the caves of the rocks and into the holes of the ground, away from the dread presence of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty when He arises to terrify the earth. ²⁰In that day a man shall cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which each made for himself to worship, to the rats and the bats, ²¹and hide in the crevices of the rocks and in the clefts of the cliffs from the dread presence of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to strike terror on the earth. ²²Cease depending on man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for at what should he be valued?

3 FOR BEHOLD, THE LORD, THE LORD of hosts, is about to remove from Jerusalem and from Judah support and sustenance, all support of bread and

all support of water; ²the mighty man and the soldier, the judge and the prophet, the diviner and the elder, ³the captain of fifty and the honorable person, the counselor, the skilful craftsman, and the expert charmer. ⁴I will give them boys as their princes, and babes^q shall rule over them. ⁵The people shall oppress, one his fellow man and another his neighbor; the youth shall domineer over the aged and the dishonorable over the honorable. ⁶When a man will take hold of his brother in his father's house, [saying,] "You have a robe; you shall be our ruler, and this heap of ruins shall be under your administration," ⁷he will protest at that time, answering, "I am not able to restore, for in my house there is neither bread nor a robe; you can not make me ruler over the people."

⁸For Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen; because their language and their deeds are against the LORD, provoking His glorious aspect. ⁹The expression of their faces witnesses against them, and they make their sin conspicuous as Sodom. They conceal nothing! Woe to them, for they deal out misery to themselves! ¹⁰Say to the righteous that it shall go well with them, for they shall eat the products of their doings. ¹¹Woe to the wicked! It shall go ill with him, for the full result of his hands shall be repaid him. ¹²As for My people, their ruling tyrants are children, and women rule over them. My people, your leaders are misleaders; they confuse the course of your paths.

¹³The LORD stands up to hold court; He is standing to judge the peoples. ¹⁴The LORD enters into judgment with the elders of His people and His princes. And you! You have devoured the vineyard; the plunder from the poor is in your houses. ¹⁵What ails you, that you suppress My people and grind the faces of the poor?^r says the Lord God of hosts.

¹⁶Moreover, the LORD has spoken: Because the daughters of Zion are

p) A hiding repeated until the finals [Rev. 6:16].

q) The Hebrew word here rendered "babes" occurs again in Isa. 66:4, and nowhere else in the Old Testament. It conveys the idea of "capricious children," who treat others maliciously for their own pleasure.

r) A Hebrew expression for severe oppression in which the last little that the poor own is taken from them.

haughty and walk with outstretched necks and ogling eyes, they go about with a mincing step and tinkle their ornaments on their feet: ¹⁷so the LORD will cause a scab to come upon the scalp of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will expose their secret parts. ¹⁸In that day the LORD will remove the finery of their anklets, net-bands, and crescents; ¹⁹earrings, bracelets, and gauze veils; ²⁰head bands, ankle chains, sashes, perfume boxes, and charms; ²¹signet rings and jewels of the nose; ²²festive robes, top tunics, shawls, and purses; ²³handmirrors, lingerie, headwear, and large veils. ²⁴It shall be, that instead of a sweet smell, there will be rottenness; instead of a girdle, a rope; instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of a rich robe, a wrapping of sackcloth; instead of beauty, a branding mark. ²⁵Your men shall fall by the sword and your valiant men in battle. ²⁶Her gates shall mourn and grieve; deserted she sits on the ground.

4 AND SEVEN WOMEN WILL GRASP one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and we will wear our own clothes; only let us be called by your name; take away our stigma."^s

²In that day the branch of the LORD shall become beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land excellent and splendid for the escapees of Israel. ³And it shall be that the one left in Zion and the one remaining in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone registered for eternal life in Jerusalem, ⁴when the LORD shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion and shall have rinsed away the blood-spots from the midst of Jerusalem by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. ⁵The LORD will create over the area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and a flaming fire shining at night; for it will be a protection over all that is glorious; ⁶there shall be a pavilion as a shade by day from the

heat, and as a shelter and refuge from the storm and rain.

5 LET ME SING TO THE ONE I LOVE a song for my loved One regarding His vineyard: My loved One had a vineyard on a fertile hill. ²He carefully spaded it and cleared off the stones, and He planted choice vines. He also built a lookout tower in the center of it and cut out a winevat in it;^t then He waited for it to produce grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

³And now, residents of Jerusalem and men of Judah, please arbitrate between Me and My vineyard. ⁴What more was there to do for My vineyard that I did not do in it? For what reason, when I expected it to produce grapes, did it yield worthless grapes? ⁵Now, let me inform you what I am going to do to My vineyard; remove its hedge, and it shall be a pasture;^u break holes in the walls, and it shall be a trampled place. ⁶I will make it a desolation; it shall be neither pruned nor hoed; briers and thornbushes shall come up, and I will forbid the rain clouds to pour rain upon it. ⁷For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are His cherished planting. He eagerly looked for justice, but see, bloodshed! For righteousness, and lo, a cry of distress.

⁸Woe to those joining house to house, who unite field to field until there is no more room; you shall be made to live alone in the middle of the land. ⁹In my ears the LORD of hosts has spoken. Most certainly will many houses become desolate, spacious and fair, without occupants. ¹⁰For ten acres of vineyard will produce but nine gallons, and ten bushels of seed will produce but one bushel.

¹¹Woe to those getting up early in the morning to secure intoxicants, lingering late in twilight until wine inflames them. ¹²The guitar and harp, the tambourine, flute, and wine constitute their feasts! But they do not show re-

s) Of being unmarried.

t) Winevats in Palestine and in the Lebanon were generally cut in the rocks at two levels; the upper vat is the larger and shallower. In this the grapes are thrown and trodden [cf. Isa. 63:3]; the lower one is smaller, but deeper. Into it the grape juice is made to flow by a channel from the upper vat. u) Heb.: "it shall be for animal consumption."

gard for the deeds of the LORD, and the works of His hands they do not see. ¹³Therefore my people go into captivity^v for lack of knowledge—their nobles famished men and their multitudes parched with thirst. ¹⁴Therefore Sheol^w has enlarged her appetite and has opened her mouth immeasurably wide, and [into it] descend her^x splendor, her crowds, her din, and all who are jubilant in her. ¹⁵Then mankind shall be abased; men shall be brought low, and the faces of the haughty shall be humiliated. ¹⁶But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in justice, and the holy God will show Himself holy through righteousness. ¹⁷Then the lambs will graze as in their pastures, but foreigners will seize the waste fields of the fat ones.^y

¹⁸Woe to those who continually draw iniquity upon themselves with worthless cords and sin with cart ropes, ¹⁹who say, "Let Him make haste! Let Him speed His work, so that we may see it! Let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, that we may know it!"

²⁰Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who place darkness as light and light as darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

²¹Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and shrewd in their own sight!

²²Woe to those who are champions at drinking wine and expert men at mixing intoxicants, ²³who acquit the guilty for a bribe and take away the rights of the righteous! ²⁴Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble and as flaming straw shrivels away, so shall their root be as decay and their sprouts shall go up as dust. For they have rejected the teachings of the LORD of hosts and have shown contempt for the words of the Holy One of Israel.

²⁵Therefore the anger of the LORD is kindled against His people, and He has stretched out His hand upon them

and smitten them, so that the mountains quake and their corpses are like refuse in the middle of the streets. Despite all this, His anger has not subsided, and His hand is still stretched out.^z

²⁶He raises a signal for faraway peoples and whistles^a for them from the ends of the earth; and look, quickly, swiftly they come!^b ²⁷Not one is exhausted, there is not a staggering one with them; none is drowsy or sleeps; his waistcloth is not loosened, and his sandal-strap does not break; ²⁸his arrows are sharp, and all his bows are bent; his horses' hoofs are hard as flint and his wheels as swift as a whirlwind. ²⁹His roaring is like that of a lioness; he roars like a young lion; he will growl, seize the prey, and conceal it; and there is no rescuer! ³⁰In that day he will roar upon him like the roaring sea; if he looks to the land, see, darkness and distress; for light is darkened by its clouds.

6 IN THE YEAR OF KING UZZIAH'S death, I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and eminent throne, and the trailing of His robe filled the temple. ²The seraphim^c were standing above Him; each had six wings;^d with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.^e ³The one called to the other and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."^f ⁴The supports of the thresholds shook at the sound of the one calling, and the house became filled with smoke.

⁵Then I said, "Alas for me; for I feel beaten, because I am a man of unclean lips and I am living among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." ⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a glowing coal which he had taken with tongs from off the altar. ⁷He touched my mouth with it and said, "Look!"

v) The Hebrew verb here is in the perfect tense, the perfect of certitude [as in 1:7].

w) The realm of the dead. x) Referring to Jerusalem.

y) The thought is—the innocent shall continue in their ways as formerly, but the fat [i.e., rich, wicked men] shall be removed by aliens who plunder them. z) To strike some more.

a) Cf. 7:18; Zech. 10:8. b) The nation the LORD employs to administer the punishing.

c) Fiery attendants, not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible until Rev. 4:6-8.

d) Massoretic text repeats six wings; the Dead Sea Scroll—Isaiah, does not.

e) Heb. "to fly to and fro," or "to hover in flight."

This has touched your lips; your iniquity is now removed, and your sins are atoned for." ⁸Thereupon I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then I said, "Here am I, send me."

⁹He said, Go! say to this people: Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive!

¹⁰Cause the heart of this people to be unreceptive; cause their ears to be hard of hearing, and paste their eyes shut,^f lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, their heart understand, and they repent and are healed.

¹¹Then I asked, "How long, Lord?" He responded: Until that time when cities are made ruins without residents, houses without people, the land utterly desolate, ¹²the LORD will have sent the people far away, and the forsaken sections of the land will be many. ¹³And though a tenth^g remains in it,^h it shall again be consumed, as an oak and as a terebinth tree,ⁱ which, when felled, has a stump; [so] the holy seed is its^j stump.

7 IN THE DAYS OF AHAZ, THE SON OF Jotham, the son of Uzziah, the king of Judah, Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah the king of Israel came to wage war against Jerusalem, but were unable to conquer it. ²When it was reported to the house of David that Syria was allied with Ephraim, his heart and the heart of his people shook as trees of the forest shake in the wind.

³Then the LORD said to Isaiah: Go forth, you and your son Shearjashub,^k to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, on the highway to the Fuller's Field, ⁴and say to him, "Be on your guard and keep calm; be not afraid nor timid of heart before these two butts of smoking firebrands; [nor] in the presence of the burning anger of Rezin of Syria and the son^l of Remaliah. ⁵Because Syria has plot-

ted evil against you [with] Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, ⁶'Let us go up against Judah, harass it, create a schism in it to our advantage, and set up the son of Tabeal as king in it,' ⁷thus says the Lord God: It shall not stand; it shall not take place!

⁸For Damascus is Syria's capital, and the sovereign of Damascus is Rezin, and within sixty-five years Ephraim shall be shattered as a nation. ⁹Samaria is the capital of Ephraim, and the sovereign of Samaria is the son of Remaliah. If you do not have firm confidence, you surely shall not abide firmly."

¹⁰Then the LORD continued speaking to Ahaz: ¹¹Ask for a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; let it be either deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz declared, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD."

¹³Then he^m said, "Hear now, house of David, is it not enough for you to try the patience of men, that you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virginⁿ shall conceive and shall bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel;^o ¹⁵He shall eat curds^p and honey until He knows how to reject the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶Even before the child shall know to reject the evil and to choose the good, the land before whose two kings you feel a sickening dread shall be forsaken. ¹⁷The LORD shall bring upon you, upon your people, and upon your father's house days such as have never been since the days of Ephraim's departure from Judah — the king of Assyria.

¹⁸In that day it shall be that the LORD shall whistle for the fly at the end^q of Egypt's rivers and for the bee from the land of Assyria. ¹⁹They shall come, and all of them shall settle in the steep ravines,^r in the clefts of the rocks, upon all thornbushes and in all the pastures.^s ²⁰Also in that day the

f) Heb.: "besmear his eyes."

g) Of the people. h) The land. i) Source of turpentine, secured by cutting into the tree stem.

j) Israel's. k) Meaning, "a remnant shall return." l) Pekah, a usurper on the throne of Israel.

m) Isaiah.

n) The Hebrew term "almah" is also applied to Miriam at about 14 [Ex. 2:8]; and to Rebekah, whose virginity is affirmed [Gen. 24:16]. The Greek translation made before Christ, has *parthenos*, usually rendered "virgin." o) God with us. An unusual child indeed [cf. Isa. 8:8; 9:6].

p) Or, "butter." q) Mouth or source. r) Or, "desolate valleys." s) Or, "drinking places."

Lord will shave with a razor, hired from regions beyond the river,^t with the king of Assyria, the hair from head to foot, including the beard.^u

²¹It shall be in that day that a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, ²²and that from the abundant production of milk he shall eat curds; then everyone, who is left in the midst of the land, shall eat curds and honey. ²³In that day it shall be that in every place where there were a thousand vines, worth a thousand dollars, there shall be briers and thornbushes. ²⁴With bow and arrows they shall come there, for the whole land shall be briers and thornbushes. ²⁵As for all the hills which were tilled with a hoe, one shall not come there for fear of briers and thornbushes; it shall be a place in which to send cattle and for sheep to trample.

8 THE LORD SAID TO ME, TAKE A large tablet and write upon it in common script:^v Hasty spoil, speedy booty.^w ²And I will have two reliable witnesses testify for me — Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. ³I went in to the prophetess,^x and she conceived and bore a son. The LORD said to me: Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz; ⁴for before the child knows how to cry, "My father" and "My mother," the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be carried away before the king of Assyria.

⁵Again the LORD spoke to me: ⁶Because this people has rejected the waters of Shiloah,^y which flow gently, and there is rejoicing^z in Rezin and the son of Remaliah; ⁷therefore, look, the LORD is bringing upon them the mighty and many waters of the river,^a even the king of Assyria and all his glory. It shall rise over all its channels and overflow all its banks, ⁸and shall sweep on into Judah, flood, and submerge^b [it]; it shall reach up to the

neck; and its outspread wings shall fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel

⁹Do you worst,^c O people, and be shattered! Yes, listen, distant places of the earth! Gird yourselves and be shattered; gird yourselves and be shattered ¹⁰Devise a plan and it shall be frustrated; speak a word and it shall not stand, for God is with us.^d

¹¹For thus the LORD spoke to me when His hand was strong [upon me] and He warned me from walking in the ways of this people: ¹²Do not call everything "conspiracy" which this people is calling "conspiracy"; fear no what they fear, nor be in dread of it ¹³The LORD of hosts, regard Him a holy; let Him be your fear; let Him be your dread. ¹⁴And He shall be a sacred asylum [to you], but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to the two houses of Israel, a trap and a snare for the residents of Jerusalem ¹⁵Many will stumble on it and will fall; they will be broken, trapped, and taken.

¹⁶Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.^e ¹⁷I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; indeed, I will hope in Him. ¹⁸Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts who dwells in Mount Zion.

¹⁹Therefore when men will say to you, "Consult the necromancers and fortunetellers,^f that chirp and mutter," should not a people consult its God? Should a people consult the dead for the benefit of the living? ²⁰To the Law^g and to the testimony!^h Whoever will not speak according to this word there shall surely be no dawn for him ²¹He shall wander through [the land] distressed and hungry; it shall be that because he is famished, he will rave within himself and curse his king and his God. Then he will turn [his eyes]

t) The Euphrates. u) To be thus shaven was very humiliating [cf. II Sam. 10:5].

v) Or, "with the pen of a man." w) Maher-shalal-hash-baz. x) His wife.

y) Shiloah may be identified as Siloam, meaning "sent," because its waters were directed from the Fountain of the Virgin through an ancient tunnel.

z) Therefore also allied with them. a) Euphrates. b) Heb.: "pass over." c) Or, "rage."

d) Or, "Immanuel." e) Teaching God's instructions is their surest seal.

f) Disembodied spirits who were to foretell the future. g) Teaching.

h) Prophetic attestation to the teachings of the books of the Law.

upward ²²and will also look to the earth and see distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. Into darkness shall he be thrust.

9 BUT SHE WHO WAS IN ANGUISH shall not continue in gloom. As in earlier time He brought the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali¹ into contempt, so in the succeeding period He has made glorious² the way of the sea, the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

²The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who lived in the land of intense darkness light has shined. ³Thou hast enlarged the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice before Thee as men are joyful in harvest time, as men shout for joy during the dividing of the booty. ⁴For his burdensome yoke, the stick for his shoulder,^k and his slave-driver's rod Thou hast broken as in the day of Midian.¹ ⁵For every tramping soldier's boot in the middle of the battle turmoil and every coat rolled in blood shall be burned—fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷There shall be no end to the increase of [His] government or to the peace upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, in that it is firmly established and supported in justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

⁸The Lord has sent a word into Jacob, and it has fallen on Israel. ⁹Therefore all the people know, Ephraim and the residents of Samaria, who in pride and in arrogance of heart boast, ¹⁰"The bricks have fallen, but we will rebuild with quarried stones; the sycamore trees have been cut down, but we will plant cedars instead." ¹¹[These know] that the LORD

brought up the adversaries of Rezin against them and stirred up their enemies, ¹²Syria from the east and the Philistines from the west, who have devoured Israel with an open mouth. Despite all this, His anger has not subsided, and His hand is still stretched out.

¹³Yet the people did not turn to Him who smote them; they did not seek the LORD of hosts.^m ¹⁴So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and reed, in a single day. ¹⁵The elder and the man of honor is the head; the prophet who teaches lies is the tail; ¹⁶for the leaders of this people are become misleaders, and their followers are swallowed up. ¹⁷Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over their young men and has no compassion on their orphans and widows; for every one of them is godless and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly. Despite all this, His anger has not subsided, and His hand is still stretched out.

¹⁸For wickedness burns as fire, consumes briars and thornbushes; it ignites the thickets of the forests, and they roll up as columns of smoke. ¹⁹The land is scorchedⁿ by the fury of the LORD of hosts, and the people become the fuel for fire. No man spares the other; ²⁰they destroy on the right and are famished; they devour on the left and are not satisfied; man consumes the flesh of his own arm—²¹Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, and together against Judah. Despite all this, His anger has not subsided, and His hand is still stretched out.

10 ALAS FOR THOSE ISSUING UN-righteous decrees and for the scribes who put injurious decisions into writing;^o ²who thrust aside the needy from their court rights and rob the poor of My people of justice, so that widows become their prey and orphans their plunder. ³What will you do in the day of visitation and in the annihilation that comes from afar? To

i) These provinces were the first to be depopulated by Tiglath-pileser [II Kings 15:29].

j) The verb is a prophetic perfect of certainty. k) Stick used to beat the upper back.

l) Recall Gideon's victory over the Midianites.

m) The LORD's intent is repentance, not punishment. n) Or, "darkened," "burned black," o) Mean judges registered unfair decisions as legal precedents, which other unfair judges could follow.

whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your glory?" ⁴You can only crouch among the prisoners and fall among the slain. Despite all this, His anger does not subside, and His hand is still stretched out.⁵

⁶Alas for Assyria, the rod of Mine anger!⁷ My indignation is the staff in their hand. ⁸I send him against a godless nation; I give him orders against the people of My indignation to take booty, to seize prey, and to trample them as the mud of the street. ⁹But he does not so intend, nor does he so plan in his heart; it is in his heart to exterminate nations—not a few.¹⁰ ¹¹For he said, "Are not my princes all kings? ¹²Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus? ¹³As my hand found the kingdoms of the idols, even though their idols excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria, ¹⁴shall I not do to Jerusalem and her images as I did to Samaria and her idols?"

¹⁵It shall be when the LORD has finished all His work on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, that I will inflict punishment on the fruit^p of the arrogant heart of Assyria's king, on the boasting of his haughty looks. ¹⁶For he claims, "By the strength of my hand have I done this and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; I have removed the frontiers of the peoples and plundered their treasures. Like a bull I have dislodged those who sat [on thrones], ¹⁷and my hand reached the wealth of the peoples [which were] as in a nest; and as men gather eggs left behind, so I gathered the whole earth. There was none that flapped a wing, opened its beak, or chirped." ¹⁸Should an axe boast itself over the man who hews with it, or a saw vaunt itself over the one who moves it back and forth? [Should] a stick wave him who takes it up, or a cane lift up him who is not wood? ¹⁹Therefore the LORD,

the LORD of hosts, shall send a wasting disease upon his robust [soldiery], and under his glory shall be kindled a burning as the burning of a fire. ²⁰The light of Israel shall be as a fire, and the Holy One of Israel as a flame, and it shall burn and destroy his thorn-bushes and his briars in one day. ²¹It will consume the glory of his forest and of his productive field; both soul and body shall be consumed; it shall be as a sick man wasting away. ²²The remaining trees of the forest shall be so few that a child could write them down.

²³It shall be in that day that the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean upon the one smiting them, but trustingly they shall lean upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ²⁴A remnant, the remnant of Jacob, will return to the mighty God. ²⁵For though your people, O Israel, be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return.²⁶ Annihilation is determined, overflowing with righteousness.²⁷ ²⁸For a full destruction and that a decisive one, the LORD, the LORD of hosts, shall make in the midst of the whole earth.²⁹

³⁰Therefore the LORD, the LORD of hosts, says this: My people, who dwell in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian nation, when it hits you with a stick and lifts up its rod against you as the Egyptians did. ³¹For in a very short time Assyria's indignation will be spent; for My anger is to their destruction. ³²Then shall the LORD of hosts raise up over them a scourge like that with which Midian was smitten at the rock of Oreb,³³ and His rod [shall be] over the sea, and He shall lift it up as in Egypt. ³⁴In that day his burden shall be lifted from your shoulder and his yoke from your neck; the yoke shall be broken off because of ointment.³⁵

³⁶He has arrived at Aiath, passed

p) Wealth, possessions. q) Divine discipline has failed; only judgment remains.

r) The Assyrians are the rod which the LORD is using to punish the godless nations, Judah in particular.

s) The LORD is working out His own plan, while the Assyrians imagine that they are working out theirs. Assyria must not assume that the LORD is a mere tribal deity.

t) The thoughts, words, and deeds his heart produces.

u) That a "remnant should return" was foretold in the name of Isaiah's son, "Shear-jashub" [7:3].

v) Paul cites this passage in Rom. 9:27-29. w) Or, "the whole land," i.e., of Israel.

x) By Gideon and his men [Judg. 7:25]. y) Divine anointing and calling.

through Migron, and stored his baggage at Michmash. ²⁹They have crossed the pass; they stay overnight in Geba; Ramah is panic-stricken; Gibeah of Saul has fled. ³⁰Shriek aloud, daughter of Gallim! Listen, Laishah! Poor Anathoth! ³¹Madmenah flees; the residents of Gebim flee for safety. ³²This very day he halts at Nob;² he shakes his fist at the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

³³Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, will lop off the branches with tremendous force; the lofty in height shall be hewn down; the high ones shall be brought low. ³⁴He will cut down the thickets of the forest with an iron [axe], and Lebanon shall fall by a majestic One.

11 A TWIG SHALL SHOOT FORTH from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the reverence of the LORD; ³and His delight shall be in the reverence of the LORD. He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide by what His ears hear; ⁴but with justice shall He judge the poor, and with fairness shall He decide for the meek^a of the land. He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and the wicked He shall slay with the breath of His lips. ⁵Righteousness shall be the girdle of His waist, and faithfulness the belt for His loins.

⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down beside the kid; the calf, the young lion, and the beef cattle together, and a little child shall lead them.^b ⁷The cow shall graze with the bear; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the asp's hole, and the weaned child shall reach its

hand in the snake's nest. ⁹They shall not hurt or destroy on all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰In that day the nations shall seek after the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner for the peoples, and His resting place shall be glorious.

¹¹In that day it shall be that the Lord will stretch out His hand a second time to recover the remnant, which is left of His people from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the islands^c of the sea. ¹²He holds up the banner to the nations; He will gather the outcasts of Israel and shall assemble the scattered of Judah from the four corners of the earth. ¹³Ephraim's envy shall vanish, and Judah's hostility shall be done away with; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor shall Judah vex Ephraim; ¹⁴but they shall swoop down upon the shoulder of the Philistines to the west; together they shall plunder the tribes of the east. Their hand shall possess Edom and Moab; the Ammonites shall become subject to them. ¹⁵Then the LORD shall dry up the tongue of the sea of Egypt,^d and in His scorching breath He shall wave His hand over the river^e and smite it into seven streams, enabling men to cross it on sandals; ¹⁶there shall be for the remnant of His people which is left over a highway from Assyria, as there was for Israel at the time when they came up from the land of Egypt.

12 'IN THAT DAY YOU WILL SAY, "I will give thanks to Thee, O LORD, for though Thou wast angry with me, Thy anger is turned away and Thou dost comfort me. ²Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for JEHOVAH, the LORD, is my strength and my song; yes, He has become my salvation." ³With

z) The places mentioned are within 10 miles of Jerusalem.

a) Or, "poor of the land," "the downtrodden."

b) Special enemies becoming special friends; the wild and the tame living peacefully together.

c) Or, "the coastlands." d) The Red Sea at the north end which the Israelites once crossed.

e) The Euphrates.

f) This song has striking affinities to Moses' song [cf. Ex. 15] and is frequently quoted in both Testaments.

joy, therefore, will you draw water from the fountains of salvation; ⁴and you will say in that day, "Give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name! Make known His doings among the nations. Proclaim that His name is exalted!"

⁵"Sing to the LORD, for He has wrought glorious feats; let this become known through all the earth. ⁶Cry out and shout joyfully, you residents of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

13 THE ORACLE^g CONCERNING BABYLON which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw in a vision. ²On the bare summit of the mountain raise a banner, and shout aloud to them; wave a hand that they may enter the gates of the nobles. ³For I have commanded those dedicated to Me, I Myself have summoned My strong warriors, even My proudly exultant ones, to execute My anger.

⁴Listen, an uproar on the mountains as of a great multitude! Listen, an uproar of kingdoms, of nations assembling!^h The LORD of hosts is mustering a battle-host; ⁵they come from a distant land, from the end of heaven, the LORD and the weapons of His indignation, to destroy the whole earth. ⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand; as destruction from the Almighty will it come. ⁷Therefore all hands shall hang helpless, and every man's heart will grow weak with fear. ⁸They will become dismayed; pangs and agonies will seize them; they will writhe like a woman in travail. One will gaze in amazement at another, with their faces aflame.

⁹Behold, the day of the LORD comes! It is pitiless, accompanied with wrath and fierce anger, to make the earth a desolation and to destroy its sinners out of it. ¹⁰For the stars of heaven and its constellations shall not give their light; the sun shall be dark at its rising and the moon shall not send out its

light. ¹¹I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud and lay low the boasting of the violent. ¹²I will make mortal man scarcer than fine gold, and mankind rarer than the gold of Ophir.ⁱ ¹³The heavens, therefore, shall tremble and the earth quake out of its place at the indignation of the LORD of hosts in the day of His fierce anger. ¹⁴It shall be that as a hunted gazelle, or as a shepherdless flock of sheep, so shall every man turn to his own people and every man flee to his own land. ¹⁵Anyone who is found shall be thrust through, and anyone captured shall fall by the sword. ¹⁶Their infants, too, shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes: their houses shall be looted and their wives ravished.

¹⁷Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who neither care for silver nor desire gold. ¹⁸Their bows shall cut down the young men; they shall have no mercy upon the fruit of the womb; they shall not look in pity on children. ¹⁹Babylon, the beauty of empires, the proud glory of the Chaldeans, shall be as Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. ²⁰It shall never, never be inhabited; no one shall dwell in it from generation to generation; neither shall the Arab pitch his tent there, nor shall shepherds fold [their flocks] there. ²¹But wild beasts shall stretch themselves out there, and their^j houses shall be full of howling creatures; the ostriches shall live there, and shaggy goats^k shall be skipping about. ²²Hyenas shall howl within the castles and jackals in her luxurious palaces; her time has nearly come, and her days will not be prolonged.

14 FOR THE LORD WILL HAVE COM-
passion on Jacob and will still choose Israel. He will set them in their own land, and aliens will join them and will cling to the house of Jacob.

g) Or, "burden." The Hebrew term conveys the idea of a revelation given to the prophet which he in turn was to utter.

h) *Dead Sea Scrolls* Sec. 10, No. 2, "though peoples roar, though kingdoms rage."

i) To reach Ophir the Red Sea was used [I Kings 9:28; 22:48], but it was beyond it, so probably in southeast Arabia. j) Houses of Babylonians.

k) The Greek translation has "demons"; the Hebrew term usually refers to the wild goats. In this context of wild animals, the shaggy goat is most likely referred to.

And the peoples will take them^l and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will give them a foothold upon the LORD's soil as male and female servants. They will make captives of those who took them captive, and they will rule over their oppressors.

³It shall be in the day when the LORD gives you rest from your sufferings and from your turmoil and from the severe service you had to perform, that you will take up this poem^m against the king of Babylon:

How the tyrant has stopped; how [his] insolent rageⁿ has ceased! ⁵The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers ⁶who smote the peoples in wrath with ceaseless blows and trampled down the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution.

⁷The whole earth is at ease and quiet! They burst out with singing. ⁸Even the cypress trees rejoice over you, the cedars of Lebanon [are saying], "Since you have fallen, no woodcutter comes against us."

⁹Sheol below is excited because of you, to meet you when you come; it arouses the dead^o for you, even the chieftains^p of the earth; it makes all the kings of the nations to rise from their thrones. ¹⁰They all will respond and say to you, "So you, too, have become weak as we; you have become like us!" ¹¹Your pomp has been brought down to Sheol, and the music of your harps. Worms are spread out underneath you, and maggots are your covering. ¹²How you are fallen from heaven, shining gleam,^q son of the morning! Chopped down to the ground,^r conqueror of nations! ¹³You reflected in your heart, "I will scale the heavens; I will elevate my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of assembly,^s far away in the

north. ¹⁴I will rise above the heights of the clouds; I will rival the Most High!" ¹⁵But you will be brought down to Sheol, down to the farthest recesses of the pit. ¹⁶At the sight of you, men will gaze at you and reflect upon you, "Is this the man who caused the earth to tremble, who made kingdoms quake, ¹⁷who turned the world into a desert and overthrew its cities, who would not permit their prisoners to go to their homes?" ¹⁸All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb; ¹⁹but you are cast forth away from your tomb, like a loathed growth, clothed like the slain, pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones^t in the pit, as a carcass trodden under foot. ²⁰You will not join your fathers in burial, because you have ruined your country, you have slaughtered your people. May the descendants of evildoers not be mentioned forever! ²¹Prepare for his sons a slaughtering place because of their father's guilt, lest they rise up, obtain possession of the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities.

²²I will rise up against him, says the LORD of hosts, and I will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, son and grandson, says the LORD. ²³And I will make it the possession of the porcupine, marshes of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction, says the LORD of hosts.

²⁴The LORD of hosts has sworn: Truly, as I have planned, so shall it be; as I have purposed, so shall it stand, ²⁵to break Assyria in My land, and I will tread him down on My mountains; then his yoke will be removed from upon them, and his burden shall be taken off their shoulder. ²⁶This is the purpose that has been planned for the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the na-

l) The covenant nation, Israel.

m) Heb.: *mashal*, a "proverbial saying," "a parable"; when these are longer and in poetic form, the word may be translated "poem."

n) *The Dead Sea Scrolls - Isaiah*, and other manuscripts have term meaning, "insolent rage" or "fury." o) Heb.: "Rephaim." In Ps. 88:10, "dead" and "Rephaim" are parallel; spirits of the dead in Sheol are aroused to meet Babylon's king.

p) Heb.: "he-goats"; i.e., the trim, well-prepared superior he-goats - the earth's able fighters, all in the realm of death.

q) Heb.: the "shining one," which some have translated Lucifer, because of these predicates.

r) Heb.: "to disable," "to prostrate."

s) Among the Babylonians there prevailed a vivid description of an Olympus of the gods, called Aralu, in the far north, where the gods of the nations assembled.

t) Orientals might throw heavy stones on a hated enemy who had fallen.

tions. ²⁷For the LORD of hosts has purposed it, and who can annul it? His hand is now stretched out, and who can turn it back?

²⁸In the year that King Ahaz died came this message: ²⁹Rejoice not, O Philistia, all of you,^u that the rod which smote you is broken, for out of the root^v of the snake will come forth an adder, and its fruit will be a fiery, flying serpent. ³⁰The first-born of the poor will eat, and the needy will lie down in safety; but I will starve your root with a famine, and your remnant will be slain. ³¹Howl, O gate, and cry aloud, O city; you are melting away, O Philistia, all of you; for out of the north comes a smoke, and there is not a single straggler with him. ³²What then shall one answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of His people find refuge.

15 A MESSAGE CONCERNING MOAB. Surely, in a night Ar of Moab is laid waste and completely ruined. Surely, in a night Kir^w of Moab is laid waste and completely ruined. ²They have gone up to the house;^x Dibon^y has gone up to the high places to weep. On Mount Nebo and at Medeba Moab wails; on every head there is baldness, and every beard is shorn.^z ³In the streets they wear sackcloth; on the roofs of their houses and in their public squares everybody wails, melting with tears. ⁴Heshbon and Elealeh cry out so loudly that their voices are heard as far as Jahaz; therefore the strong men of Moab cry; his soul quivers within him. ⁵My heart cries out for Moab; her fugitives [flee] to Zoar^a and

to the third [town], Eglath. For weeping they made the ascent to Luhith^s; on the road to Horonaim they raise a cry of destruction. ⁶For the waters of Nimrim are become deserts;^b thus the grass is withered away, and the new grass fails; there is no verdure. ⁷Therefore the provisions, acquired and stored, they carry over to the Brook of the Willows. ⁸For the cry of distress has circled the borders of Moab, the howling to Eglaim and the howling to Beer-elim. ⁹Though the waters of Dimon^c are full of blood, I [the LORD] will bring additional calamities upon Dimon — a lion for the escaped of Moab and for the remnants of the land.

16 SEND THE TRIBUTE LAMB TO the ruler of the land from Sela of the desert to the mountains of the villages of Zion. ²Then, like fluttering birds [from] an overturned nest, the daughters of Moab shall gather at the fords of the Arnon. ³"Bring counsel and arbitrate justly; give us shade as the night in the middle of the day; hide the hunted; do not betray the refugee. ⁴Let the outcasts of Moab live among you; be a hiding place to Moab who faces the devastator."^d For then the oppressor has met his end, the destruction has ceased, and the pillager has disappeared; ⁵then a throne will be established in loving-kindness,^e and One shall sit upon it in faithfulness, in the tent of David, judging and seeking justice, and eager to do justice.

⁶We have heard of the pride of Moab, how proud he was; of his arrogance and insolence; of his idle boasting. ⁷Therefore Moab laments for Moab, every one wailing. For the

u) The five important cities of Philistia at that time were Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, and Ekron [Josh. 13:3].

v) While a root usually means the underground part of a tree and its source of life, it may also stand for offspring, as in Isa. 11:10 — a "root of Jesse"; so it means here the source from which the adder springs.

w) Ar and Kir are located on the high plains of southern Moab, from the Arnon south a few miles to Kerak; both cities were fortified. x) To their temple.

y) Dibon, 3 mi. north of the Arnon, where the famous "Moabite Stone" of Mesha was discovered in 1868. z) To an Oriental, shaving the face is a sign of special sorrow.

a) Close to the south end of the Dead Sea, on the east side [cf. Jer. 48:34]. Lot fled to it from Sodom [Gen. 19:20-23]. b) Heb.: desolations.

c) The stream near the south end of the Dead Sea, which was the boundary between Moab and Edom. Dead Sea Scroll has 'Dibon.'

d) This is the plea of the refugees of Moab, who had hid in Edom.

e) Hebrew word *hesed*, meaning "loving-kindness," is one of the greatest concepts in the O.T. [cf. John 3:16].

raisin-cakes^f of Kir-hareseth you sigh, utterly discouraged,^g because the fields of Heshbon languish, [also] the vine of Sibmah. The masters of the nations struck down its red-colored clusters; its runners^h reach to Jazer, stray into the desert, and stretch over the shores of the sea.^b

⁹Therefore will I weep in the weeping of Jazer for the vine of Sibmah; I shall drench you with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh, because upon your summer fruits and on your harvest the shout of battle has fallen. ¹⁰Joy and gladness have been removed from the productive fields; in your vineyards no songs, no shouts of joy [are heard]; the wine in the pressing trough is not trodden out by the treader; cheering shouts I have made to cease. ¹¹Accordingly, my feelings are moved for Moab like a harp, and my soul for Kir-harsh. ¹²For it shall be that when Moab has presented himself and has wearied himself upon the high placeⁱ and has entered into his sanctuary to pray, it will avail him nothing.

¹³This is the word which the LORD did speak concerning Moab. ¹⁴But now the LORD speaks, saying that within three years, like the years of a hired hand, the glory of Moab shall be brought into contempt with all its great throng [of people], and the remnant shall be small, few, insignificant.

17 A MESSAGE CONCERNING Damascus. Observe! Damascus is about to be undone as a city; she will become a heap of ruins. ²The cities of Aroer are forsaken and given over to flocks which lie down, with no one to make them afraid. ³The fortifications will disappear from Ephraim, the royal power from Damascus, and the remnant from Syria; they shall be as the glory

of the sons of Israel, declares the LORD of hosts.

⁴It shall be in that day that the glory of Jacob shall wane, and his fatness shall become lean. ⁵It will be as when a reaper gathers the standing crop, his arms full of ears of grain; yes, it will be as when one gathers the few remaining stalks in the valley of Rephaim. ⁶However, there shall be a leftover in it, as when an olive tree is beaten,^j two or three olives on the topmost bough, four or five on the outer branches of a fruit tree, says the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁷In that day man will turn to his Maker,^k and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel. ⁸He will look no more to the altars, the work of his own hands, or what his fingers have made; nor will he have regard for the images of Ashteroth or for the sun-images. ⁹In that day their strong cities^l shall be like the forsaken places of the wooded heights and mountain tops, which they have deserted at the approach of the Israelites, and they shall become a desolation. ¹⁰Because you have forgotten the God of your salvation^m and have not remembered the Rock of your protection,ⁿ therefore you have established pleasant plantations^o and have planted in them strange slips. ¹¹On the day you plant them, you carefully shield them,^p and in the morning you have the seed blossoming; yet the crop will vanish in the day of grief and incurable pain.

¹²Alas, the uproar of many peoples that roar like the roaring of the sea, and the rushing of the nations that rush like the rushing of mighty waters. ¹³Nations rush like the rushing of mighty waters. He will rebuke them, and they will flee far away, chased like chaff on the mountains^q before the

f) They enjoyed raisin-cakes when celebrating the vintage festival, and offerings were made to Chemosh, Moab's national god.

g) Branches of vine of Sibmah. h) Dead Sea.

i) Bringing sacrifices. j) Rarely can one beat every olive from its tree.

k) Isa. calls God the "Maker"; as again in 27:11; 51:13; 54:5 [cf. 22:11].

l) Heb.: "cities of refuge"; the strong city afforded shelter in times of warfare and calamity.

m) The word "salvation," as a noun, occurs nowhere else in the book; though it is part of the prophet's name. n) Or, strength, help, safety.

o) The pleasant plantations quite likely were in the "Adonis gardens," in which Adonis festivals took place. p) Heb.: vine slips of a strange god are hedged in carefully to assure their growth.

q) Ground threshing floors in Palestine and Mt. Lebanon are to this day located on prominent knolls or hilltops where the winds will drive the chaff swiftly away.

wind, like whirling dust before the hurricane. ¹⁴At eventide, lo, terror! Before morning they are gone. Such is the fate of those who pillage us and the lot of those who plunder us.

18 ¹ALAS, LAND OF BUZZING WINGS,⁹ which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, ²that sends ambassadors by the sea,¹ and in vessels of papyrus upon the face of the sea. Go, you swift messengers, to a people tall and smooth, to a people dreaded near and far, that conquers and treads down, whose land the rivers divide. ³All you inhabitants of the world and you dwellers upon earth, when a signal is raised on the mountains, look! When a trumpet is blown, hear! ⁴For thus the LORD has spoken to me: I will remain quiet and look on from My dwelling place like the glowing heat of sunshine and the heavy dew in the heat of the harvest. ⁵For before the harvest, when the blossom-time is over and the bud is becoming a ripening grape, He lops off the branches with pruning shears; and the tendrils He removes, He cuts away. ⁶They will be left together for the vultures of the mountains and for the wild beasts of the land; the vultures [will feed] all summer upon them, and all the wild beasts of the land will winter upon them. ⁷Yet, at that time gifts will be brought to the LORD of hosts from a people tall and smooth, from a people dreaded near and far, a nation conquering and treading down, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, to Mount Zion.

19 ¹A MESSAGE CONCERNING EGYPT. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud; He comes to Egypt; Egypt's idols tremble before Him; the heart of Egypt melts within him. ²I will stir up the Egyptians to fight Egyptians, [every] man will fight with

another, a man with his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. ³The Egyptian's energy shall become exhausted; his wisdom will I make useless, and they will resort to the idols and magicians, to the wizards and fortunetellers. ⁴And I will give the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master; a fierce king will reign over them, says the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

⁵The waters of the sea will be dried up, and the river will run empty and be dried up. ⁶The rivers will become foul, and the streams of Egypt^u will decrease and dry up; the reeds and rushes will rot away. ⁷The meadows alongside the river and the mouth of the river and all the seeded fields bordering on the river will be dried up, blown away; they shall be no more. ⁸Fishermen will lament, those who cast hooks into the river will mourn, and the spreaders of nets over the top of the water will pine away. ⁹They who prepare the combed flax and weave cotton^v will be humiliated. ¹⁰Its supporting pillars will be crushed,^w and those who work for wages will be grieved in soul.

¹¹Utterly foolish are the princes of Zoan,^x likewise, the advice of Pharaoh's wisest counselors is folly. How can they say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise; a son of ancient kings"? ¹²Where now are your wise men? Let them declare to you; let them know what the LORD of hosts has planned against Egypt. ¹³The princes of Zoan are confused, and the princes of Memphis^y are deluded; [those forming] the cornerstone of her tribes have led Egypt astray. ¹⁴The LORD has mingled a spirit of error in its midst so that Egypt now staggers in all her doings, as a drunken man sways back and forth in his vomit. ¹⁵Neither head nor tail, palm branch nor reed can do anything for Egypt.

¹⁶In that day the Egyptians will be

r) This chapter of warning reads like a page of actual history. To one who has seen the White Nile across a thousand miles, as far as Uganda, the prophet's description is surpassingly graphic!

s) Ethiopia is one of the homes of the stinging "tsetse" fly. Its vast territory lies between the White Nile and the Blue [cf. Zeph. 3:10].

t) The natives still speak of the Upper Nile as a "sea," because of its great width.

u) The banks and the delta area. v) Heb: white stuff.

w) Probably referring to the business men of Egypt.

x) Zoan was a famous city in the n.e. part of the Delta.

y) Memphis is on the Nile, about ten miles south of Cairo; it was the capital of lower Egypt.

like women; they will fear and tremble under the threatening hand which the LORD of hosts will shake over them. ¹⁷The land of Judah will become a terror to all Egypt, and anyone who recalls it to mind will dread the purposes of the LORD of hosts which He is purposing against it. ¹⁸In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing by the LORD of hosts, one of which shall be called the City of Destruction.

¹⁹In that day there shall be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt and a pillar to the LORD near its border. ²⁰It will be for a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt, so that they will cry to the LORD because of their oppressors; and the LORD will send a Savior, even a mighty One, and He will deliver them. ²¹The LORD will reveal Himself to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day and shall worship Him with sacrifice and offerings; and they shall make vows to the LORD and perform them. ²²The LORD will surely smite Egypt, smiting and healing, when they return to the LORD. He will heed their petitions and heal them.

²³In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria; the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and Egypt will with the Assyrians serve the LORD. ²⁴At that time Israel will be the third^z with Egypt and Assyria and become a blessing in the midst of the earth, ²⁵a blessing which the LORD of hosts will have given them, saying: Blessed be Egypt My people, Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.^a

20 IN THE YEAR THAT THE GEN-
eralissimo, who was sent by Sargon the king of Assyria, came to Ash-

dod,^b he fought against it and took it. ²The LORD said at that time by means of Isaiah the son of Amoz: Go and loose the sackcloth from your loins and remove the sandals from your feet; and he did so, going naked and barefoot. ³And the LORD said: As My servant Isaiah has gone for three years naked and barefoot as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Ethiopia, ⁴so shall the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, both young and old, naked and barefoot with stripped buttocks, to the shame of Egypt. ⁵Then they will be dismayed and be put to shame because of Ethiopia their hope and of Egypt their boast. ⁶And on that day the inhabitants of this coastland will lament, "See! so it goes with those on whom we relied, to whom we fled for help to save us from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape?"

21 A MESSAGE CONCERNING THE
desert of the west. As whirlwinds in the southland^c sweep on, so [it] comes from the desert, the land of terror. ²A harsh vision is declared to me; the traitor deals treacherously, and the destroyer demolishes. Go up, Elam; lay siege, Media;^d all the groaning I bring to an end. ³Therefore my loins are filled with anguish; pangs have seized me like those of a woman giving birth. Having heard, I squirm; having seen, I am terrified. ⁴My heart reels; horror appals me; the evening twilight, which I love, has been turned into trembling for me.

⁵Set the table! Spread the cloth! Eat, drink! Arise, princes; anoint your shields!^e ⁶For thus the LORD said to me: Go, set a watchman; let him announce what he sees. ⁷Should he see cavalry,^f horsemen in pairs, a troop on donkeys and on camels, let him listen very diligently! ⁸Then he cried as a

z) These three will form a spiritual alliance, united nations for God.

a) The great historical enemies of Israel are thus reconciled through their acceptance of the faith of the covenant people.

b) Ashdod was a fortified city situated s.w. of Jerusalem on the Plain of the Philistines.

c) The Negeb is the name of the desert immediately south of Judah; "the desert of the west," probably including some of Arabia.

d) Elam lay east of the Tigris, bordering partly on the Persian Gulf; Media was the mountainous district adjoining it on the north.

e) Shields were anointed to ward off more effectively the strokes of the enemy.

f) May refer to chariots.

lion, "Lord, I am standing on my watchtower continually by day, at my observation post I am stationed every night. ⁹And, behold, this comes: a troop of men, horsemen in pairs!" And the [watchmen] announced, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground." ¹⁰O, my threshed and winnowed one of the threshing floor,^g what I have heard from the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, I announce to you.

¹¹A message concerning Dumah. Someone from Mount Seir keeps calling to me, "Watchman, what [period] of the night?"^h Watchman, what [period] of the night?" ¹²The watchman answers, "Morning comes, but also night! If you wish to inquire, seek; turn; come!"

¹³A message concerning Arabia. In the thickets of the Arabian desert you must lodge, caravans of the Dedanites.ⁱ

¹⁴Greeting the thirsty, bring [them] water, you inhabitants of the land of Tema;^j meet the fugitives with bread.

¹⁵For before the sword have they fled, before the drawn sword, and before the bent bow, before the hardship of battle. ¹⁶For thus the Lord said to me: Within a year, according to the years of a hired hand, all the glory of Kedar shall come to an end; ¹⁷and those that are left of the numbered^k archers, the heroes of the sons of Kedar, shall be few. For the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken.

22 A MESSAGE CONCERNING THE valley of vision. What troubles you that all of you have climbed upon the housetops, ²you, full of noise, a tumultuous city, an exultant town? Your slain have not been slain by the sword, nor have they died in battle. ³All your leaders have fled together; without a bow have they been captured. All those of you whom they

overtook were made captive together, even those who had fled far away. ⁴Therefore I said, "Turn your gaze from me, [as] I weep bitterly; do not try to comfort me because of the devastation of the daughter of my people." ⁵For a day of confusion, downtreading, and perplexity from the LORD, God of hosts [is] in the valley of vision, a crashing down of walls and shouting to the mountains. ⁶Elam has taken up the quiver, with the chariots, infantry, and horsemen. Kir has uncovered the shield. ⁷Your choice valleys were filled with chariots, and horsemen set themselves in array against the gate. ⁸Then He removed the covering^l of Judah, and you looked for weapons in the house of the forest.^m ⁹You saw that the breaches in the walls of the city of David were numerous. You also collected the waters of the lower pool, ¹⁰counted the houses of Jerusalem, and broke down houses to fortify the wall. ¹¹You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool; but you did not look to the Maker of it, nor did you recognize Him who planned it long ago!

¹²Therefore at that time, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, called [you] to weeping and lamenting, to baldness and to the girding on of sackcloth. ¹³But instead, see, pleasure and mirth, the slaying of cattle and the killing of sheep, eating meat and drinking wine, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die." ¹⁴The LORD of hosts has revealed in my ears: Surely this iniquity will not be atonedⁿ for by you till you die, says the Lord, the LORD of hosts.^o

¹⁵Thus says the Lord, the LORD of hosts, Come, go to this steward, to Shebna,^p who is over the palace, [and say,] ¹⁶What do you have here, and whom have you here, that you have here carved a sepulchre for yourself.

g) Heb.: "son of a threshing floor" — idiom for "afflicted people."

h) First, second, third or fourth, each 3 hours, from 6:00 to 6:00.

i) The Dedanites were desert traders, related to Abraham through Keturah. They carried merchandise across the desert to Babylon.

j) Tema was the capital of the Ishmael tribe of the district north of the Dedanite territory, and s.e. of Damascus. k) Specific number of offensive warriors necessary for victory. l) Protection.

m) Solomon named his armory "the House of the Forest of Lebanon" [I Kings 7:2].

n) Heb.: "covered." o) Jerusalem's iniquity was frivolity, ignoring the LORD in a time of crisis.

p) Shebna was the administrator of a palace but his position did not entitle him to a tomb among royalty. He was arrogant.

you who are carving out a lofty sepulchre for yourself, hewing out a home in this rock for yourself? ¹⁷Behold, the LORD will hurl you away with violence, you strong man; He will thoroughly cover you. ¹⁸He will twist you together [and cast you] as a ball into a far-reaching land; there you will die and there will be your luxurious chariots. You are the disgrace of your master's palace. ¹⁹I will thrust you from your office and will pull you down from your position.

²⁰In that day I will summon My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah. ²¹I will clothe him with your robe, support him with your girdle, and commit to him your authority; he shall become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. ²²And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open and no one shall shut; he shall shut and none shall open. ²³I will fasten him like a peg in a firm place and he shall become a throne of honor to his father's house. ²⁴And they shall hang on him all the weight of his father's house, shoots and growths,^q every small vessel, from bowls to pitchers.

²⁵But in that day, as the LORD of hosts said, the other peg that is fastened so firmly in a sure place shall give way, be cut down, and fall; and it fell; the burden that was upon it shall be cut off, for the LORD has spoken it.^r

23 A MESSAGE CONCERNING TYRE.
Wail, you ships of Tarshish! Devastation [has come]. so that there is no house or harbor.^s It was reported to them from Cyprus. ²Be silent, inhabitants of the coastlands; the merchants of Sidon,^t sailing the sea, have replenished you;^u and [from across] the big sea ³came her revenue, the seed of

Sihor and the harvest of the river;^v you were the merchant trader of the nations. ⁴Be ashamed, Sidon, for the sea has spoken, the strength of the sea, saying, "I have neither travailed nor given birth; I have neither reared young men nor nourished virgins." ⁵When the news [comes] to Egypt, they will be pained because of the report about Tyre.

⁶Cross over to Tarshish, you dwellers of the coastlands! ⁷Is this your exultant [city] whose birth dates far back into antiquity, and whose feet carried her to settle far away? ⁸Who planned this against Tyre, the distributor of crowns, whose merchants were princes and whose traders were the honorable of the earth? ⁹The LORD of hosts planned to blemish the pride of all glory and to bring into contempt the honored of the earth. ¹⁰Overflow your land like the [Nile] river, daughter of Tarshish! There is no longer restraint for you.^w ¹¹He has stretched out His hand over the sea; He has shaken kingdoms; the LORD has given command concerning Canaan^x to destroy her fortresses. ¹²He has said: You shall no longer triumph, you dishonored virgin daughter of Sidon.^y ¹³Arise, pass over to Cyprus; yet even there you shall find no rest. ¹⁴Wail, O ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold shall be laid waste.

¹⁵It shall be in that day that Tyre shall be forgotten for 70 years, like the days of one king. But at the end of the 70 years, Tyre will fare as the prostitute in the song: ¹⁶"Take a harp, go about the city, forgotten harlot; make a sweet melody; sing many songs

q) Heb.: uses vegetable world terms to denote all descendants.

r) If the peg in vs. 23 refers to Shebna, then the promises made to Eliakim suggest that the prophet regarded Eliakim as a type of the Messiah. s) Heb.: deprived of house and entrance.

t) Sidon was 25 mi. north of Tyre on the Mediterranean coast.

u) There is added in *The Dead Sea Scrolls*: "your messengers passed over the sea."

v) Grain from the Nile valley.

w) Vs. 10 is probably advice to return to country life and till the soil, exchanging seagoing traffic for agriculture; but it could refer to Tarshish's freedom, to trade with Tyre, the strongest competitor destroyed.

x) Or, "concerning the merchant city."

y) According to Gen. 10:15, Sidon is reckoned as Canaan's first-born; hence Tyre was once a colony of Sidon.

that you may be remembered." ¹⁷It shall be at the end of 70 years that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she will return to her harlot hire and will maintain improper relationships with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. ¹⁸Her merchandise and her hire will be set apart to the LORD;² it will not be stored up or hoarded, but her gain will be given to those who dwell in the presence of the LORD, [to supply] them with adequate food and elegant clothing.

24 BEHOLD, THE LORD IS EMPTY-
ing the earth and laying it bare; He is distorting its surface and scattering its inhabitants. ²It shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with the master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. ³The country shall be completely emptied and utterly looted; for the LORD has spoken the word.

⁴The earth mourns and fades away; the world languishes and withers; the most prominent of the people^a shall languish. ⁵The land lies polluted by its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the Law, violated the statutes, and broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶Therefore a curse is consuming the land, and the people living in it are found guilty; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.

⁷The new wine mourns, the vines languish, all the merry-hearted sigh. ⁸The mirth of the timbrels is still; the din of the revelers has ceased; the music of the harp is silent. ⁹No more will they drink wine with song; strong drink will be bitter to the drinkers. ¹⁰Broken down, the city has become desolate; every house is closed up, so that no one can enter! ¹¹There is an outcry for wine in the streets. All joy

is turned to darkness;^b the mirth of the earth is gone; ¹²desolation is left in the city, and its gates are battered into ruins. ¹³For so shall it be in the midst of the whole earth among the peoples, as the beating of an olive tree,^c or as the gleaning [of grapes] when the vintage is over.^d

¹⁴They will raise their voice and sing; concerning the majesty of the LORD do they joyfully shout from the sea. ¹⁵Therefore, glorify the LORD in the regions of the sunrise,^e the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, in the islands of the sea. ¹⁶From the ends of the earth we hear psalms; yes, glory to the Righteous One! Yet, I confess, "Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me!" For the deceivers deceive; yes, with deceit the deceivers deceive."

¹⁷Panic, pitfall, and plot^f are upon you, inhabitant of the land! ¹⁸It shall be that he who flees from the noise of panic shall fall into a pit, and he who climbs out of the pit shall be captured by a snare; for the sluices on high are opened and earth's foundations tremble. ¹⁹The earth is utterly broken; the earth is completely shattered! The earth is violently shaken. ²⁰It reels and rocks like a drunken man and totters like a shanty; its transgression weighs heavily upon it; it shall fall to rise no more.

²¹In that day it shall be that the LORD will visit with punishment the hosts of those lofty on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth. ²²They will be gathered as prisoners are gathered in a pit and imprisoned in a dungeon; after many days they shall be visited. ²³Then shall the moon blush, and the sun shall be ashamed; for the LORD of hosts shall be king on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem His glory shall be before His elders.

25 O LORD, THOU ART MY GOD, I
will exalt Thee; I will praise
Thy name; for Thou hast wrought

2) Tyre is to be restored, not by her own devices, but by the favor of God. Trading and profits become jointly related to the LORD. [Cf. Deut. 23:18]. a) Or, "the heavens with the earth."

b) Or, "joy grown dark"; some mss. read, "passed away."

c) To get the last olive an olive tree was beaten with long slender poles.

d) The prophet uses the same figure in 17:6 of a few grapes left on the vines in gleaning.

e) Heb.: "in the fires" [of the east]. f) Ch. 6:4.

g) Hebrew reads, "pachad, pachoth, and pach are upon you."

marvels; plans determined long ago are steadfast and reliable. ²For Thou hast turned the city into a heap, the fortified city into ruins; the castle of foreigners is no more a city; it will never be rebuilt. ³Therefore strong peoples will glorify Thee, and the cities of ruthless nations will revere Thee. ⁴For Thou hast been vigor to the weak and power to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm and a shade from the heat, when the blast of the tyrants was like a rainstorm on a wall. ⁵As heat in a dry place Thou dost subdue the noise of foreigners; the song of the tyrants is subdued like heat by the shadow of a cloud.

⁶On this mountain^h the LORD of hosts shall make for all peoples a feast of rich food; a feast of well aged wine, of rich [beef] full of marrow; a feast of old wine well refined. ⁷And He shall destroy on this mountain the veilⁱ which is upon all peoples and the shroud that covers all nations. ⁸He shall swallow up death forever, and the LORD God shall wipe away tears from all faces; He shall remove from all the earth the reproach of His people, for the LORD has spoken it.^j

⁹It will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God on whom we have put our hope that He might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation." ¹⁰For the hand of the LORD shall rest on this mountain, and Moab shall be trodden down in its place as straw is trodden down into the moisture of a dung pit. ¹¹Though Moab stretches out his hands in the middle of it as a swimmer stretches out [his hands] to swim, He shall lay low his pride despite the craftiness of his hands. ¹²And the high-towering fortifications of his walls shall be cast down, made low, brought to the ground, even to the dust.

26 IN THAT DAY THIS SONG SHALL be sung in the land of Judah, "We have a strong city; He sets up salvation as walls and bulwarks. ²Open the gates, that the righteous people which maintains truth may enter in. ³Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace^k whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusts in Thee. ⁴Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD God^l is the Rock of Ages.^m ⁵For He has brought down the residents of the lofty places; He humbled the inaccessible city; He leveled it low to the earth, throwing it down to the dust. ⁶The foot shall trample upon it, the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy."

⁷For the just the way is level. Thou, Upright One, makest smooth the path of the righteous. ⁸Yes, in the way of Thy judgments, LORD, we wait for Thee. Our heart's desire is for Thy name and for Thy remembrance. ⁹My soul yearns for Thee in the night; indeed, from the depths of my spirit, do I diligently seek Thee; for when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.ⁿ ¹⁰[Though] favor is shown to the wicked, the wicked will not learn righteousness; in the land of right-doing, he is perverse and refuses to see the majesty of the LORD. ¹¹Though Thy hand was lifted,^o LORD, they refused to look; let them see Thy zeal for Thy people and be shamed. Yes, LORD, let Thy fire for Thy enemies consume them.^p

¹²LORD, Thou shalt establish peace for us forever; all our works Thou hast wrought for us, ¹³O LORD our God; other masters besides Thee have had dominion over us, but we shall acknowledge only Thy name. ¹⁴The dead do not live; the ghosts do not stand up. Accordingly, Thou hast visited and destroyed them and caused all memory of them to perish. ¹⁵Thou hast in-

h) Mount Zion, as in 2:2-4.

i) The veil of mourning covering the face. j) The prophet anticipates Paul [I Cor. 15:26].

k) "Perfect peace" is expressed in Hebrew by repeating the word for peace.

l) Heb.: *Yah-Yahweh*, the combination occurring here and in 12:2, and nowhere else in the O.T.

m) Or, "in the LORD God is an everlasting rock."

n) God's judgments may bring the disobedient to their senses. o) Heb.: "high," i.e., "to strike."

p) Such a prayer reminds us of the imprecatory psalms, 69, 109, and 137. Cf. Isa. 9:3.

creased the nation, LORD. Thou hast increased the nation; Thou art glorified. Thou hast extended the boundaries of the land. ¹⁶LORD, in distress they sought Thee; they poured forth a whispered prayer when Thy punishment was upon them. ¹⁷As a woman with child writhes when the hour draws near for her delivery and cries out in her pangs, so have we suffered without Thy presence, LORD; ¹⁸we have been in pain; we writhed, but we brought forth only wind; we wrought no deliverance in the earth nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen. ¹⁹But Thy dead shall live, [including] my corpse; they shall rise. [You] who dwell in the dust, awake and sing joyfully; for Thy dew is a dew of light, and Thou shalt drop it on the earth, upon the dead.

²⁰Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourselves a little while until [God's] indignation is past. ²¹For see! the LORD is coming out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the soil will not cover her blood, nor longer conceal her slain.

27 IN THAT DAY THE LORD, WITH His relentless, great, and strong sword shall visit^q Leviathan, the fugitive snake, Leviathan, the coiling serpent, and shall slay the dragon^r which is in the sea.

²In that day there shall be a red-wine vineyard; sing to it in responses.

³I, the LORD, am its keeper. I water it continually;^s and I watch over it night and day, lest harm might befall it. ⁴There is no wrath now with Me. Should I find thornbushes and briars [in it], I would fight them and burn them all together. ⁵Or let them obtain My protection and make peace with Me! Let them make peace with Me!

⁶In the days to come, Jacob shall take root; Israel shall bud and blossom and shall cover the face of the earth with produce.

⁷Has He smitten him as He smote those who were smiting him? Or, were they slain as those they had slaughtered?^t

⁸By driving her,^u by sending her away, He contended with her. He removed her with His rough blast as in the day of an east wind. ⁹Only in this way, therefore, could Jacob's iniquity be atoned for; and this will be the full fruition of the removal of his sins, that he shall make the stones of the altars^v into crushed lime and that the shame images and the sun pillars shall stand no more.

¹⁰For the fortified city shall become desolate, a dwelling left deserted and forsaken like the wilderness; there calves browse and lie down and eat the twigs of it. ¹¹When its boughs are withered, women shall come, break them off, and burn them in the fire. For this is a people without discernment; therefore He who made them will have no compassion on them; He who formed them will show no favor.

¹²In that day it shall be that the LORD shall thresh out grain from the river^w to the Brook of Egypt, and you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel! ¹³In that day a great trumpet shall be blown, and those perishing in the land of Assyria and the outcasts in the land of Egypt shall worship the LORD on the holy mountain at Jerusalem.^x

28 WOE TO THE HAUGHTY CROWN^y of the drunkards of Ephraim, and to the fading flower of its ornament of beauty, which is on the head of the fertile valley of those overcome with wine! ²Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty agent; like a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, like a flood of powerful, overwhelming wa-

q) i.e., "to afflict," "punish."

r) Heb.: *tannin*, "sea monsters." This and Leviathan are figurative terms for God's agents of destruction, such as Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt. s) Heb.: "every moment."

t) God punished His agents, through whom He disciplined Israel, worse than Israel.

u) Or, "by exact measure." v) Pagan altars.

w) The "river," the Euphrates; the "Brook of Egypt," the Wadi el-Arish, along the bounds of the Negeb, between Gaza and Pelusium.

x) The great world judgment is over, the enemies of Israel annihilated, and the redeemed restored to their own land.

y) The "crown" of Ephraim was Samaria, the capital city of the Ten Tribes, situated in a large fertile valley.

ters, He will cast down to the earth with the [clenched] hand. ³The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot; ⁴and the fading flower of its ornament of beauty, which is at the head of the fertile valley, shall be like a first ripe fig² before summer; when a man sees it, he eats it as soon as he has put it in his hand.

⁵In that day the LORD of hosts shall be a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people, ⁶a spirit of justice to him who executes justice, and of valor to those who turn back the battle to the gate.

⁷These also reel with wine and wander about because of strong drink; [both] priest and prophet reel because of strong drink; they are victims of wine; they wander about due to strong drink; they err in vision and stumble in giving judgment;^a ⁸for all their tables are covered with vomit; there is not a place without filth. ⁹Whom will He teach knowledge, and who shall be made to understand the message? [Babes just] weaned from the milk, [just] drawn from the breasts? ¹⁰For [it is] precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.^b ¹¹But with stammering lips and in a foreign language,^c He will speak to this people, ¹²to whom He said: This is the rest you shall give to the weary, and this is the refreshing. Yet they would not listen. ¹³However, the word of the LORD shall be to them, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little; that they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared, and taken.

¹⁴Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers, who rule this people in Jerusalem! ¹⁵Because you have

boasted, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an agreement; when the overwhelming scourge passes through, it shall not reach us, for we have made falsehood our refuge, and in fraud we hid ourselves"; ¹⁶therefore, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation Stone, a tested Stone,^d a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; he who believes will not be hurried.^e ¹⁷I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plummet; hail will sweep away your refuge of lies, and waters will flood your hiding place. ¹⁸Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will be canceled. When the overwhelming scourge passes through, you shall be trampled down by it. ¹⁹As often as it passes through, it will carry you away, for morning by morning will it pass, by day and by night. It will be unmixed terror to understand the message. ²⁰For the bed is too short to stretch one's self upon it and the covering too narrow for him to wrap himself in it. ²¹For the LORD shall arise as on Mount Perazim^f and be indignant as in the valley of Gibeon,^g to do His work, His strange work, and to perform His task, His unusual task. ²²Now therefore, scoff no more, lest your bondage be aggravated; for of a determined annihilation upon the whole earth have I heard from the Lord God of hosts.

²³Give ear and hear my voice; listen and hear my words. Does he who plows for sowing plow continually? ²⁴Does he [continually] tear up and harrow his land? ²⁵Does he not rather, after leveling the surface, scatter till and sow cummin, put the wheat in rows, barley in the appointed places and rye around its border? ²⁶His God correctly instructs and teaches him.^h

z) Early figs in Palestine ripen in late May or early June, about two months earlier than the ordinary crop, even in Jerusalem, 2500 ft. above sea level. a) Cf. 5:11, 22.

b) Rhyming monosyllables in Hebrew: tsaw-la-tsaw, tsaw-la-tsaw; kaw-la-kaw, kaw-la-kaw; z'er-sham, z'er-sham; which as imitated in English, has been suggested, "Law on law, law on law; saw on saw, saw on saw; a little here and a little there!" Thus do the toppers mock!

c) *Dead Sea Scrolls*, "Hymns," Sect. 8, No. 11: "with stammering tongue and with barbarous lips." d) Faith in God is Israel's only sure foundation.

e) An Arab proverb runs: "Hurry is of the devil."

f) Perazim in central Judah, one scene of David's victories over the Philistines (II Sam. 9:20).

g) The Gibeonites were punished by Joshua for their deceit, when Israel had entered Canaan. Gibeon or Geba was about five miles north of Jerusalem [Josh. 9].

h) The farmer's methods are a parable of God's dealing with men.

²⁷Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, neither does a cart wheel roll over cummin; but dill is beaten out with a rod and cummin with a flail. ²⁸Grain is crushed; he will not continually thresh it, but he rolls the wheels of his cart over it, since with his horses he cannot crush it.¹ ²⁹Even this comes from the LORD of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.

29 ALAS FOR ARIEL, ARIEL,¹ THE city where David encamped! Add year upon year, let the feasts run their annual cycle. ²Then will I bring distress upon Ariel; there shall be moaning and mourning; she shall be to Me an altar hearth.^k ³I will encamp against you round about you and push siege instruments and set up fortifications against you. ⁴Then from deep underground you will speak; your speech will come muffled from the dust; your voice will be coming from the ground as that of the spirit of one dead; yes, your words will be whispered from the dust.

⁵But the multitude of your enemies shall be like fine dust and the mass of the terrible ones like chaff blowing away; unexpectedly, suddenly it shall come.¹ ⁶You shall be visited by the LORD of hosts with thunder and earthquake and mighty din; with whirlwind and tempest and the flame of devouring fire. ⁷The multitude of all the nations that war against Ariel, with all its equipment, even those who distress her, shall be like a dream, a vision in the night. ⁸It will be as when a hungry man dreams that he is eating, but he awakes with his hunger unsatisfied;^m or as when a thirsty man dreams, and see, he is drinking, but he awakes and lo, he is faint and craving; so shall it be with all the mul-

titude of nations that war against Mount Zion.ⁿ

⁹Confuse yourselves and be confounded! Blind yourselves and be blind! Become drunk, but not with wine; stagger, but not with hard liquor.^o ¹⁰For the LORD has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep,[thus] He closed your eyes^p—the prophets; and covered your heads—the seers. ¹¹To you the visions of all [these things] have become like the words of a writing that is sealed; which if a man hand it to a learned one, requesting him to read it, he will answer, "I cannot, for it is sealed"; ¹²or, if one gives the writing to another who is not a scholar saying, "Read this please," and he replies, "I cannot read."

¹³The LORD said: Because this people draw near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, while their hearts^q are far from Me, and their reverence for Me is but the memorized injunction of men,^r ¹⁴therefore take notice: I will continue to do astounding things with this people, things wonderful and marvelous; the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their intelligent men shall vanish.

¹⁵Alas^s for those who hide deep their plans from the LORD, whose deeds are done in the dark; who say, "Who sees us?" and, "Who knows us?" ¹⁶Your perversity! Is the potter to be considered on an equal with the clay, so that the thing made can say of its maker, "He has not made me"? Or the thing that is molded, can it say to him who formed it, "He has no knowledge"?^t

¹⁷Is it not still a little while until Lebanon becomes a garden^u and the gardens shall be considered a forest?^v

¹⁸In that day the deaf shall hear the words of this writing, and then the

i) Suitable means must be used to gain the goal in each instance.

j) Jerusalem, eulogized as Lion of God. k) The altar hearth was drenched with blood.

l) Cf. 37:36; Sennacherib and the sudden destruction of his vast army.

m) Heb.: His soul is empty.

n) A most vivid picture of the disenchantment of aggressive warfare!

o) Cf. 8:9. The imperatives here are emphatic.

p) The atrophy of an unused faculty. God has closed their eyes; but the people had also closed their own eyes! Paul quotes vs. 10 in Rom. 11:8. q) Their thoughts.

r) Religious attitudes and actions by training and habit, and not from conviction.

s) This "woe" is directed against the political intrigues of certain conspirators, who, by hoping to obtain help from Egypt against Assyria, were deaf and dumb to spiritual things. Isaiah is aware of their plans. t) Cf. 45:9; Rom. 9:20. u) Heb.: *carmel*. v) Forest of fruit trees.

eyes of the blind shall see, in spite of their dimness and darkness; ¹⁹the meek shall have increasing joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. ²⁰For the tyrant shall have vanished; the scoffer shall have ceased; and all those intent on doing evil shall be cut off, ²¹who for a word declare a person guilty, and entrap the defender of justice in the gate,^w and with empty arguments turn aside the person who is in the right.

²²Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall no more be put to shame, neither shall his face now grow pale. ²³For when he and his children see the work of My hands in their midst, they shall sanctify My name; they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and shall stand in awe of the God of Israel. ²⁴Those erring in spirit shall come to understanding, and those who murmured shall accept instruction.

30 ALAS FOR YOU, REBELLIOUS children, says the LORD, who formulate a policy that is not Mine; who make an alliance^x contrary to My Spirit, thus adding sin to sin; ²who set out to go down to Egypt without asking for My counsel, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt. ³The protection of Egypt shall end in shame,^y and the protection you seek in the shadow of Egypt shall be to your reproach. ⁴His princes are in Zoan, and his messengers have arrived in Hanes.^z ⁵All shall come to shame because of a people who will bring them no benefit, that are of no help or profit, but bring shame and disgrace.^a

⁶A message concerning the beasts of the southland.^b Through a land of trouble and anguish, the home of the

lioness and the lion, the viper and the flying serpent, they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys and their prized treasures on the humps of their camels to a people who cannot help them. ⁷As for Egypt, its assistance is empty and vain; therefore I have called her "Rahab^c who sits still."

⁸Go now, write it in their presence on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come [as a witness] for ever and ever: ⁹that they are a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not listen to the LORD's instruction,^d ¹⁰who say to the seers, "See not," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things! Speak smooth things to us; predict delusions!" ¹¹Forsake the way, swerve from the path, and cease holding up before us the Holy One of Israel.^e ¹²Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: Because you have spurned this word and have trusted in oppression and crookedness and have relied on them, ¹³therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a broken section ready to fall, bulging out from a high wall, whose crash shall come suddenly at any instant. ¹⁴It shall be broken like the smashing of a potter's vessel smashed intentionally in pieces, so that among the fragments there shall not be found a piece with which to carry a coal of fire from the hearth or to dip water from a cistern. ¹⁵For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel:^f In conversion and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Yet you would not, ¹⁶but you answered, "No! we will flee upon horses"; therefore you shall flee—"upon the swift shall we flee"; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. ¹⁷At the threat of one, a thousand of you and at the threat of five [all of you] shall flee, till you will

w) Where legal cases were tried and criminals judged. x) Heb.: "who weave a web."

y) An alliance with Egypt will give Jerusalem only tottering walls and ultimate ruin.

z) Hanes was not far south of Memphis; Zoan was ancient Tanis.

a) Hosea had denounced the foreign alliance of northern Israel with Assyria [7:11]; so also Isaiah himself [20:5, 6].

b) Heb.: Negeb, the southern part of Judea between Hebron and the desert.

c) Rahab or "sea-dragon," which became a symbol of Egypt; menacing in mien, but laggard in action. d) Cf. Isa. 1:10.

e) Faithful prophets are charged with pessimism and lack of patriotism by people preferring "smooth things" which please [Cf. Amos 2:12; Hos. 9:8, 7; Mic. 2:6, 11].

f) Vs. 15 is a summary of Isaiah's gospel: Confidence in God and in His control of history; renunciation of earthly assistance in the face of international affairs; a calm reliance on God, as in 28:12, 16.

be left like a flagstaff on the peak of a mountain, and as a beacon on a hill.

¹⁸Nevertheless the LORD longs to be gracious to you! Therefore He shall rise up to bestow mercy on you; for the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are they who wait for Him.^g ¹⁹O people in Zion, who dwell in Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. He shall surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry! He will answer you when He hears you. ²⁰Though the LORD gave you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher^h will not hide Himself any more, for with your eyes you will see your Teacher.^h ²¹When you turn, whether to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it!" ²²Then you will consider unclean your graven images overlaid with silver and your molten images plated with gold;ⁱ you will cast them aside as an unclean thing, and you will say to them, "Be gone!"

²³He shall then give you rain for the seed with which you sow the soil, and food, the produce of the soil which is rich and plenteous; your cattle in that day will graze in large pastures. ²⁴The oxen and the donkeys that till the ground will feed on salted provender^j winnowed with sieve and fan. ²⁵On every lofty mountain and on every high hill there will flow brooks, copious streams in the day of the great slaughter when the towers fall. ²⁶Then the light of the moon will be as the light of seven days, at the time the LORD binds up the fractures of His people and heals the severe wounds of His blow.

²⁷Behold, the Name^k of the LORD is coming from afar, in burning anger, amid thick rising smoke; His lips are filled with fury; His tongue is like consuming fire. ²⁸His breath as an

overflowing torrent shall reach the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction [and to place] on the jaws of the people a bridle that will mislead them.^l ²⁹But you shall have a song as in the night consecrated for feasting; and you shall [have] gladness of heart as when men march with flutes to come to the mountain of the LORD, the Rock of Israel. ³⁰For the LORD will cause His powerful voice to be heard and will show His arm descending with furious anger, [with] a flame of devouring fire, a cloudburst, a tempest, and hailstones.^m ³¹The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of the LORD when He smites with the rod; ³²but every stroke of the rod of chastisement which the LORD lays upon them shall be accompanied by the timbrel and harp,ⁿ when, in battles, He assails them with a brandishing arm. ³³For Topheth^o has already been prepared; yes, for the king it has been made ready, made deep and wide and piled high with fire and logs in abundance. The breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, is setting it on fire.

31 ALAS FOR THOSE WHO GO DOWN to Egypt for help, who rely on horses and trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are powerful; but they do not look to the Holy One of Israel; they do not seek the LORD.^p ²Yet He who brings calamity is also wise, He shall not retract His words; He will arise against the house of evildoers and against the helpers of those who work iniquity. ³The Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. For, when the LORD stretches out His hand, he who helps falls and he who is helped stumbles; they shall all perish together.

⁴For thus the LORD said to me: As

g) Cf. 64:4.

h) Teacher may be a name for the Messiah, for in vss. 18-26 the prophet gives a picture of the blessings for the remnant in the Messianic dispensation, one of which is a teachable disposition in them. i) Cf. 40:19.

j) Domestic animals, usually fond of salted provender, will share in the general prosperity.

k) "The Name" of the LORD implies God Himself.

l) Vss. 27-33 reveal the omnipotence of God, by whom Assyria is to be annihilated.

m) As He fought for Israel against the Canaanites [cf. Josh. 10:11]. n) On Israel's part.

o) The place of refuse burning, the deep valley south of Jerusalem, where human sacrifices had been offered to Molech. The Assyrians, by implication, are here to be sacrificed, too. In this we have an example of Semitic warfare past and present.

p) The prophet here emphasizes the contrast between trust in Egyptian cavalry and trust in God.

the lion or the young lion growls over his prey and, though a full band of shepherds be called out against him, is neither terrified at their shouting nor daunted at their noise, so the LORD of hosts will come down to fight upon Mount Zion and upon His hill. ⁶Like hovering birds, [so] will the LORD of hosts protect Jerusalem, protect and deliver it; [by] passing over,^q He will preserve it.

⁶Return, O children of Israel, to Him from whom you have so gravely revolted! ⁷For in that day^r each man will cast away with contempt his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which your sinful hands have made for you. ⁸The Assyrian shall fall by the sword of no man; no human's sword shall devour him. He shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be put to bond service.^s ⁹His rock^t will pass away in terror, and his princes will desert the standard in panic, says the LORD, whose fire is in Zion and His furnace in Jerusalem.

32 BEHOLD! A KING SHALL REIGN in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice;^u ²each of them shall be like a hiding-place from the wind and a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place, as the shade of a great rock in a weary land. ³Then the eyes of those who see shall no more be blind, and the ears of those who hear will listen. ⁴The heart of the heedless will understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers will speak readily and distinctly. ⁵No more will the fool^v be called noble, nor the churl be considered liberal. ⁶For the fool speaks folly, and his mind brings forth iniquity, to practice hypocrisy and to utter falsehood concerning the LORD, starving

the soul of the hungry and taking away the drink of the thirsty. ⁷The instruments of the churl are evil; he devises sinister plans in order to ruin the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaks justly.^w ⁸But a noble man plans noble things and he stands for what is noble.

⁹You careless women,^x get up! Hear my voice; you irresponsible daughters, listen to my words. ¹⁰In little more than a year you so at ease shall be shaken; for the vintage will fail and the ingathering will not come. ¹¹Tremble, you careless women, shudder, complacent ones; strip yourselves bare; gird sackcloth^y upon your loins! ¹²Beat your breasts in mourning for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vines, ¹³for the land of my people, where thornbushes and briars grow; yes, for the houses of mirth in the joyous city! ¹⁴Because the palace hill and the watchtower^z for all time will become caves, the joy^a of wild donkeys, the pasture lands of flocks; ¹⁵until the Spirit^b is poured upon us from on high and the wild desert becomes a fruitful field and the fruitful field is thought to be a forest. ¹⁶Then justice will dwell in the desert, and righteousness will abide in the fruitful field; ¹⁷and the fruit of justice will be peace and the effect of righteousness rest and security forever. ¹⁸My people will live in a habitation of peace, in secure dwellings and quiet resting places ¹⁹even when hail falls, felling the forest, and the city is utterly brought down. ²⁰Blessed are you, who sow beside all waters, sending forth the feet of your ox and donkey.^c

33 ALAS FOR YOU, DEVASTATOR! you who have not been devastated yourself; you traitor, whom they have not betrayed! When you have

q) "Passing over" is the root of *pesah*, from which the word "passover" is derived, meaning to "rescue" or "preserve." r) Day of deliverance and judgment [cf. Isa. 2:20-21].

s) So also in Solomon's time [I Kings 9:21]. t) "His strength."

u) This chapter describes a future of pure religion and general prosperity, when "the aristocracy of birth and wealth will be replaced by an aristocracy of character" [Delitzsch]. Cf. 11:1-9.

v) A "fool" to the Hebrews was one who neither revered God nor respected his fellow men.

w) When the poor man's plea is legally right. x) Cf. Isa. 3:16-26, Amos 6:1-6.

y) The prophet mentions some ways of expressing grief; all are still practiced in the Middle East.

z) "The hill" is probably Ophel, the name given to the southern projection of the hill on which the temple stood. The watchtower rose above it; and nearby were palaces of the royalty.

a) i.e., favorite resort.

b) "Spirit" here, as well as in Isa. 63:10, 11, because the prophet regarded it as the divine principle of life which transforms land and people. c) Securely, in plenty — a scene of peace.

ceased to devastate, you shall be devastated yourself; and when you have ended your traitorous deeds, you shall be betrayed yourself.

²O LORD, be gracious to us! We have waited for Thee. Be Thou our strong arm every morning, yes, our salvation in time of trouble. ³At the sound of tumult the peoples flee; when Thou liftest up Thyself, the nations scatter. ⁴Then your plunder^d will be snatched away as when the caterpillar loots; they will leap upon it as do grasshoppers.

⁵The LORD is exalted; He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness. ⁶The stability of your times will be a wealth of deliverances, wisdom, and knowledge; the reverence of the LORD is his treasure.

⁷Listen! Their heralds cry aloud outside; the ambassadors of peace weep bitterly; ⁸the highways are desolate; the traveller has disappeared. He breaks the covenant; he despises cities;^e he^f respects no man. ⁹The land mourns and languishes; Lebanon is ashamed and withers; Sharon is as a desert; Bashan and Carmel drop their foliage. ¹⁰The LORD announces: I will now arise; I will now be exalted; I will now lift Myself up.^g ¹¹You conceive chaff, and you bring forth stubble.^h Your firelike breath shall consume you; ¹²the peoples shall be as in lime kilns, as thorns cut down that are set on fire.ⁱ

¹³Hear, you who are afar off, what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge My might. ¹⁴The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless.

Who among us can live with devouring fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting flames? ¹⁵He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly; who scorns gain won by oppression, who shakes his hands^j refusing bribes,

who stops his ears, refusing bloodshed, and shuts his eyes, refusing to look [favorably] on evil. ¹⁶He will dwell on the heights; his resort for safety will be the fortresses of rocks; his bread will be provided him; his water will be sure.^k ¹⁷Your eyes will see the King^l in His beauty; they will behold a land that stretches far. ¹⁸Your heart will meditate on the terrors: "Where is the scribe? Where is the weigher? Where is he who counted the towers?"^m ¹⁹No longer will you see a determined, fierce people, a people of an obscure speech, and of an unintelligible, barbarous language.ⁿ

²⁰Observe Zion, the city of our festivals. Your eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation; a tent, immovable,^o whose pegs will never be plucked up nor any of its cords be broken. ²¹But there the LORD will be with us in majesty; in a place of rivers and broad streams on which no oar-propelled boats will go nor mighty ships pass. ²²For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our King; He will save us. ²³The tacklings hang loose; they cannot hold the mast firmly in its socket, nor keep the sail spread out.^p Then the abundant loot will be divided; even the lame will carry off plunder. ²⁴No resident there will say, "I am sick," for the people living there will have had their sins forgiven.^q

34 DRAW NEAR, O NATIONS, TO hear, and listen, you peoples! Let the whole earth and its fulness hear,^r the world and all its offspring. ²For the LORD's anger is against all the nations and [His] indignation against all their hosts; He has doomed them and has given them over for slaughter. ³Their slain shall be cast out; the stench of their corpses shall

d) What Israel's enemies had robbed from them.

e) *The Dead Sea Scrolls* read: "despises witnesses." f) "He" is the Assyrian invader.

g) Judah's extremity is God's opportunity.

h) For this metaphor, compare 59:4; and for a parallel, 26:18.

i) In kilns, as a thornfire, the fire is hot, consumes rapidly. j) Indignantly refusing.

k) The image of war and siege is here maintained.

l) The Messianic King ever central in prophetic vision. In vs. 22 identified with the LORD Himself.

m) Referring to tribute-collecting officials or looting armies.

n) Assyrian was a sister-tongue to Hebrew, but unintelligible to the people [Jer. 5:15].

o) Or, "tabernacle, that shall not be taken down."

p) i.e., "your present ship of state is unsafe."

q) Was sickness proof to the Hebrews of God's displeasure, because of sin still unforgiven?

r) The same Hebrew word for "fulness" is used in 6:3.

rise, and the mountains shall melt in their blood. ⁴All the host of heaven shall dissolve, and the skies shall be rolled up like a scroll; all their host^a shall drop as leaves drop from the vine and as a fig falls from the fig tree.

⁵For My sword has been bathed^t in the heavens; and see, it descends on Edom, on the people whom I have doomed for judgment. ⁶The LORD has a sword coated with blood, besmeared with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of rams' kidneys; for the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah,^u a great slaughter in the land of Edom.^v

⁷Wild oxen shall fall with them, and bullocks with steers; their land shall be glutted with blood, and their dust saturated with fat. ⁸For the LORD has a day of retribution, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. ⁹The streams [of Edom] shall be turned into pitch^w and her soil into brimstone; her land shall become burning pitch, ¹⁰that shall not be quenched night or day;^x its smoke shall ascend forever from generation to generation; it shall be desolate, no one shall pass through it for ever and ever. ¹¹But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it; the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. He shall stretch over it the measuring line of chaos and the plummet of worthlessness.^y ¹²Her caves,^z with no one in them, will [still] be called a kingdom, but all her princes shall have vanished. ¹³Thorns will thrive [where once] were palaces; nettles and thistles [will fill] its fortresses; it will become a haunt of jackals and an abode for ostriches. ¹⁴Desert beasts will meet [there] with howling creatures. Shaggy goats^a will call one to another. The night monsters will settle there and find a place to rest. ¹⁵There the screech owl will make

her nest, lay and hatch [her eggs], and gather [her brood] under her shadow; vultures too will assemble, each one with her mate. ¹⁶Search and read it out of the book of the LORD that not one of them will be missing, not one will be without a mate, for the mouth of the LORD has given orders and His Spirit has gathered them. ¹⁷He has cast the lot for them; His hand has apportioned [the land] for them by a line. They shall possess it forever and shall dwell in it from generation to generation.^b

35 THE WILDERNESS AND THE DRY land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. ²It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with delight and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,^c the excellency of Carmel and of Sharon; they shall see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble hands; make firm the tottering knees. ⁴Say to those who are impatient of heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with retribution, with the recompense of God. He shall come and save you." ⁵Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, because waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷The scorching sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. ⁸A highway shall be there, yes, a way; it shall be called the Holy Way.^d The unclean shall not pass over it; it shall be for them alone;^e travellers and

s) The stars and planets.

t) "Bathed," in the sense of appointed and equipped with fury, to do its work here on earth.

u) Bozrah is beautifully situated about 20 miles s.e. of the Dead Sea, but has long been lying in ruins. v) Edomites as animals for sacrifice.

w) So, too, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Section 6, No. 20.

x) Like Sodom, on Edom's northern boundary, [Gen. 19:24].

y) Or, "line of confusion," "stone of emptiness," same terms as in Gen. 1:2, *Tohu* and *Bohu*.

z) *Choreyah* can be translated "her caves," or "her nobles." Edom's capital was a city of caves.

a) See note on Isa. 13:21.

b) The LORD has assigned Edom to these wild animals as explicitly as He had once assigned Canaan to Israel.

c) Nature will be transformed. In contrast to the pathetic annihilation of Edom, the joy of Judah stands out happy and radiant.

d) Other mention of this "highway" in Isa. 11:16; 40:3; 43:19; 49:11.

e) Only the remnant or believers in God will be welcomed; the uncircumcised and the unclean are, as in 52:1, denied entrance to the holy city.

fools' shall not wander about on it. ⁹No lion shall be there nor shall any beast of prey come thither or be found there; but the redeemed^d shall walk there. ¹⁰The ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, while sorrow and sighing shall flee away.^h

36 IN THE FOURTEENTH¹ YEAR OF King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and occupied them. ²Then the king of Assyria sent the field marshal^k from Lachish^k to Jerusalem against Hezekiah with a large army. He took a position by the aqueduct of the upper pool on the highway to the fuller's field.¹ ³And there came to him Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was [steward] over the [king's] household, Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder.

⁴The field marshal said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: What confidence is this in which you trust? ⁵I say, is a mere word of the lips enough counsel and strength for war? On whom do you now rely, that you dare to rebel against me? ⁶Look, you are relying upon the support of Egypt, a broken reed, which will only enter into and pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. ⁷But if you say to me, 'We trust in the LORD our God,' is He not the God whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed and who has said to Judah and Jerusalem, 'Before this altar you must worship'?^m ⁸Come now, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria, and I will give you 2,000

horses, provided you can set riders on them. ⁹How can you repulse the attack of a single captain, the least of my master's officers, and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ¹⁰Is it without the LORD's approval, that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me: Go up against this land and destroy it."ⁿ

¹¹At this, Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the field marshal, "Please, speak to your servants in Aramaic,^o for we understand it; do not speak in the Jews' language with the people listening upon the wall." ¹²But the field marshal replied, "Was it to you and your master^p only that my master sent me to speak these words, and not to the men sitting on the wall, who are to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?" ¹³Then the field marshal stood up and shouted with a loud voice in the Jews' language: "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. ¹⁴Thus the king says to you: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you; for he will not be able to deliver you. ¹⁵And do not let Hezekiah cause you to trust in the LORD by saying, 'The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

¹⁶"Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me; then every one of you will eat of his own vine and fig tree, and every one of you will drink the water of his own cistern; ¹⁷until I come^q back and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. ¹⁸Beware lest Hezekiah beguile you by saying, 'The LORD will deliver us.' Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? ¹⁹Where are the gods of Hamath and

f) The godless are fools, Ps. 14:1; 53:1. g) The penitent sinner.

h) The Dead Sea Scrolls, "Hymns," Sect. 18, No. 6: "for sorrow and sighing are no more."

i) The 14th of the 15 additional years given to Hezekiah [38:1-5].

j) Rabshakeh is the Assyrian word for "field marshal," a title.

k) Lachish, modern Tel el Hesi, an important fortress, s.w. of Jerusalem, commanding the road from Egypt. l) Where Isaiah had met Ahaz [7:3].

m) Hezekiah had done much to reform worship in Judah [II Kings 18:4], destroying their "high places." n) Cf. Isa. 10: 5, 6.

o) Aramaic was the common language of commerce and diplomacy of that time.

p) Throughout his speech the commander refrains from calling Hezekiah "king."

q) Come back from conquering Egypt?

Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? ²⁰Who among all the gods of these lands ever delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand? ²¹But they were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's command was, "Do not answer him."

²²Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was the steward of the [king's] household, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes rent and told him the words of the field marshal.

37 SO IT WAS THAT WHEN KING Hezekiah heard it, he rent his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ²He also sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah^r the prophet, the son of Amoz. ³They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'This day is a day of anguish, of rebuke and of disgrace; children have come to the birth,^t and there is no strength to bring forth. ⁴It may be that the LORD your God will hear the words of the field marshal, whom his master, the king of Assyria, has sent to insult the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard; therefore lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left!'"^u ⁵So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, ⁶and Isaiah said to them, "In this manner you shall report to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: Be not afraid because of the words which you have heard, with which the household attendants^v of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷See, I will send a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumor, so that he will return to

his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land!'"

⁸So the field marshal returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah; for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish. ⁹Now [the king] had heard a report that Tirhakah the king of Ethiopia had come to fight against him. When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, ¹⁰"Thus shall you say to Hezekiah king of Judah: 'Do not let your god, in whom you trust, deceive you, promising that Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. ¹¹See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all other lands, destroying them utterly, and are you to escape? ¹²Have the gods of the nations, which my fathers destroyed, delivered them, Gozen, Haran, Rezep, or the Edenites who were in Telassar? ¹³Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, or the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, or of Ivvah?'"^w

¹⁴Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, read it, went up to the house of the LORD, and Hezekiah spread it before the LORD. ¹⁵Hezekiah then prayed to the LORD: ¹⁶"O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who art enthroned above the cherubim,^x Thou art the God, Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made the heavens and the earth. ¹⁷Incline Thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open Thine eyes, O LORD, see and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. ¹⁸Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste^y all the nations and their lands ¹⁹and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands — wood and stone; therefore they destroyed them. ²⁰So now, O

r) Hamath, Arpad, and Sepharvaim were located north of Damascus, west of the Euphrates river.

s) Hezekiah recognized that Isaiah stood nearer to God than he stood; he craves Isaiah's help through prayer, and he speaks to him of the LORD as "your God" [vs. 4]. Prophets were frequently consulted in times of public danger [cf. Jer. 37:3].

t) *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, "Book of Hymns," Section 5, No. 5.

u) The efficacy of genuine intercessory prayer is taught and assumed throughout the O.T. The idea of a "remnant" to be saved is characteristic of Isaiah. v) Heb.: "the king's boys."

w) Many of these as yet unidentified places, probably located in the region about Hamath, and in Haran, between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

x) The cherubim were symbols of the divine presence, the reference here being to the two figures over the ark of the covenant.

y) The Hebrew verb translated "laid waste" is used here of nations, but never elsewhere of nations in the O.T., except in 60:12.

LORD, our God, save us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou, LORD, art God alone."

²¹Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying,² "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, ²²this is the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and laughs you to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem wags her head^a behind you. ²³Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted up your eyes? Against the Holy One of Israel! ²⁴By your messengers you have insulted the LORD^b and have boasted, With the multitude of my chariots, I have scaled high mountains and the recesses of Lebanon; I have felled its tallest cedars and its choicest fir trees; I reached its extreme height, its luxurious forest.^c ²⁵I dug and drank water, and with the soles of my feet I have dried up all the streams of Egypt.

²⁶"Have you not heard how I have done it long ago, having planned it in ancient times? Now I have brought it to pass, that you should lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. ²⁷Their residents, shorn of their strength,^d grew dismayed and confounded. They became like grass of the field, like tender green plants, like the grass upon the housetops, like a cornfield [blasted] before it is full grown. ²⁸I know your sitting down, your going out and your coming in, also your raging against Me. ²⁹Because of your raging against Me, and because your arrogance has come to My ears, I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips,^e and I will

drive you back, to return by the way you came.

³⁰"And this shall be a sign^f to you: This year you will eat what grows of itself and next year likewise what springs from the same; but in the third year you may sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ³¹And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again strike root downward and bear fruit upward. ³²For a remnant shall go forth from Jerusalem and the escapees from Mount Zion; the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall accomplish this. ³³Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall neither enter this city nor shoot an arrow there; neither shall he approach it under shield nor cast up a mound before it. ³⁴By the way that he came, by the same shall he return; he shall not enter the city, says the LORD; ³⁵for I will defend this city and save it, for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David."

³⁶Then the Angel of the LORD went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000; and when men rose in the morning, look, these were all dead!^g ³⁷So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp, went back, and lived at Nineveh. ³⁸And so it was that as he was worshipping in the house of Nis-roch, his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, slew him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Ararat. After that, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.^h

38 IN THOSE DAYS HEZEKIAH FELL ill to the point of death. Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live on." ²Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and

z) Hezekiah's prayer, in vss. 15-20, is followed by Isaiah's Taunt Song, in vss. 21-29, the latter displaying the prophet's thought and vigor of diction.

a) To wag the head was an oriental gesture of contempt.

b) Heb.: *Adonai*, as a divine name conveys the meaning of "the LORD" as Master, superhuman, and above all other gods. c) Sennacherib's boast of his might and of his greatest achievements.

d) Heb.: "Short of hand."

e) Pictured as a roaring, raging bull, pulled back home against his will.

f) This sign would prove to the Jews that the LORD had foreseen all the circumstances of the deliverance [cf. 10:5-15]. The Assyrians attacked the Hebrews during the 7th Sabbatical year, followed by the year of Jubilee; two years of rest and diminished harvests.

g) Herodotus witnesses to Sennacherib's great losses near Pelusium on the border of Egypt, stating that a plague of field mice caused it.

h) One ancient authority states that Sennacherib was slain, because of his choice of Esarhaddon to succeed him; Esarhaddon reigned 681-668 B.C.

prayed to the LORD, ³"Remember now, I beseech Thee, O LORD, how I have walked before Thee in truth and in sincerity of heart and have done what is good in Thy sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. ⁴Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying: ⁵"Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears. See! I will add fifteen years to your life. ⁶Also I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city. ⁷And this will be the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has promised: ⁸Behold, I will turn back the shadow ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz, on which the sun has gone down.ⁱ And the sun returned ten of the degrees it had gone down.

⁹A writing by Hezekiah, king of Judah, after he had been ill and had recovered from his illness: ¹⁰I said, "In the noontide of my days^j I am to pass into the entrances of the grave, deprived of the rest of my years." ¹¹I said, "I shall not see the LORD, [even] the LORD, in the land of the living, nor again behold men among the inhabitants of the world. ¹²My dwelling is plucked up and wrested from me as a shepherd's tent; I have finished my life^k like a weaver; He cuts me from the loom; from day to night Thou bringest me to an end.^l ¹³I place Him before me until morning. Like a lion He breaks all my bones; from day to night Thou bringest me to an end. ¹⁴Like a twittering swallow I chirp, and like a dove I moan. My eyes grow dim looking upward. I am in anguish; be Thou my surety.

¹⁵"What can I say? For He has spoken to me, and He has done it. I

will go softly all my years, because of the bitterness of my soul. ¹⁶O LORD, by these things men live,^m through them may my spirit revive; restore me to health and make me to live!

¹⁷"See, this great bitterness was for my own peace; Thou hast lovingly delivered me from the pit of corruption;ⁿ Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.^o ¹⁸Surely, the grave cannot praise Thee; death cannot rejoice in Thee; those who go down to the pit cannot hope in Thy faithfulness. ¹⁹The living, the living, he praises Thee, as I do this day; the father makes known to his children Thy faithfulness. ²⁰The LORD is ready to deliver me, and my songs will we sing all the days of our life in the house of the LORD."^p

²¹Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the eruption that he may recover." ²²Hezekiah had also said, "What is the sign that I shall again go up to the house of the LORD?"

39 AT THAT TIME MERODACH-BALADAN the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been ill and had recovered.^q ²Hezekiah was pleased with their visit and showed to them his treasure house, his silver and gold, the spices and fine oil, his whole armory, all that was found among his treasures; there was nothing in his house or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them. ³Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say and where did they come from?" Hezekiah replied, "They came from the far-away country of Babylon." ⁴[Isaiah] said, "And what did they see in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They

i) The clause, "on which the sun has gone down," is in the Greek translation, not in the Hebrew.

j) Heb.: "the time of rest" [cf. Ps. 102:24]. k) Heb.: "rolled up my life."

l) Hebrew idiom: as a weaver cuts his threads from the loom before his cloth is finished, so Hezekiah's life was to be prematurely cut off.

m) Hezekiah came to see that the LORD's discipline was a pledge of forgiveness [cf. Heb. 12:11]. "Sweet are the uses of adversity." n) *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Section 6, No. 1.

o) We may forgive, but we rarely forget: God forgives and forgets!

p) If Hezekiah's psalm was used in public worship, it would account for the plural pronouns "us" and "we."

q) Merodach-baladan had once thrown off the yoke of Assyria. Not only did he wish to felicitate Hezekiah on his recovery, but probably, also, to persuade him to ally himself with Babylon, in another revolt against Assyria.

saw everything in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."^r

⁶Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, ⁶"Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: Take note, the days are coming when all that is in your house, even all that your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the LORD. ⁷Some of the sons of your own issue, whom you shall beget, shall be carried away, and they shall become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." ⁸Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "Good is the word of the LORD which you have spoken"; and he added, "For there will be peace and stability in my time."

40 COMFORT YE,^a COMFORT YE MY people, says your God. ²Speak heartily^t to Jerusalem, and shout to her that her warfare is completed, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley must be filled up; every ridge must be cut down; the crooked turns must be straightened, and all rough places made smooth. ⁵The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it."

⁶A voice is calling, "Proclaim!" And I said, "What shall I proclaim? All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers and the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows upon it. Surely, the people is grass; ⁸the grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God shall stand for ever!"

⁹Zion's heralds of good tidings, climb up on a high mountain; lift up your voice with strength, Jerusalem's her-

alds of good tidings. Lift it up, be not afraid! Say to the cities of Judah, "Observe your God!" ¹⁰Behold, the LORD God is coming with power; His arm shall rule for Him. See, His reward is with Him and His compensation before Him.^u ¹¹He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms, carrying them in His bosom and gently leading those that are with young.

¹²Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, marked off the heavens with a span,^v enclosed the dust of the earth in a measuring basket, weighed the mountains in scales or the hills in a balance? ¹³Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or has, as His counselor, instructed Him? ¹⁴Whom did He consult so as to impart understanding to Him, showing Him the path of justice, teaching Him knowledge, and indicating the way of discernment? ¹⁵Behold, the nations are as a drop in the bucket and are reckoned as a speck of dust on scales. He lifts up islands like fine dust particles. ¹⁶Lebanon's trees are not enough to kindle a fire nor its animals sufficient for a burnt offering. ¹⁷All the nations are as nothing before Him; they are accounted as less than nothing and worthlessness. ¹⁸To whom then will you liken God, or with what likeness would you compare Him?

¹⁹The skilful designer casts an image, the goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions for it silver chains! ²⁰He who is too poor for such an offering chooses a tree that will not rot; he then seeks for it a skilful carver to set up an image that will not be overthrown.^w

²¹Do you not know, have you not heard, has it never been told you in times past, have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?^x

²²It is He who sits above the circle^y of the earth [to whom] the earth's in-

r) Hezekiah had shown childish vanity, had lacked faith and vision.

s) Chs. 38 and 39 are the introduction to ch. 40. The newly discovered *Dead Sea Scrolls Isaiah* confirms it, as the first line in Hebrew of ch. 40 is written as the final line of the page which carries ch. 39. t) Heb.: "to the heart."

u) An Arab sheikh, after conquering some rival tribe, usually comes back driving his plunder of livestock before him [cf. Isa. 62:11; Rev. 22:12]. v) A "span" was about 9 inches.

w) For an idol to fall would be a bad omen [cf. I Sam. 5:3].

x) Cf. Rom. 1:20—creation reveals God's eternal power and deity.

y) Suggested, probably, by skies and horizon.

habitants are as grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them like a tent in which to live; ²³who brings princes to naught, and makes the dignitaries of earth look like nothing. ²⁴Scarcely are such potentates planted, scarcely sown, their stock has hardly struck root in the ground,² when He breathes upon them and they wither and the wind carries them away like stubble. ²⁵To whom, then, would you liken Me, that I should be equal? says the Holy One.³ ²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see! Who created these? He who brings out their host by number and calls them all by name through the greatness of His might and the force of His power. Not one lacks anything!

²⁷Why, Jacob, do you say, and why, Israel, do you declare, that your way is hidden from the LORD, that your rights are overlooked by your God? ²⁸Do you not know, have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth; He never faints or grows weary; His wisdom is unsearchable. ²⁹He imparts vigor to the fainting, and to those who have no might He increases strength. ³⁰Even youths shall faint and grow weary and young men go down exhausted; ³¹but they that await the LORD shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles;^b they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

41 SILENTLY [LISTEN] TO ME, YOU islands;^c let the peoples renew their strength; let them approach and then speak; let us draw near together for judgment. ²Who raised him up from the east, whom righteousness called to service?^d ³Who placed nations in subjection to him and made kings submit to him, rendering them as dust to his sword and as whirling straws to

his bow? ³He pursued them; he passed unhindered in the way which his feet had never trod. ⁴Who has wrought and accomplished all this? It was He, who summoned the generations from the beginning; it was I, the LORD, the first and with the last; I am He.

⁵The islands saw it and became alarmed; the ends of the earth trembled; they approached and drew near. ⁶Every one helped his neighbor and said to his brother, "Take courage!" ⁷The craftsman encourages the goldsmith, and he who polishes with the hammer encourages him who strikes on the anvil, saying of the soldering, "That is good!" And he fastens it with nails so that it may not be moved.^e

⁸But you, O Israel, My servant,^f Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, My friend; ⁹you whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth and called from its utmost corners, and to whom I said: You are My servant; I have chosen you and have not rejected you; ¹⁰fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God! I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with My vindicating right hand.^g

¹¹Behold, all those who are incensed against you shall be ashamed and confounded; the men who strive against you shall perish; they shall be as nothing. ¹²You will seek those who contended against you, but you shall not find them; they shall be as nothing; the men who fought you shall be as a vacuum. ¹³For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, Fear not, I will help you.

¹⁴Fear not, you worm^h Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you, says the LORD; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁵See, I will change you to a sharp, new, threshing sledge, having cutting edges;ⁱ you shall thresh

z) *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, "Hymns," Sect. 14, No. 20: "its stocks are grounded firm in the earth."

a) The full name of God, characteristic of the book of Isaiah, is "The Holy One of Israel," occurring in Isa. 1-39 twelve times and in chs. 40-66 thirteen times.

b) Eagles were to renew their plumage in riper years, and thereby to acquire new strength for activity and endurance. c) Heb.: term for calling "all lands and peoples." d) Heb.: "to his foot."

e) Idols are dependent on nails and craftsmen — in contrast to God.

f) The prophet uses the word "servant" with elasticity; of the Patriarchs, Moses, David, Job, Cyrus, and others; also of all Israel and especially of the Messiah; in all some 40 times.

g) Heb.: "right hand of my righteousness." h) "Helpless," easily "trodden under foot."

i) An instrument still used in threshing grain on circular ground floors, the heavy planks supported underneath with stones.

the mountains^j and crush them, and the hills you shall make like chaff. ¹⁶You shall winnow them; the wind shall carry them away; the whirlwind scatter them. But you shall exult in the LORD; you shall glory in the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁷When the wretched and poor seek for water and there is none, so that their tongues are parched with thirst, I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. ¹⁸I will open rivers on the bare heights and fountains^k in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water and arid lands springs of water. ¹⁹I will plant the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive tree in the wilderness; the cypress, the hard oak, and the pine tree will I place together in the desert; ²⁰that men may both see and recognize, both consider and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

²¹Present your case,^l says the LORD; produce your strongest grounds, says the King of Jacob. ²²Let them bring them near and declare to us what is to happen. Let them tell us of former events as to what they are; tell us that we may consider them and know the outcome, or let us hear the coming events. ²³Declare [now] the things to occur hereafter, that we may know that you are gods; yes, do either good or evil, that we may be astonished, observing it together. ²⁴See, you are nothing, and your work is worthless; an offense is he who chooses you!^m

²⁵But I have roused up one from the north, and he shall come from where the sun rises; he shall call on My name; he shall trample on princes as on mortar, as a potter kneads his clay. ²⁶Who announced this from the beginning so that we could know, or who predicted this so that we might confess, "He is righteous"? There was no one who foretold it; in fact, no one let it

be heard; truly, no one heard your words. ²⁷I first [said] to Zion, Look, behold! And to Jerusalem, I send heralds with the good news. ²⁸When I look there is not a man; I look around and there is not a counselor whom I could ask and who could answer a word. ²⁹Behold, theyⁿ are all uselessness; their work is nothing, and their images are wind and waste.

42 BEHOLD MY SERVANT, WHOM I uphold, My elect in whom My soul delights!^o I have put My Spirit upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment^p to the nations; ²He shall not cry or shout aloud, or cause His voice to be heard in the street; ^{3a}a bruised reed He shall not break, and a dimly burning wick^q He shall not quench; but He shall bring forth justice in agreement with truth; ⁴He shall not fail nor be suppressed, until He has established justice in the earth; the islands will await His teaching.

⁵Thus says the only God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth with all its vegetation; who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to them who walk therein: ⁶I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will hold your hand and guard you and give you as a covenant^r for the people, as a light for the Gentiles ⁷to open blind eyes, to bring captives out of prison, and those who sit in darkness out of houses of bondage. ⁸I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another nor My praise to graven images. ⁹The messages of former times, see, they have come to pass, and now I declare new things; before they come forth I let you hear of them.

¹⁰Sing a new song to the LORD, His praise from the ends of the earth: you who sail the sea and all its fulness; the islands and those who dwell on

j) The "mountains" and "hills" are symbols of giant opposition.

k) The word for "fountains" in the Hebrew is really an Assyrian root but is found also in the Siloam Inscription, meaning "running waters."

l) In vss. 1-4 worshipers of idols were addressed; in vss. 21-24 the idols are challenged.

m) The challenge which should settle the controversy is not accepted. n) Idols.

o) Identity of Servant and the Messiah [cf. 49:5, 6; 53:11; Matt. 12:18].

p) "Judgment" in the sense of the truth, the right knowledge of God.

q) Heb.: "a dim flax," wicks were made of tow, flax fibre.

r) The Messiah will bring to pass all that was contained in the covenant God made with His people.

them. ¹¹Let the desert and its fortified towns raise their voices and the encampments in which Kedar^s dwells; let the residents of Sela^t sing; let them shout from the top of the mountains.

¹²Let them give glory to the LORD and proclaim His praise in the islands!

¹³For the LORD shall go forth like a mighty hero, like a warrior He stirs up His zeal; He utters the war cry; He shouts aloud! He proves Himself mighty against His foes.

¹⁴I have been still, I was silent, restraining Myself; but like a woman in travail I will now shriek; I will both pant and gasp at once. ¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills and dry up all their herbage; I will turn rivers into islands^u and dry up the pools. ¹⁶I will make the blind walk in a way that they do not know and lead them in paths unfamiliar to them. Darkness before them I will turn to light, and rough places I will make smooth. These are the things I will do, and I will not leave them undone. ¹⁷They who trust in idols and say to molten images, "You are our gods," shall be turned back and be utterly ashamed!

¹⁸Listen, you who are deaf; and look, you who are blind, that you may see! ¹⁹Who is blind but My servant, or deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is as blind as My devoted one^v or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰You have seen many things, but would not observe; your ears have been open, but you would not hear. ²¹It delighted the LORD for His righteousness' sake; therefore He magnified the Law and made it honorable. ²²Nevertheless this is a robbed and plundered people, all of them are entrapped in holes and hidden in houses of bondage; thus they become a prey. Yet no one came to their rescue, [they became] booty. And no one said, "Give back." ²³Who among you will listen to this, pay at-

tention and hear for the time to come? ²⁴Who gave up Jacob to plunderers and Israel to robbers? Was it not the LORD against whom we had sinned, in whose ways they refused to walk and whose law they would not obey? ²⁵So He poured out upon them the fierceness of His anger, even the violence of war. He placed them in an encircling fire without their perceiving it; it burned them, yet they did not lay it to heart.

43 BUT NOW THUS SAYS THE LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: Be not afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name;^w you are Mine. ²When you pass through the waters I will be with you, and when through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you go through fire you shall not be scorched; or through flames, you shall not be burned. ³For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba^x in exchange for you. ⁴Because you are precious in My eyes, you are honored and I love you; therefore I will give men in your place and nations in exchange for your life.^y ⁵Fear not, therefore, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and gather you from the west. ⁶I will say to the north, Give up! and to the south, Hold not back! Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, ⁷all indeed who are called by My name whom I have created and formed for My glory; yes, I have made them. ⁸They shall bring forth the blind people who have eyes, and the deaf who have ears.^z

⁹Let the nations be gathered together, and let the peoples assemble; who among them could declare this, or inform us of past events? Let them

s) "Kedar" was the distant home of Ishmael's descendants in Arabia.

t) "Sela" is usually identified with Petra in Mt. Seir, 50 mi. south of the Dead Sea.

u) Land with streams will become land without moisture.

v) This Hebrew word *meshullam* is akin to the Arabic "*moslim*," meaning "the surrendered one."

w) As My favorite friend. To be called "by name" here means singled out for special honor, position, and function.

x) Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba at that time were the most opulent and powerful of all Israel's neighbors. Those addressed here are exiles.

y) Other men and nations to take the place of captive Israel.

z) Blind and deaf to God's teaching in history.

produce their witnesses to justify themselves, or else let them hear and respond, "It is true." ¹⁰You are My witnesses, says the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me.^a ¹¹I, even I, am the LORD, and beside Me there is no savior. ¹²I have spoken and I have saved; I have made known, and there is no strange god among you; you are My witnesses, says the LORD, ¹³and I am your God. From all time I am He; no one shall wrest you out of My hand; I shall perform and who shall undo it?

¹⁴Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent [one] to Babylon and have brought down as fugitives all the Chaldeans into the ships, over which they rejoiced. ¹⁵I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. ¹⁶Thus says the LORD, the One who made a way in the sea, a path amid its mighty waters,^b ¹⁷who led forth chariot and horse, the army and power; together they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, snuffed out as a wick. ¹⁸But do not recall former events, nor consider longer the things of the past. ¹⁹Behold, I do a new thing; now it is springing forth; do you not recognize it?^c In the desert I surely will make a way, rivers also in arid wastes. ²⁰The beasts of the field will honor Me, the jackals and the ostriches, because I provide waters in the desert and streams in the arid wastes to give drink to My chosen people, ²¹this people whom I fashioned for Myself that they might set forth My praise.

²²Jacob, you have not called upon Me, for you, Israel, became weary of Me; ²³you have not brought Me sheep

for a burnt offering or honored Me with your sacrifices; I have not forced you to serve with offerings or exacted incense from you. ²⁴You have neither brought Me sweet cane with money, nor satisfied Me with fat sacrifices; but you have burdened Me with your sins and wearied Me with your iniquities.

²⁵It is I, I who blot out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will remember your sins no more.^d ²⁶Remind Me;^e let us judge together; state [your case] that you may be vindicated. ²⁷Your first father sinned, and your interpreters rebelled against Me. ²⁸Therefore I have profaned the chief ones of the sanctuary; I have delivered up Jacob to a curse and Israel to reviling.

44 BUT NOW^f HEAR, O JACOB MY servant, Israel whom I have chosen. ²Thus says the LORD, your Maker, who formed you from the womb and who will help you: Be not afraid, Jacob My servant, the upright,^g whom I have chosen. ³I will pour water upon the thirsty and streams upon the dry; I will pour out My Spirit upon your seed and My blessing upon your offspring; ⁴they will spring up in the midst of grass^h like willows by running streams. ⁵One will confess, "I am the LORD's," and another will call himself by the name of Jacob; still another shall inscribe upon his hand, "unto the LORD," and entitle himself with the name Israel.ⁱ

⁶Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no God. ⁷Who is like Me? Let him call it out, declare it and state [his proofs] before Me, for I directed the ancient people and future events. And that which is to take place let them make known. ⁸Fear not, be

a) In Babylonian cosmology, the gods were the first to emerge from primeval chaos.

b) The great miracle in Israel's history was the exodus from Egypt; but the prophet sees Israel's deliverance from idolatry and evaluates it as greater.

c) In 42:9 the new things are announced before they spring forth; here the prophet sees them germinating. The people have done nothing to merit forgiveness.

d) Vs. 25, and chap. 53, may well be regarded as the highest revelation of grace in the O.T.

e) Of your past merits.

f) "Now" the LORD, no longer a legal adversary, but a divine Redeemer.

g) *Jeshurun*: a title meaning "upright," in contrast to "Jacob," which means "supplanter." Jacob is now to become noble and trustworthy; a rare name for Israel [Deut. 32:15].

h) Some mss. read: "like grass in the midst of water."

i) Thus branded, desiring to be recognized as proselytes to Israel's faith.

not afraid! Have I not foretold it and long ago announced it? You are My witnesses; is there a god beside me? There is no other Rock; I know of none!

⁹All the carvers of images are confused, for their precious productions are worthless; they themselves witness that they neither see nor know anything, so that they are put to shame.

¹⁰Who formed a god and cast an image that is utterly useless? ¹¹See, all its associates shall be put to shame. Their makers are but human beings.

Should they assemble together and take their stand, they would fear and be disconcerted together. ¹²The work-er with an iron tool¹ worked it^k in the

coals and shaped it with hammers, working with a strong arm; yes, he became hungry and his strength was exhausted; he drank no water and was faint. ¹³The wood-carver stretched a line and marked it with a pencil; he shaped it with chisels; then with the compass he marked it out and made it

after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of the human [body], so that it inhabited a house.¹ ¹⁴A man cut down a cedar for himself and took a cypress tree, or an oak, and raised it for himself among the trees of the forest; he planted a pine tree and rain made it grow. ¹⁵This shall be to men for fuel. A part of it he took and warmed himself; yes, he kindled a fire and baked bread; and surely he made a god^m and fell prostrate before it; he fashioned it into an idol and bowed down to it. ¹⁶Part of it he burned in the fire; with that part of it he ate flesh, he roasted flesh and was satisfied; he also warmed himself and said, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!" ¹⁷The rest of it he made into a god, an idol; he bowed down to it and worshiped it and prayed to it, saying, "Deliver me, for thou art my god!"

¹⁸They are ignorant, they will not understand; their eyes are besmeared so that they cannot see, and their

hearts, so that they cannot understand. ¹⁹Not one considers in his heart; there is neither knowledge nor understanding to say, "Part of it I burned in the fire, yes, I baked bread upon its coals, I roasted flesh and ate it; and shall I make the remainder of it an abomination? Shall I cast myself down to the log of wood?" ²⁰He feeds on ashes; his heart is deceived, and it has led him astray; he cannot save himself, nor will he ask, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"ⁿ

²¹Remember this, Jacob, for you, Israel, are My servant! I formed you, you are My servant; Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me. ²²I have caused your transgressions to vanish like a cloud and your sins as a fog; return to Me, for I have redeemed you.^o ²³Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has done it; shout, O you depths of the earth; break forth, O you mountains, into song; the forests also and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob and has glorified Himself in Israel.

²⁴Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, He who formed you from the womb: I am the LORD, the Maker of all things, I alone stretched out the heavens and founded the earth by Myself; ²⁵I am He who confounds the omens of soothsayers, makes diviners mad, refutes the sages showing that their wisdom is folly, ²⁶who confirms the words of His servants, and fulfills the counsel of His messengers. It is I who say to Jerusalem, Be inhabited and to the cities of Judah, They shall be rebuilt, and I will raise her ruins. ²⁷I am the One saying to the deep, Be dry, I will dry up your rivers; ²⁸I am He who says of Cyrus: He is My shepherd, and he shall fulfil all My pleasure; and of Jerusalem, She shall be rebuilt, and of the temple, I will restore your foundations.

45 **THUS SAYS THE LORD TO HIS** anointed, to Cyrus,^p whose right hand I hold fast to subdue nations be-

j) The workman in metal. k) The image. l) As a shrine. m) Of the other portion.

n) The prophet here, in vs. 9-20, lashes idolatry with satire and scorn. The details of the work in making them is the most vivid exposure of idols and their manufacture in his entire book.

o) Cf. 43:25; their consciousness of guilt will vanish through the LORD's promise of forgiveness; clouds and mists are transitory. Redemption is regarded as a motive for conversion.

p) Cyrus is consecrated as the LORD's agent in the redemption of Israel. He alone of foreign rulers receives the title, "His anointed."

fore him, and I will loose the loins of kings,^q to open double doors before him and the gates shall not be closed.^r ²I Myself will go before you^r and make smooth the rough places. I will shatter the doors of brass and cut apart the bars of iron.^s ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and hoarded wealth of secret places that you may know that I am the LORD, and that I, who have called you by name, am the God of Israel. ⁴For the sake of My servant Jacob and of Israel, My chosen one, I have called you by name; I have given you a title though you do not know Me.^t ⁵I am the LORD; there is no other; beside Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you do not know Me,^u so that all may know, from the rising of the sun to its setting, that beside Me there is none; I am the LORD, and there is no other. ⁶I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create calamity; I am the LORD who does all these things. ⁷Pour down, O heavens from above, and let the skies rain righteousness; let the earth open and salvation spring forth^v and righteousness sprout together with it. I the LORD have created it.

⁸Alas for him who strives with his Maker, an earthen vessel from [among] vessels of earth! Shall the clay ask him who fashions it, "What are you making?" or [say], "Your workmanship has no hands?" ⁹Alas for him who says to [his] father, "What would you beget?" or to a woman, "What would you travail for?" ¹⁰Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, his Maker: Would you question Me about the things to come concerning My children? Would you command Me concerning the work of My hands? ¹¹I made the earth and created man upon it; I with My hand stretched out the heavens and appointed their starry host. ¹²I raised him up in righteousness^w and will make plain all his ways. He shall rebuild My city

and return My exiles without reward or hire, says the LORD of hosts.

¹³Thus says the LORD: The resources of Egypt, the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of great stature, shall come toward you and belong to you; they shall come after you; in chains shall they come and bow down before you and plead with you because with you alone is God, and there is no other. ¹⁴Truly Thou art a God who hidest Thyself,^x God of Israel, Savior! ¹⁵All the makers of idols are together ashamed and disgraced and are gone away in confusion. ¹⁶But Israel shall be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; you shall never be ashamed or disgraced for ever and ever.

¹⁷For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens; He is the God who formed the earth, fashioned it, and firmly fixed it; He created it not in vain, but made it for habitation: I am the LORD, and there is no other. ¹⁸I have not spoken in secret or in dark corners of the earth, nor have I ever said to the descendants of Jacob, Seek Me in vain. I, the LORD, speak the truth and declare what is right.

¹⁹Assemble now, approach, and come near unitedly, you escapees of the nations! No knowledge have they who carry their carved idols of wood and pray to gods that cannot save. ²⁰Declare them, bring them,^x yes, take counsel together. Who announced this long ago and since declared it? Was it not I, the LORD? There is no other God beside Me. I am a righteous and rescuing God; there is no God apart from Me! ²¹Look to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. ²²By Myself I have sworn: The word of truth has gone forth from My mouth, and it shall not return; therefore to Me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear. ²³Surely, one shall say, in the

q) Hebrew idiom meaning: "I will weaken or handicap kings."

r) The LORD here is addressing Cyrus [vss. 2-7].

s) A phrase quoted in "The Hymn of the Initiates," *The Dead Sea Scrolls*. "Hymns," Sect. 10, No. 23: "Bars of iron and doors of brass [held me]."

t) Cyrus, when called, was not a worshiper of the LORD.

u) This reading of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* is preferable to "let them bring forth salvation."

v) They will see that the LORD's choice of Cyrus to assist in the emancipation of Israel was right.

w) He works in mysterious ways.

x) Give reasons for praying to gods that cannot save.

LORD I have righteousness⁷ and strength; unto Him shall all men who were incensed against Him come and be ashamed. ²⁵In the LORD shall all the offspring of Israel be justified and be triumphant.²

46 BEL IS BOWED DOWN, NEBO IS stooping,^a their images are consigned to animals and to cattle; these which are carried about are heavily loaded, making a burden for the weary beast. ²They stoop, they bow down together, they cannot save the load; they themselves are gone into captivity.

³Listen to me, O house of Jacob, and all of you who remain of the house of Israel, whom I have transported from birth and carried from the womb!^b ⁴Even to old age I am the same and to [the time of] gray hair I will bear^c you. I have made you and I will carry you: even I will bear you and save you.

⁵To whom then will you liken Me, make Me equal, and compare Me, that we should be like one another?

⁶They lavishly pour out gold from a bag and weigh silver in a balance; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they prostrate themselves and worship it. ⁷They lift it upon their shoulders, they carry it, and they put it down in its place. There it stands; it cannot move from its place. Though one cries to it for help, it does not answer or save him from his distress.

⁸Remember this and show yourselves human;^d recall this to mind, you apostates; ⁹remember the former things of old; for I am God, and I alone am God; there is no other like Me ¹⁰who

announces the end from the beginning and from ancient times things that have not yet taken place, saying, My purpose shall stand, and I will do all that pleases Me; ¹¹calling a ravenous bird^e from the east and from a faraway land the man of My counsel. Yea, I have spoken, I will bring it about; I have planned it, I will perform it. ¹²Listen to Me, you stout-hearted who are far from righteousness. ¹³I will bring My righteousness near; it shall not be far away and My salvation shall not tarry. I will give salvation in Zion and to Israel My glory.^f

47 COME DOWN AND SIT IN THE dust, virgin daughter of Babylon;^g sit on the ground, there is no throne [for you], daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no longer be called dainty and delicate. ²Take the millstones and grind meal, doff your veil, strip off the skirt, bare the leg, pass through rivers. ³Your disgrace shall be exposed, likewise your shame shall appear! For I will take vengeance, I will spare no man.^h ⁴The name of our Redeemerⁱ is the LORD of hosts, the Holy One of Israel.

⁵Sit in silence and enter obscurity, daughter of the Chaldeans, for you shall no longer be called the mistress of kingdoms. ⁶I was angry with My people, I profaned My heritage;^j I gave them into your hand, you showed them no mercy; on the aged you made your yoke excessively heavy. ⁷You boasted, "I shall remain as mistress forever," so that you took none of these things to heart, nor did you think on the result of it.^k

⁸Now hear this, you sensual one,

y) "Righteousness" is here in the plural, which intensifies the idea of both salvation and victory.
z) Apparently including the Gentiles [cf. vss. 14, 22].

a) Bel and Nebo were the supreme deities of the Babylonians, Bel being Baal in Hebrew and meaning "lord"; Nebo was the god of learning, whose chief seat of worship was in Borsippa near Babylon.

b) Idols had to be carried by worshipers. God carries His worshipers from time of birth.

c) Hebrew term means: "carry a heavy load."

d) This Hebrew term is found nowhere else in the Scriptures. Thought is: "acknowledge your guilt."

e) Birds of prey were swift in their movements; Nebuchadrezzar is likened to an eagle [Jer. 49:22; Ezek. 17].

f) Vs. 13 has 3 terms indicating the one redemption for God's people: righteousness, salvation, and glory.

g) Babylon is here portrayed as a delicate but haughty queen, reduced to the condition of a menial slave, in spite of all that her magicians and astrologers can do for her.

h) i.e., no man shall be able to resist Me!

i) When Babylon is disgraced by the Lord, captive Israel is redeemed.

j) i.e., I ordered it to be defiled. k) Babylon's boasting resulted in a blind mind and a hard heart.

sitting securely and saying to yourself, "I am, and there is no one equal to me; I shall not sit as a widow or experience the loss of children!" ⁹But these two things shall come upon you suddenly, in a single day, loss of children and widowhood; in full measure they shall come upon you in the midst of your numerous sorceries and the great abundance of your enchantments. ¹⁰You have felt secure in your wickedness and said, "No one sees me"; but your wisdom and your knowledge have seduced you, for you said in your heart, "I am, and there is no one equal to me." ¹¹But disaster shall come upon you, which you shall not be able to charm away; ruin shall fall upon you, which you will not be able to avert; and desolation shall suddenly come upon you, of which you had no expectation. ¹²Persist then with your incantations and your many enchantments, with which you have wearied yourself from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit; perhaps you will inspire terror.

¹³You are exhausted due to your many plans; let the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators^m stand up and save you from what shall come upon you. ¹⁴Take note! They shall all be like stubble, the fire shall consume them. They shall not be able to save themselves from the power of the flame. Such coals are not for warming, not as a fire to sit by. ¹⁵Such to you are theyⁿ with whom you have wearied yourself, with whom you have dealt from your youth. Each one wanders off in his own direction; not one will save you.^o

48 HEAR THIS, HOUSE OF JACOB, who are called by the name of Israel and are sprung from the waters of Judah; who swear by the name of the LORD and profess the God of Is-

rael, but neither truthfully nor rightfully.^p ²For they call themselves citizens of the holy city^q and depend on the God of Israel whose name is the LORD of hosts.

³Former events I declared in ancient times, they issued from My mouth. I caused them to be heard; then suddenly I did them and they came to pass. ⁴Because I knew that you were obstinate, that your neck was an iron sinew and your forehead brass, ⁵therefore I told you long ago; before it happened I warned you, lest you should say, "My idol did these things; my graven and molten image ordered them." ⁶You have heard and now see it all, and you, will you not declare it? Henceforth I am going to tell you of new things, guarded secrets of which you have never heard,^r ⁷things created now and not long ago; before today you did not hear of them lest you should say, "Look, I knew about them!" ⁸Indeed, you never heard nor knew them, nor did you open your ears before this. For I knew you to be very treacherous and that you have been called a transgressor from your birth.

⁹For My name's sake I have postponed My anger, and for My praise I have held Myself back from cutting you off. ¹⁰Look! I have refined you, but without finding silver, and tried you in the furnace of affliction. ¹¹For My own sake, for My own sake,^s I must do it, for how My name is profaned! I will not yield My glory to another.

¹²Listen to Me, O Jacob, and Israel, My called one; I am He, I am the first; I am also the last. ¹³My hand founded the earth, and My right hand spread out the skies; I call to them and they respond together. ¹⁴Assemble, all of you, and hear! Who among you foretold these things? There is one whom the LORD loves;^t therefore He shall

l) In 8:19, Isaiah had already boldly challenged the sorcerers.

m) Referring to those who mapped out the heavens in zones, gazed at the stars, and professed to foretell lucky and unlucky days. n) i.e., such is their fate.

o) No amount of sorcery or enchantment will suffice to avert Babylon's desolation!

p) Israel is again addressed as apostates, as in Isa. 1.

q) Jerusalem is still called "the holy city."

r) Namely, the overthrow of pagan idolatry, the coming of Cyrus, and the new manifestations of the LORD's glory.

s) The LORD's honor is carefully guarded by the prophet's repetition of "For My own sake."

t) "The called one": Israel [cf. vs. 12].

carry out His pleasure on Babylon, and His arm shall be raised against the Chaldeans. ¹⁵I, even I, have foretold it; yes, I called him^u and brought him and prospered his way. ¹⁶Draw near to Me and listen to this: from the first I have not spoken in secret; at the time it comes to pass I will be there. For God the Lord has sent Me^v and His Spirit.

¹⁷Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you for your profit, who leads you in the way you should go. ¹⁸Oh! that you had listened to My commandments; then your peace would be like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.^w Your descendants would be like the sand, and like its grains so would be the offspring of your body; their name would not be cut off nor destroyed from before Me.^x

²⁰Go forth from Babylon! Flee from the Chaldeans! Announce this with a singing voice; let this be heard, let it go forth to the ends of the earth. Say, "The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob!" ²¹They thirsted not when He led them through the deserts. Water for them He made to flow from the rock; He split the rock and water came gushing forth.^y

²²There is no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked.

49 LISTEN TO ME, YOU ISLANDS, and pay attention, you peoples from afar! The LORD called me from my birth, from the body of my mother He has caused my name to be remembered. ²He made my mouth like a sharp sword and in the shadow of His hand He hid me; He made me a polished arrow, and in His quiver He concealed me. ³He said to me, You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified. ⁴But I said, "I have la-

bored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing; nevertheless surely my right is at the LORD's disposal and my recompense rests with God."

⁵But now the LORD, who formed me from my birth to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him and that Israel might be gathered for Him — for I am honorable in the LORD's eyes and my God is my strength — ⁶He says: It is too light a thing that you should be My servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will make you a light to the nations that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.^z ⁷Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, to the one despised by men, abhorred by the nation and the servant of rulers: Kings shall see and stand up; princes also shall pay homage; because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.^a

⁸Thus says the LORD: In a favorable time I have answered you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you; I will protect you and make you a covenantal pledge to the people to re-establish the land and cause to re-inherit the desolate possessions;^b ⁹to say to the prisoners, "Come out," and to those in darkness, "Show yourselves." Alongside the roads^c they shall feed, and on all the bare hills shall be their pasture. ¹⁰They shall not hunger or thirst, and no mirage or sun shall plague them; for He who has mercy shall lead them, and to fountains of water He shall guide them. ¹¹I will make the hills into a roadway, and my highways shall be elevated. ¹²Behold, these come from far away; look, these [are] from the north and from the west; and these are from the land of Syene.^d ¹³Sing, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth; let the mountains break forth into song; for the LORD has compassion on His people and

u) Cyrus, the Lord's agent for Babylon's destruction and Israel's deliverance.

v) Cf. Isa. 61:1 and its fulfillment, Luke 4:18-21.

w) What Israel might have been may still become their experience.

x) Cf. the Lord's promise to Abraham [Gen. 13:16; 15:5; 17:6].

y) Vss. 20 and 21 are full of both prospect and retrospect.

z) To restore Israel was but part of the Servant's task. a) Vs. 7 anticipates the message of ch. 53.

b) Reflects Joshua's initial dividing of the land. c) As they travel homeward.

d) Syene may be China or identified with Assouan near the First Cataract of the Nile in Upper Egypt. Later a Jewish colony sprang up there.

will show mercy to His afflicted ones.

¹⁴But Zion says, "The LORD has forsaken me; the Lord has forgotten me!"

¹⁵Can a woman forget her nursing child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, but I, I will never forget you. ¹⁶Behold, I have graven you upon the palms of My hands. Your walls are continually before Me. ¹⁷Your builders have caused your destroyers to hasten away, and your devastators are departing from you. ¹⁸Lift up your eyes, look round about and see! They all are gathering to come to you.^e As I live, says the LORD, you shall surely adorn yourself with them all as ornaments and fasten them on like a bride.^f

¹⁹Then your ruined and desolate places, yes, your devastated land will become too narrow for your inhabitants. Those who swallowed you up will be far away. ²⁰Also the children of which you were bereft shall say in your ears, "This place is too narrow for us; give us room to live." ²¹And you will say to yourself, "Who has produced these for me? I was bereaved and childless, exiled and wandering, but these, who has brought them up? See, I was left alone, whence have these come?"

²²Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up My hand to the nations; I will raise high My signal to the peoples, and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders. ²³Kings shall be your foster fathers^g and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground, they shall fall down before you and they shall lick the dust of your feet;^h then you will know that I am the LORD, and that no one who trusts in Me shall be ashamed.

²⁴Shall booty be recovered from a mighty one, or shall lawfully held captives be rescued?ⁱ ²⁵But thus says the LORD: Even the captive of the mighty one shall be freed, and the booty of the tyrant recovered. I will strive with

your opponents, and I Myself will save your children. ²⁶I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh^j and become drunk with their own blood as with wine. All flesh shall know that I am the LORD your Saviour, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

50 ¹THUS SAYS THE LORD: WHERE is the bill of divorcement of your mother with which I dismissed her?^k Or, to which of My creditors did I sell you? Observe, for your iniquities you sold yourself, and for your transgressions your mother was put away. ²Why, when I came, was there no man^l and no one to answer Me when I called? Is My hand too shortened^m to redeem? Have I no power to deliver? Behold, by My rebuke I dry up the sea and turn rivers into a desert; their fish begin to stink for want of water, they die of thirst. ³I clothe the heavens with blackness and cover them with a mourning garb of sackcloth.

⁴The Lord God has given me a tongue to know how to speak a timely word to the weary. He awakens every morning, He alerts my ear to hear as a student. ⁵The Lord God has opened my ear, I have not been rebellious, I did not pull back. ⁶I gave my back to the smiters, my cheeks to those who plucked off my beard; I did not shield my face from insult and spitting.

⁷The Lord God is my helper; therefore I am not confounded, for I set my face like a flint; I know that I shall not be put to shame. ⁸He who vindicates me is near by. Who will contend with me? Let us take our stand together. Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me. ⁹Behold, the Lord God helps me; who is he that can condemn me? Take note, all of them will wear out like a garment; moth will consume them!

¹⁰Who among you reveres the LORD? Who listens to the voice of His servant? When he walks in darkness, with-

e) In vision the prophet sees the Israelites returning and calls on Jerusalem to welcome her sons.

f) Returned exiles will adorn Jerusalem as jewels a bride. g) Heb.: "nursing fathers."

h) Licking the dust of a superior's feet is an extravagant, but thoroughly Oriental, metaphor for abject self-humiliation. Cf. Mic. 7:17; Ps. 72:9. i) Cf. 31:4. j) Cf. 9:20.

k) According to Deut. 24:1-4, a man could not remarry his divorced wife, if she had, by another husband, become a widow; Zion's divine Husband had not renounced His right to her; the wife had separated herself. l) To greet Me. m) Heb.: "Is My hand shortened, shortened?"

out a gleam of light, he will trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God. ¹¹Look, all you who kindle the fire and set off the sparksⁿ — walk in the light of your fire and amid the sparks you have lit. This comes to you from My hand;^o you shall lie down in torment.

51 LISTEN TO ME, YOU WHO FOLLOW after righteousness,^p you who seek the LORD; look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you have been dug. ²Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you! For when he was but one I did call him; I blessed him and multiplied him. ³Thus the LORD comforts Zion; He comforts all her piled-up ruins. Her wilderness He shall make like Eden and her desert portions like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness shall abound in her, thanksgiving too and melodious song.

⁴Attend to Me, My people, and give ear to Me, My nation; for a law^a shall issue forth from Me, and My justice^r will I set for a light to the peoples. ⁵My victory is near; My salvation is gone forth; My arms shall judge the people; the islands shall wait for Me, and in Me shall they put their trust. ⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens; then look to the earth below! The skies shall vanish like smoke, and the earth shall wear out like a garment; its dwellers shall die in swarms; but My salvation shall abide forever, and My victory^q shall never be annulled.

⁷Listen to Me, you who know what is right, you people in whose heart is My instruction. Fear not the reproaches of man nor be dismayed by their revilings. ⁸For the moth shall devour them like a garment, and the worm shall consume them as wool; but My victory shall be forever and My salvation to all generations.

⁹Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of the LORD! Bestir Thyself as in the days of old, times long past! Was it not Thou who didst hew Egypt in pieces and who pierced the dragon?^t ¹⁰Was it not Thou who didst dry up the sea, the waters of the mighty deep, who madest the depths of that sea a road for the redeemed to pass over?^u ¹¹So the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing and with everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, but sorrow and sighing shall flee away.^v

¹²I, I am He who comforts you; who are you that you should fear mortal man, or the son of man who shall be made like the grass? ¹³Should you forget the LORD, your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, so that you are every day continually filled with terror because of the wrath of the oppressor when he is out to destroy? Where, now, is the wrath of the oppressor? ¹⁴The captured ones shall speedily be set free; he shall not die or go down to the pit of death, nor shall he lack bread. ¹⁵For I am the LORD your God, who stirs up the sea that its billows roar; the LORD of hosts is His name. ¹⁶I have put My words in your mouth and have covered you in the shadow of My hand, stretching out the heavens, founding the earth, and saying to Zion, You are My people!^w

¹⁷Awaken! Rouse yourself, rise up, Jerusalem! You have had to drink from the LORD's hand His cup of indignation, the cup that causes you to stagger,^x and you have drained it to the dregs.^y ¹⁸There is not one to lead you of all the sons she has borne; neither is there one of all the sons she nourished that takes her by the hand.^z ¹⁹These two things have overtaken you — but who can be sorry for you? — desolation and destruction, starvation

n) Fire and sparks of sin, apostasy.

o) The LORD overrules evil, causing it to return upon the heads of evildoers.

p) i.e., you can seek to conform to God's will. q) Torah: revelation of God's will.

r) The LORD's application of His will to life.

s) Heb.: *tzaddik* — righteousness executed equals victory. t) Cf. chap 27:1 and footnotes.

u) Israel's passage through the Red Sea. v) Cf. Isa. 35:10.

w) This was comfort and encouragement to a people who had before heard, "You are not my people" [cf. Hos. 1:9]. x) Heb.: "bowl of cup of reeling."

y) Sennacherib's own account of Judah's humiliation records 46 of her walled cities conquered, many inhabitants carried away, and King Hezekiah shut up in his palace like a bird in its cage.

z) The princes and rulers were carried away captive.

and slaughter. Whom can I use to comfort you? ²⁰Your sons are lying helpless at the head of every street like antelopes entrapped in nets; they are full of the LORD's fury, the rebuke of your God.

²¹Therefore hear this, you afflicted ones, who are drunk but not with wine.^a ²²Thus says the Lord, the LORD, your God, who pleads the cause of His people: See, I have removed from your hand the cup that causes you to stagger, even the cup you drained to the dregs, and you shall not continue to drink of it. ²³But I will place it in the hand of your oppressors, those who said to you, "Bow down, that we may pass over you"; and you made your back as the earth and as a street to them who passed over.

52 AWAKE, AWAKE, PUT ON YOUR strength, O Zion; put on your glorious apparel, Jerusalem, the holy city; for there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and unclean. ²Shake off the dust, stand erect, then sit down, Jerusalem; free yourself from the bonds about your neck, captive daughter of Zion. ³For thus says the LORD: You sold yourself for nothing, and without money you shall be redeemed. ⁴For thus says the Lord God: My people went down long ago into Egypt to sojourn there; the Assyrians have oppressed them without cause.^b ⁵And now, what do I find? asks the LORD; that My people have been taken away for nothing? that their rulers complain and My name, says the LORD, is blasphemed all day continually; ⁶therefore My people must learn My name; yes, on that day, they must learn that it is I who speak; it is I!

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who

brings good tidings of well-being, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" ⁸Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,^c together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they gaze at the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth joyously, sing together, you wasted ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

¹¹Depart, depart, go out of there;^d touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her; purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the LORD. ¹²For not with haste will you go out, nor in flight will you depart, for the LORD goes before you, the God of Israel is your rear guard.

¹³Behold! My Servant shall work wisely,^e He shall arise, be exalted, and shall stand exceedingly high. ¹⁴As many at first were astonished at Him — His appearance was so disfigured beyond human semblance and His form beyond that of the sons of men^f — ¹⁵so He shall sprinkle^g many nations; kings shall stand in silence before Him, having never been told what they now see and never understood what they now hear.^h

53 WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR MESSAGEⁱ and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²For He grew up before Him as a tender plant, like a root out of a dry ground, without form or comeliness, that we should have looked at Him; possessed of no beauty, so that we should be drawn toward Him. ³He was despised and shunned by men,^j a man of sufferings and acquainted with sickness; and we hid our faces at the sight of Him;^k He

a) Zion's desperate state of spiritual declension exceeded her sad physical condition.

b) The Lord classifies the Egyptian sojourn with Assyrian oppression. From both God brought, or will bring, relief.

c) From afar the watchmen on Zion's walls see some of Israel's exiles returning, the Lord leading them. d) From all centers of pagan idolatry. e) The abundant results prove this.

f) What follows in Chap. 53 is an amplification of this statement.

g) The terms used here might mean startle, but the term used is the regular O.T. term employed for sprinkling; e.g., with sacrifices.

h) The glory of the Messiah will outshine all earthly glory.

i) The revelation received, and here referring especially to the proclamation of that revelation.

j) Shunned, because unattractive; but what He suffered, they and we deserved.

k) Heb.: literally, "and as a hiding of faces from Him."

was despised and we did not esteem Him.

⁴Surely He has borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows; yet we regarded Him as a stricken one, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the punishment which procured our peace fell upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁷He was maltreated, and He submitted Himself;¹ He opened not His mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. ⁸From distress and from judgment He was taken, and who of His contemporaries would consider that He was cut off from the land of the living for the transgressions of my covenant people to whom the stroke was due?^m ⁹Men made His grave with the criminals, and He was with the rich in His death,ⁿ although He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

¹⁰Yet it was the LORD's will to bruise Him; He put Him to grief. When His soul shall constitute an offering for sin, He shall see His followers, He shall prolong His days,^o by His hand shall the LORD's will advance. ¹¹The results of the sufferings of His life He shall see — He shall be satisfied. By knowledge of Him shall My Righteous Servant make many righteous, for He shall bear their guilt. ¹²Therefore I will give to Him His portion among the great, and with mighty ones shall He apportion gain. For He poured out His soul unto death and was numbered with the transgressors, while He bore sins of many and made intercession for transgressors.^p

54 SING, BARREN ONE, "YOU WHO did not give birth; break into a song, and shout aloud, you who never writhed in childbirth; for more numerous are the children of the single than the children of the married, says the LORD. ²Enlarge the space of your tent, and stretch out the curtains of your dwelling; do not hesitate, but lengthen your cords and make secure your tent pegs! ³For to the right and to the left you will expand abroad, until your descendants shall possess the nations and populate desolate cities.^r

⁴Fear not, for you shall not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you shall not be made to blush; you shall forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you shall remember no more. ⁵For your true husband is your Maker, the LORD of hosts is His name, and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; He shall be called the God of the whole earth. ⁶For the LORD has called you when you were an outcast woman and grieved in spirit, and as a woman in youth who was rejected, says your God. ⁷For a brief moment did I forsake you,^s but with great compassion I will gather you. ⁸In an outburst of indignation I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting mercy I will have compassion on you, says the LORD, your Redeemer.

⁹For this is to Me as in the days of Noah: I swore that the waters of Noah should never again submerge the earth, so have I sworn not to be angry with you again or to rebuke you. ¹⁰For though the mountains should move and the hills should shake, My loving-kindness shall never depart from you nor the covenant of My peace be withdrawn, says the LORD, who has compassion upon you.

¹¹Wretched one, storm-tossed, and disconsolate, see! I will lay your stones

1) The Father's will is also the will of the suffering Son.

m) The Servant's sufferings were for all mankind and for all time.

n) Jesus was with criminals on crosses, and His body was laid in Joseph's tomb.

o) Though dead, He continues to live.

p) This fourth "Servant" song has been rightly interpreted by the Church as fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

q) We hear no more of the "Servant," but of "the servants" of the LORD [54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13-15; 66:14; cf. 61:1-3].

r) The vision of the LORD's victorious "Servant" in Chap. 53 inspires the prophet with a rapturous picture of Jerusalem's glorious future [cf. Isa. 11:14].

s) "Brief," in comparison with the endless glory which shall follow; all their catastrophes are regarded as incidents.

in antimony^t and will establish you upon sapphires. ¹²I will make your pinnacles of agates, your gates of carbuncles, and your surrounding walls of precious gems. ¹³All your sons shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. ¹⁴In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, so be not afraid, and from terror, for it shall not come near you. ¹⁵They who gather to attack you do so not by Me; he who stirs up strife with you shall fall before you. ¹⁶Behold, it is I who created the smith who blows on the burning coals to produce a tool for his work, and I have created the devastator to destroy.^u ¹⁷No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue that rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the LORD's servants and their victory from Me, says the LORD.

55 PAUSE, EVERYONE WHO IS thirsty, come to the waters, and he who has no money, come, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.^v ²Why do you spend your money for what is not bread and your labor for what never satisfies? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good;^w let your soul delight itself in abundance. ³Incline your ear and come to Me; hear, and your soul^x shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the unfailing mercies to David.^y ⁴Behold, I made Him a witness to the people, a leader and a commander of the nations. ⁵Surely, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and peoples that did not know you shall run to you because of the LORD your God and for the Holy One of Israel, for He has glorified you.

⁶Seek the LORD while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near! ⁷Let the wicked forsake his way,

and the unrighteous man his schemings; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. ⁸For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return thither, but water the earth and make it bring forth and bud and so give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall My word be, which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not come back to Me uselessly, but it shall do what I purpose and accomplish what I commissioned it.

¹²For you shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace, the mountains and the hills breaking out in song before you and all the trees of the field clapping their hands. ¹³Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and they shall be to the LORD for His renown, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

56 THUS SAYS THE LORD: MAINTAIN justice and practice the right, for My salvation is close at hand and My victory is ready to be revealed. ²Blessed is the man who observes this and the son of man who holds to it strictly, who observes the Sabbath, does not profane it, and restrains his hand from doing evil.^z ³Let not the stranger who has joined himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people"; neither let the eunuch say, "See, I am a dry tree."^{aa} ⁴For thus says the LORD: The eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths and choose things in which I delight and hold fast to My covenant, ⁵to them I will give within My house and within My walls

t) Antimony is a black powder, used by Oriental ladies in painting their eyelids and eyebrows, to give them a more distinctive appearance. u) The LORD is the arbiter of war.

v) The gospel appeal to a people, oblivious of the "wells of salvation" promised in 12:3.

w) Israel's prosperity depends on obedience to the invitation.

x) To the Hebrew, the "soul" was the seat also of sensuous enjoyment [cf. 29:8].

y) Cf. II Sam. 7:8-16.

z) These two ordinances were fundamental conditions of Jewish citizenship, Sabbath observance, and upright living. Chap. 55 expounds the grace and faithfulness of God; this chapter emphasizes obedience to His Law.

a memorial^a and a name better than sons and daughters; an endless name I will give them, one that shall not be cut off.

⁶Also the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be His servants, every one who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, holding fast to My covenant — ⁷them I will bring to My holy mountain, and I will make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar, for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.^b ⁸Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the exiled of Israel, I will collect yet others unto them besides those already gathered.

⁹All you beasts of the field and you animals of the forest, come and devour. ¹⁰His watchmen are blind; they do not know they are all dumb dogs that cannot bark, loving to lie down to dream and slumber. ¹¹As greedy dogs they never experience satisfaction; without exception, the shepherds themselves cannot make distinctions;^c each in his own way seeks his own gain. ¹²"Come," they say, "let us^d fetch wine; let us guzzle strong drink, and let tomorrow be as today, only more so."

57 THE RIGHTEOUS MAN PERISHES and nobody cares; godly^e men are snatched away, while no one lays it to heart that the righteous man is taken away before calamity comes; ²he enters peace. They rest each in his bed^f who has gone on his upright way. ³But come here, you sons of a sorceress, offspring of an adulterer and a harlot! ⁴At whom are you sneering with open mouth and jeering with thrust-out

tongue? Are you not the children of sin, a disloyal brood? ⁵You who inflame your passions under the oak and under every green tree, even slaughtering children in the valleys and in the clefts of the rocks? ⁶Among the polished stones of the valley is your portion; they, yes, they are your lot; to them you pour out your libations and bring your meal offerings. Should I be appeased by such doings? ⁷Upon a high and lofty mountain you have spread your [adulterous] bed, and thither you climbed to offer sacrifice. ⁸Behind the door and the side post you have set up your symbol.^g Deserting Me, you have uncovered your bed, have gone up on it, have widened it, and have bargained for those whose embraces you love and with whom you have multiplied your harlotries, gazing upon your symbol. ⁹You have anointed yourselves for Molech^h and have sent him presents of oil and perfume;ⁱ you sent your envoys far off and abased yourselves to Sheol. ¹⁰Thus you have wearied yourselves with your many wanderings; yet you never said, "It is hopeless." You found new strength, so you were not exhausted.

¹¹Now whom did you dread and fear that you were so false; that you did not remember Me or give Me any thought? Was it not because I have so long kept silent that you have not revered me? ¹²I will make known what your righteousness and your doings come to, and they will not benefit you. ¹³When you cry out, let your idol-collection save you. The wind will carry them away; even a breath will take them off. But he who takes refuge in Me shall inherit the land and shall possess My holy mountain.

¹⁴It shall be said,^j Build up, build up, prepare the way; remove every ob-

a) In Hebrew for "memorial" the word is *yad*, "hand." On ancient Phoenician and Punic stones the figure of a "hand" is often found, intended as a "memorial." To the prophet "the house of God" was more abiding than posterity.

b) Prayer taking the place of ritual sacrifices; therefore more attractive in winning foreigners. Jesus in cleansing the Temple cited this passage [cf. Mark 11:17].

c) Between right and wrong, the good and evil.

d) The Dead Sea Scrolls support "us" rather than "I."

e) The Hebrew word, *hesed*, rendered "godly," expresses deep spiritual significance. The Hasideans, forerunners of the Pharisees, bore a name built on the same Hebrew root.

f) Coffins and tombs were often spoken of by the ancients as "beds."

g) Carvings of the sexual organs were prominent in the Asherah worship, which led to the exposing of the worshippers' secret organs themselves. h) The god of the Ammonites.

i) To consult the oracles of Sheol was necromancy. Unguents played a great part in the cults of the Semites. j) The LORD is speaking, as in 40:3 ff. and also 62:10.

struction from My people's way.^k ¹⁶For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place; I also dwell with him who is lowly and contrite in spirit, to restore the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite.^l ¹⁶For I will not contend forever, nor will I be angry forever; for the vital breath of men would fail before Me, the souls whom I created.^m ¹⁷Because of their sins of greed, I was indignant for a time and smote them and in anger hid My face; then they went astray according to their own desires. ¹⁸I saw their doings, but I will now heal them and guide them, repaying them with comfort — those of them who are sorry. I create the product of the lips.ⁿ ¹⁹Peace! peace! to those afar and to those near, says the LORD; and I will heal them. ²⁰But the wicked are like the troubled sea; it cannot rest and its waters cast up mire and dirt. ²¹There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.^o

58 CRY ALOUD, SPARE NOT, LIFT up your voice like a trumpet; announce to My people their transgression and to the house of Jacob their sins.^p ²Yet they seek Me daily and delight to know My ways, as a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the law of their God. They ask of Me about the righteous ordinances;^q they delight to draw near to God. ³They say, "Why have we fasted, and Thou seest it not? Why do we afflict ourselves, and Thou takest no notice of our humility?"

Because on your fast days you seek your own pleasure and oppress all your employees. ⁴You fast for strife and contention; you strike with your wicked

fist.^r You are not fasting today so as to have your voice reach on high. ⁵Can such a fast be the kind I choose — a man to bow down his head like a rush, to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call fasting, or an acceptable day to the LORD?^s ⁶Is not this the fast I have chosen: to loosen the bonds of wickedness; to undo the bands of the yoke; to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and to take the outcast poor into your home; to clothe those you see unclad, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

⁸Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall follow speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, and the glory of the LORD shall follow you as your rear guard. ⁹Then you will call and the LORD shall answer; you will cry and He shall say, Here am I. If you will banish from your midst all oppression, the finger of scorn and slanderous speech, ¹⁰if you will open your heart to the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light shine in the darkness, and your gloom shall become like noonday. ¹¹The LORD shall guide you continually and shall satisfy your soul in dry places; your strength shall be renewed, and you shall be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never disappoint.^t ¹²Your sons shall rebuild the ruins of former years and shall revive the foundations of old, and you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets in which to dwell.^u

¹³If you do not tramp upon the Sabbath^v by doing your business on My holy day, but call the Sabbath an en-

k) Social and political, but especially all spiritual obstacles.

l) God's infinite greatness meeting man's limitations, poverty, and need; especially those whom the rich and powerful oppress.

m) To abandon the faithful would defeat God's object in their creation.

n) Quoted in "Hymn of the Initiates," *The Dead Sea Scrolls*.

o) Specifically those who ignore and disobey God's law.

p) In chs. 49-57 the spiritual agent of salvation, now the conditions on which salvation may be enjoyed [chs. 58-66]. He begins, as in 40:1 and 49:1, with a double imperative.

q) Correct forms of worship. r) Such fasting only makes a man quarrelsome!

s) Lev. 16 records the only fast day required by the Law, the great day of Atonement, when Israel should "afflict their souls and do no work of any kind" [vs. 29].

t) *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, "Hymns," Sect. 14, No. 1: "a fountain of waters never failing."

u) Great the glory of those who repair the holy city!

v) The appointed Sabbath is holy ground. To observe the day cheerfully is a test of the people's fidelity to the LORD. The Sabbath is as a sanctuary, not to be trodden upon with irreverent feet.

joyment, in order that the LORD might be sacredly honored; and if you honor it by not doing your business, nor seeking your own pleasure, nor talking idle talk; ¹⁴then you shall find your delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the highways of the earth; I will nourish you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it.^w

59 BEHOLD, THE LORD'S HAND IS not too short to save,^x nor His ear too dull to hear; but your sins have separated you and your God; ²your iniquities have hidden His face from you, so that He could not hear you. ³Your hands are tainted with blood^y and your fingers with iniquity. Your lips spoke falsehood, and your tongue muttered injustice. ⁴No one demanded justice nor did anyone plead for honesty; they trusted in confusion and spoke falsehood, conceived mischief and produced iniquity.^z ⁵They hatch the eggs of asps^a and weave the spiders' webs. He who eats of their eggs dies; from a broken egg a viper is hatched. ⁶Their webs shall not serve as clothing; they shall not cover themselves with their own handiwork. Their works are of wickedness; deeds of violence are in their hands; ⁷their feet run to do evil; they make haste to shed innocent blood; their schemes are schemes of deceit; rapine and ruin are on their path. ⁸The way of peace they do not know; justice is not in their tracks; they have twisted their ways before them; whoever walks in that way does not know peace.^b

⁹Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us. We wait for light, but look, darkness; for brightness, and we walk in gloom.^c

¹⁰We grope like a blind man along a wall, we feel our way like one without eyes; we stumble at midday as in the night. In the prime of our life we resemble the dead. ¹¹All of us growl like bears and sadly moan like doves;^d we wait for justice, but there is none; for deliverance, but it remains far from us. ¹²For our transgressions are multiplied in Thy presence; our sins witness against us; truly, our transgressions are ever with us. In regard to our iniquities, we are conscious of them:^e ¹³rebellious against and denying the LORD; discontinuing from following after our God; talking oppression and revolt; conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. ¹⁴Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth has fallen in the street, and honesty is unable to enter. ¹⁵Truth is so lacking, that if anyone turns from evil, he becomes a victim of plunder.

¹⁶The LORD saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice.^f He saw that there was no man; He was amazed that there was none to interpose; then His own arm brought Him victory, and His righteousness sustained Him. ¹⁷He put on righteousness as a coat of mail and salvation as a helmet upon His head; He dressed Himself in robes of vengeance for clothing, and He put on zeal^g as a cloak.^h ¹⁸According to deeds shall He surely requite: wrath to His enemies, recompense to His adversaries; to the islands shall He render retribution. ¹⁹So shall they revere the name of the LORD from the west and His glory from the rising of the sun; for He will come like a rushing stream, the breath of the LORD driving it. ²⁰He will come to Zion as her Redeemer and to those in Jacob who turn from sin, says the LORD.

w) This clause occurs also in 1:20 and 40:5, but nowhere else in the O.T. x) Cf. Isa. 50:2. y) This chapter finds its natural historical background in the 8th cent. B.C. Cf. vs. 3 with Isa. 1:15, 21.

z) The nation has become alarmingly corrupt: murder, lying, injustice, and violence fill the catalogue of Israel's many sins. Cf. Isa. 29:21.

a) Heb.: *Tziphoni* - a fabulous, deadly monster. Cf. Isa. 11:8.

b) In contrast to this, cf. Isa. 26:3.

c) Isaiah identifies himself with his people, and he leads them in confession of their sins as though their sins were his own. Cf. 6:3; 53:4-6. d) Pining for liberty.

e) Conscience troubled them.

f) Justice, honor, truth, and uprightness are personified in vss. 14-15; justice forced back, honor not to be found, truth stumbling in the market, and uprightness unable to enter! The scenes of this tragedy are the law courts. g) Divine jealousy.

h) Vss. 17-18 give the fullest description of the LORD as a warrior in the O.T. See also Ex. 15:3. Cf. with Eph. 6:14-17; I Thess. 5:8.

²¹And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, says the LORD: My Spirit which is upon you and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth nor from the mouth of your children, nor from the mouth of your grandchildren, says the LORD, from now onward even forever.¹

60 ¹ARISE, SHINE; FOR YOUR LIGHT has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you! ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and a dark cloud the nations; but the LORD shall arise over you, His glory shall be seen upon you. ³Nations shall walk in your light and kings in your dawning radiance. ⁴Lift up your eyes round about and see!^k They all are assembling themselves and are coming to you; your sons are coming from afar, and your daughters are carried to you on the hip.¹ ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your hearts will be filled with awe and swell [with joy]; because the riches of the sea shall be turned to you, and the wealth of nations shall come to you. ⁶A stream of camels will come upon you; the dromedaries^m of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come, bringing gold and frankincense; they shall proclaim the fame of the LORD. ⁷All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of the Nabaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance upon My altar, and My glorious house shall be glorified.ⁿ

⁸Who are these that roll in like clouds, like doves flying to their dove-cote openings? ⁹Surely, the islands must wait eagerly on Me. The vessels of Tarshish are among the first, bringing your sons from afar; their silver and gold is with them [to honor] the

name of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, because He has glorified you.

¹⁰The sons of strangers shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for though in My wrath I smote you, yet in My favor^p I will have mercy upon you. ¹¹Your gates shall be open continually; neither by day nor by night shall they be closed, that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations as their kings are led captive. ¹²For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall become utterly desolate. ¹³The glory of Lebanon shall come to you — the cypress, the buttonwood, and the pine together — to adorn the place of My sanctuary, and the place of My feet I will make beautiful. ¹⁴The sons of your oppressors, bending low, shall come to you; all those who once despised you shall crouch at your feet. Then they shall call you, "The city of the LORD, Zion, the Holy One of Israel."^p ¹⁵Instead of you being forsaken and hated, with no one passing through you, I will make you an everlasting majesty, a joy for many generations. ¹⁶You shall drink the milk of the nations and drain the wealth of kings; then you shall know that I am the LORD your Saviour and that your Redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob. ¹⁷Instead of brass I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze, instead of stones, iron, and I will make Peace your governor and Justice your ruler.^q ¹⁸Violence shall no more be heard in your land, neither desolation nor ruin within your borders. You shall call your walls Salvation and your city gates Thanksgiving. ¹⁹No more shall the sun be your light by day nor the moon give light for brightness at night; but

j) Repeating the essential covenant promises first given to Abraham, then to all believers.

k) Ch. 53 announced the coming of the Redeemer to Zion; this chapter pictures Zion as redeemed and prosperous, exiles from distant lands crowding to share the wondrous light of God. To the eye of faith, it has come. k) i.e., look in all directions.

l) Still a mode of carrying children in the Orient [cf. Isa. 66:12].

m) Working dromedaries are usually young; they are single-humped and speedy, especially those of Midian.

n) Midian, Ephah, Sheba, and the Nabaioth were the tribes to the south and the southeast of the Dead Sea in n.w. Arabia.

o) The Biblical idea of sovereign grace, undeserved favor, is indicated here.

p) This picture of Zion's restoration is a graphic vision, transcending those of the prophet's youthful ministry [cf. 11:9; 25:8].

q) Peace and Righteousness stand in sharp contrast to the violence and injustice.

the LORD shall be your everlasting light and your God your glory. ²⁰Your sun shall never set, and your moon shall never wane; for the LORD shall be your everlasting light;^r your days of mourning shall be ended. ²¹Your people, everyone of them, shall be righteous, and they shall possess the land forever; they are a shoot which I have planted and the work of My hands, through whom I shall glorify Myself. ²²The least [among them] shall become a thousand and a small one shall become a strong nation; I, the LORD, will hasten it in its [proper] time.

61 THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD GOD is upon me;^s for the LORD has anointed^t me to preach good tidings to the humble;^u He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to settle the mourners in Zion, giving them a laurel wreath instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness; so that they may be called oaks of righteousness planted by the LORD to glorify Himself.

⁴They shall rebuild the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations and renew the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁵Aliens shall stand [ready] and feed your flocks, and the sons of foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers. ⁶As for you, you shall be called a priesthood^v of the LORD; "servants of our God" shall be said of you. You shall partake of the wealth of the nations, and with their riches you shall become famous.^w ⁷Instead of your

shame you shall have double [reward]; instead of reproach they shall rejoice in their portion; thus shall they possess a double inheritance in their land; they shall have everlasting joy. ⁸For I the LORD love justice; I hate unjust plundering. I will faithfully give them their recompense, making an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations and their offspring in the midst of the people. All that see them shall recognize them as descendants whom the LORD has blessed.^x

¹⁰I will greatly exult in the LORD, and my soul shall rejoice in my God;^y for He has clothed me with robes of salvation, and He has covered me with a mantle of righteousness — as a bridegroom adjusts his priestlike crown and as a bride adorns herself with jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden makes its plants to grow, so the Lord God shall cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

62 ¹FOR ZION'S SAKE I WILL NOT keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness shines forth brightly and her salvation radiates as a lamp. ²The nations shall behold your deliverance and all the kings your glory. You shall then be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD shall bestow. ³You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD and a royal diadem in the palm of your God. ⁴No more shall you be termed "Forsaken," nor your land be called "Desolate"; but you shall be called "My delight is in her,"^a and your land "Beulah";^b for the LORD takes pleasure in you, and your land shall be married [to Him]. ⁵For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall

r) The LORD's presence is symbolized as a supernatural light, superseding nature's ordinary light. Cf. 4:5; 24:23; 30:26; Rev. 21:23; not that the sun and the moon shall cease to exist, but that the new Jerusalem shall then realize her dependence on God.

s) The speaker in chaps. 61 and 62 is the Great Deliverer; the prophet is His mouthpiece.

t) Anointed in sense of appointed and qualified.

u) The Hebrew term *anawim* is variously translated: poor, needy, weak, afflicted, lowly.

v) Cf. 1 Peter 2:5.

w) Humbled Israel would exchange places with her famously rich captors.

x) Material prosperity will be an additional proof of God's attitude to those in Israel who believe.

y) This believer's response to the message of salvation is possible because redemption is realized. Cf. Luke 4:18-21. z) This chapter continues ch. 61. a) Heb.: *Hephzibah*.

b) Beulah: "Married," or "The Espoused."

your sons wed you; and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen^c who shall not be silent any day or night; and you who put the LORD in remembrance shall take no rest ⁷and give Him no rest until He establishes [you] and sets up Jerusalem for a praise in the earth. ⁸The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm: I will certainly not give your grain as food for your foes again nor shall the aliens' sons drink your new wine for which you have labored; ⁹but they who have garnered the grain shall eat it and praise the LORD; they who have gathered the wine shall drink it in the courts of My sanctuary.

¹⁰March, march through the gates;^d prepare the way of the people; build, build up the highway; clear away the stones; lift up a banner for the people! ¹¹Behold, the LORD has made it to be heard to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him and His recompense before Him.^e ¹²They shall call them "The holy people, the redeemed of the LORD"; and you shall be called, "Sought out; a city not forsaken."

63 WHO^f IS THIS WHO COMES FROM Edom, with crimson-stained apparel from Bozrah, the One adorned in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His might? It is I, the One speaking righteousness, mighty to save!

²Why is thy apparel red and thy clothing stained as those of one who treads the wine press?

³I have trodden the wine press alone and from the peoples there was none with Me; I trod them in My anger and trampled them in My wrath; thus their blood was sprinkled on My clothing, and I stained all My raiment. ⁴For a day of vengeance was in My heart,

and the year of My redemption has come.

⁵I looked, but there was no one to help; I marvelled that there was no one to support; so My own arm saved for Me, and My own indignation upheld Me. ⁶I trod down the peoples in My anger; I made them drunk in My fury and poured their lifeblood upon the ground.

⁷I will recount the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has done for us and the great goodness to the house of Israel which He showed them, according to His mercy and according to the abundance of His lovingkindness. ⁸For He said, Surely they are My people, children who will not deal falsely; so He became their Saviour. ⁹In all their affliction He was afflicted; but the Angel^g of His Presence saved them;^h in His love and in His sympathy He redeemed them; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

¹⁰But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit;ⁱ therefore He was turned to become their antagonist and He Himself fought against them. ¹¹But He recalled the days of old, Moses and His people. Where is He who brought up from the sea the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within him,^j ¹²the one causing His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses and dividing the waters before them to make for Him an everlasting name? ¹³Who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the wilderness they should not stumble. ¹⁴As cattle descend to the valley,^k so the Spirit of God gave them rest. Thus Thou didst lead Thy people to make for Thyself a glorious name.

¹⁵Look down from heaven, and see from Thy holy and glorious abode. Where are Thy zeal and Thy mighty acts? Thy yearning pity and compassion are withholding themselves from

c) Not mere "watchmen," who look out for the enemy, but guardians and protectors of the city's welfare. d) The gates of Jerusalem. e) Cf. 40:10.

f) Vss. 1-6 is a poem of judgment and redemption.

g) The Angel in whom the LORD was personally present.

h) The LORD and His Presence are identical. In ancient times, the LORD came to save them in person, not by proxy.

i) His Holy Spirit is grieved, which shows the prophet conceived of Him as a person.

j) The Holy Spirit is becoming more explicitly emphasized as a person, as the personal aspect was in the "Servant" in ch. 53. k) To find better pasturage, refuge, and rest.

me. ¹⁶For Thou art our Father;¹ though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not recognize us, Thou, O LORD, art our Father; our Redeemer from of old is Thy name. ¹⁷Why, O LORD, dost Thou have us wander from Thy ways and harden^m our heart so that we do not revere Thee? Return for Thy servants' sake, for the tribes of Thy heritage! ¹⁸Thy holy people possessed it for a short time; our enemies have trodden down Thy sanctuary. ¹⁹We have become like people over whom Thou hast never ruled, like those who are not called by Thy name.

64 OH, THAT THOU WOULDST REND the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at Thy presence, ²as fire kindles brushwood and as fire makes water to bubble; to make Thy name known to Thy adversaries; to cause the nations to tremble before Thy face ³by way of executing terrible deeds which we did not expect. Thou didst come down, the mountains quaked at Thy presence. ⁴From ancient times men have not heard or perceived, nor has human eye seen a God besides Thee who works for him who waits for Him.ⁿ ⁵Thou dost meet him who is joyful, who works righteously and who in Thy ways remembers Thee. Thou wast indeed angry because we have committed sins; we continued long in them; shall we be saved? ⁶We have all become as one unclean; all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf;^o our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away. ⁷No one calls on Thy name or bestirs himself to lay hold on Thee; for Thou hast hidden Thy face from us and hast delivered us to the control of our iniquities.^p

⁸Yet, LORD, Thou art our Father. We are the clay; Thou art our potter;

we all are the work of Thy hands.^q ⁹Be not angry, LORD, beyond measure, and do not remember our iniquities forever. Behold, observe, we pray Thee, we are all Thy people! ¹⁰Thy holy cities have become a wilderness; Zion is become a waste and Jerusalem a desolation. ¹¹Our holy and beautiful house in which our fathers worshiped is burned with fire, and all our cherished places have been laid waste.^r ¹²In view of these things, LORD, wilt Thou restrain Thyself, wilt Thou be silent and afflict us beyond measure?

65 I HAVE LET MYSELF BE SOUGHT out by those who did not inquire for Me;^s I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said: Here am I, here am I, to a nation which did not call on My name. ²I spread forth My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way which is not good, after their own devices; ³a people who continually provoke Me to My face, offering sacrifices in gardens, burning incense on bricks, ⁴sitting in graves^t and lodging in secret caverns;^u who partake sacrificially of the meat of hogs,^v and in whose vessels is the broth of unclean animals;^w ⁵who say, "Keep your distance, come not near me, for I am holier than you." These are a smoke in My nostrils and a fire that burns all day. ⁶Look, it is written before Me:^x I will not keep silent, but I will recompense, I will repay into their bosoms ⁷both your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers, says the LORD, because they too burned incense upon the mountains and reproached Me upon the hills. Therefore I will measure out their former work into their bosoms.^y

⁸Thus says the LORD: As new wine is found in the cluster and one says, "Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it," so I will do for My servants' sakes,

l) The clearest expression in the O.T. regarding our relation to God.

m) All that happens is divinely permitted and thus forms part of His program, including human opposition to His will. n) Cf. 40:31. The prophet longs for new theophanies [physical manifestations of God's presence to man]. o) Fading both in moral vigor and in material well-being.

p) Heb.: "melted us in the hand of our iniquities."

q) Isaiah emphasizes divine sovereignty and human dependence. Cf. Isa. 29:16; 45:9; 60:21; also Ps. 100:3; Rom. 9:20-21. r) Sennacherib's humiliation of Judah went deep.

s) Heb.: "I afforded access to Myself for consultation." t) Practicing necromancy; cf. 8:19; 29:4.

u) Sleeping in secret places to obtain dreams. v) Swine were sacred to some idols.

w) Possible of mice [cf. 66:17]. x) Isaiah uses similar language in 34:16.

y) The LORD punishes according to sin; thus Isaiah re-emphasizes the LORD's justice.

that I do not destroy them all. ⁹I will bring forth a progeny² from Jacob, and from Judah the inheritors of My mountains; My chosen ones shall inherit it, and My servants shall dwell there. ¹⁰Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks, and the valley of Achor a resting place for herds for My people, because they sought Me! ¹¹But you who forsake the LORD and ignore My holy mountain, who spread a table for Fortune and make abundant mixed wine for Destiny,^a ¹²I will destine you for the sword, and you all shall bow down to the slaughter; because when I called, you did not answer, and when I spoke you did not obey, but you did what was evil in My eyes and you chose what displeased Me.

¹³Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, My servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry; take note, My servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty; observe, My servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame; ¹⁴mark well, My servants shall sing for gladness of heart, but you shall cry out for sorrow of heart and shall wail for anguish of soul.^b ¹⁵You shall leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones; the Lord God shall slay you; but His servants shall be called by another name. ¹⁶Then he who blesses himself in the land shall swear by the God of truth,^c because the former troubles shall have been forgotten and hidden from My eyes.

¹⁷For behold, I am creating new heavens and a new earth.^d The past shall be forgotten and shall never come to mind; ¹⁸but rejoice and exult forever over what I create, for I create Jerusalem [an occasion] for joy, and her people will rejoice. ¹⁹I too will rejoice over Jerusalem and will delight in My people. No more will there be heard in her the voice of weeping or

the voice of crying. ²⁰No more shall there be in it infants that live a few days; or old men who do not live out their days;^e for the youth shall die a centenarian. Even the sinner shall be struck by the curse at a hundred. ²¹They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²²They shall not build and another inhabit; nor shall they plant and another eat. For as the lifetime of a tree so are the days of My people, and My elect shall enjoy the work of their hands. ²³They shall neither labor in vain, nor bring forth [children] for calamity; for they and their offspring with them are the offspring of those blessed of the LORD. ²⁴It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear. ²⁵The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food; they shall not hurt nor destroy on any of My holy mountains, says the LORD.^f

66 **THUS SAYS THE LORD:** HEAVEN is My throne and the earth is My footstool; what manner of house would you build for Me, and where would be the place of My rest? ²My hand has made everything, and thus it came to be, says the LORD. I will look favorably^g upon that man who is humble, feels crushed in spirit, and trembles at My word;^h ³rather than on him who slays an ox as though he slew a man; who sacrifices a sheep as he would break a dog's neck; who brings a cereal oblation as if it were the blood of swine; who presents frankincense as though he were worshiping idols.ⁱ They certainly have chosen their own ways and delight in their abominations; ⁴indeed, I have decided their calamity; what they dread I will

2) Promised also in Isa. 6:13 and 53:10; that is, descendants who were a true "offspring."
a) "Fortune" and "Destiny" were regarded by some in Israel as deities, in whose cults they participated.

b) The prophet's fourfold contrast between the LORD's servants and apostates is striking [vss. 13, 14]. c) Literally, the "Amen of Truth."

d) Nature also is to be transformed in harmony with a renewed humanity; as so frequently emphasized by Isa. [cf. 11:6-9; 25:8; 30:23-26; 32:15; 35:10].

e) Among the blessings of Israel's new theocracy is the extension of life—longevity as before the Flood. f) Cf. Isa. 11:6-9. g) With compassion.

h) That is, listening in awe and obedient to His commands.

i) The four prescribed acts of worship are as sinful, when executed without love for the LORD, as the four enumerated sins.

bring upon them; because when I called, no one answered, and when I spoke, they did not listen; they did what was evil in My eyes and chose what was displeasing to Me.

⁶Listen to the message of the LORD, you who stand in awe of His word:^j Your brothers who hate you and who spurn you for My sake,^k say, "Let the LORD be glorified that we may see your joy"; but they shall be confounded!

⁶Listen, a thunderous voice from the city! A voice from the temple! It is the LORD's voice rendering recompense to His enemies. ⁷But before she travailed she gave birth; before her pains came on, she was delivered of a son!

⁸Who ever heard of such a thing? Who ever saw its like? Shall a land be brought forth in a single day? Shall a nation be born in a moment? Yet Zion had hardly travailed, when she gave birth to her children. ⁹Shall I bring to birth and not give delivery? says the LORD; shall I cause to bear and yet close the womb? says your God.^l

¹⁰Rejoice with Jerusalem and exult in her, all you who love her; rejoice exceedingly, all you who mourn over her; ¹¹that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breasts, that you may drain out and enjoy yourself from the fulness of her glory.

¹²For thus says the LORD: Observe! I will extend to her peace like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream. Then you shall be nursed, carried upon the hips, and be dandled on the knees.^m ¹³As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you; in Jerusalem you shall be comforted. ¹⁴When you see it, your heart will rejoice; your bones shall flourish like green grass; so shall the hand of the LORD be revealed toward

His servants and His indignation toward His enemies. ¹⁵For behold, the LORD shall come with fire and His chariots like a whirlwind to satisfy His anger in fury, His rebuke with flames of fire.ⁿ ¹⁶For by fire the LORD will execute judgment, even with His sword upon all flesh; the slain by the LORD shall be many.

¹⁷Those who consecrate and cleanse themselves to go into the garden, following someone in the center, who eat swine's flesh, vermin, and mice, shall come to an end together,^o says the LORD. ¹⁸For I know their doings and their thoughts; [the time] comes to gather all nations and tongues; they shall come and they shall see My glory. ¹⁹I will set up a sign;^p I will send some of those who survive to the nations—to Tarshish,^q Put and Lud, to Mesheck and Rosh, to Tubal and Javan, to the islands afar off who have neither heard of My fame nor seen My glory—they shall proclaim My glory among the nations. ²⁰They shall bring there all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD; [they shall return] on horses, in chariots, on litters, upon mules, and upon dromedaries to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD; just as the Israelites used to bring their cereal offerings in clean vessels to the house of the LORD.

²¹Some of them I will take for priests^r and Levites, says the LORD.

²²For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall continue before Me, says the LORD, so shall your progeny and your name remain.

²³It shall be that from new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the LORD. ²⁴They shall go forth; they shall gaze upon

j) Messianic expectations; religion will become spiritual; unbelieving scoffers will be silenced, and Zion shall rejoice. k) Zion's apostates mock the hopes of their pious brothers.

l) The LORD has begun to restore His people; He will not leave their salvation incomplete [cf. 37:3]. m) Cf. 49:22, 23; 60:4. n) Cf. 17:13; 30:17.

o) Apostates, who regulated the idolatrous ceremony of purification, are especially condemned. p) Sign is a miracle as in Isa. 7:11. To send Jewish ambassadors on any mission would be a "miracle" to them!

q) Tarshish is thought to be the important port in Spain called Tartessus; Put and Lud were in north Africa; Mesheck and Tubal in Asia Minor; Javan was another name for Greece [compare Ezek. 38:1 and 39:1]. r) Something beyond what was prescribed in Deut. 17:9 ff.

the dead bodies of those who have re- quenched;^t they shall be an abhor-
belled against Me;^s for their worm rence to all mankind.
shall not die, nor shall their fire be

s) This verse became the basis of the Jewish conception of Gehenna, or Ge-Hinnom, the "Valley of Hinnom," in which human sacrifices were offered to Molech. The Talmud locates the mouth of hell in this valley.

t) The torments of the apostates are eternal; Jesus uses this text in Mark 9:46. When this verse has been read in Jewish synagogues, the reader usually rereads vs. 23, as the book of Isaiah, he feels, should conclude happily.

JEREMIAH

626 B.C.

1 THE WORDS OF JEREMIAH THE SON of Hilkiah, one of the priests who lived at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. ²The word of the LORD first came to him in the days of Josiah^a the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.^b ³It continued to come during the reigns of Jehoiaquim^c son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah^d the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

⁴The word of the LORD came to me, ⁵Before I fashioned you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I dedicated you; I designated you for a prophet to the nations. ⁶Then I said, "Alas! LORD God, I do not know how to speak, for I am but a child."^e ⁷The LORD went on to say to me, Stop saying that you are a child; for wherever I shall send you, you shall go, and whatever I shall command you, you shall speak. ⁸Never fear their faces, for I am with you to rescue you, says the LORD. ⁹Then the LORD extended His hand and touched my mouth; the LORD said to me, Now I have put My words in your mouth. ¹⁰Look! Today I have appointed you as the overseer of nations and over kingdoms, to root up,

to break down, to destroy, to exterminate, to rebuild, and to establish.

¹¹Later the word of the LORD came to me, What do you see, Jeremiah? I replied, "I see the shoot of an almond tree."^f ¹²Then the LORD said to me, You are a close observer! I am likewise awake over My word to fulfill it.^g

¹³The word of the LORD came to me the second time, What do you see? I replied, "I see a boiling pot^h with its face from the north."ⁱ ¹⁴Then the LORD said to me, Calamity will come from the north upon all the settlers of the land. ¹⁵I will summon all the members of the kingdoms of the north, says the LORD; they will come and will place each one his throne at the entrance of Jerusalem and around on every one of her walls and also of all the cities of Judah.^j ¹⁶Because of their evil I will pronounce My judgments upon them, for they have forsaken Me, have offered sacrifices to other gods, and have prostrated themselves before the works of their hands.

¹⁷Now, gird up your loins, arise and declare to them everything I shall command you; do not be undone by their faces, lest I ruin you in their presence. ¹⁸See! I, on My part, have made you today as a beleaguered city, as an im-

a) Ruled from around 638 B.C. to 609 B.C.; slain in the battle of Megiddo, 609 B.C., by Pharaoh Necho. b) 626 B.C. c) The oldest son of Josiah. He ruled from 608 to 597 B.C.

d) 586 B.C. Zedekiah ruled 597 to 586 B.C.

e) The Hebrew "na'ar" may mean anyone from three months to forty years of age. Jeremiah was about twenty-four when his prophetic ministry began.

f) The "awake tree"—first tree to awake from the winter sleep. The blossom comes before the leaves.

g) God continuously working in history and in persons bringing His plan to fruition; a play on words in the original for emphasis.

h) A household utensil used for cooking food, or washing clothes. i) Region of calamity.

j) Complete invasion of the land.

pregnable fortress, and as an unassailable stronghold against the entire land — against the kings of Judah, against her princes, against her people, and against the people of the land.^k ¹⁹They will fight against you, but they shall not overcome you, because I am with you to rescue you, says the LORD.

626-621 B.C.

2 THEN THE WORD OF THE LORD came to me, ²Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, I remember the devotedness of your youth, the love of your courtships,^l and your following Me in the desert,^m in the land that was not sown. ³Israel was holy to the LORD, the first fruits of His yield;ⁿ all those devouring him shall be punished. Calamity shall come upon them, says the LORD. ⁴Listen to the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and every family of the house of Israel.

⁵Thus speaks the LORD: What injustice did your fathers find in Me, that they abandoned Me, habitually followed after^p futility, and became useless? ⁶None of them said, "Where is the LORD, the One who brought us up from the land of Egypt, the One who brought us through the wilderness, through a land of steppes and pits, through a land of deep darkness, and through a land that no man passes through or inhabits?" ⁷Then I brought you into a garden land to eat of its fruit and its good things; but when you went in, you defiled My land and made My inheritance an abomination. ⁸Even the priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?" The experts of the law did not know Me; the rulers rebelled against Me, and the prophets^q prophesied for Baal and pursued things which did not profit. ⁹Nevertheless I again will plead with you, says the LORD, and with your children's children I

will plead. ¹⁰For cross over to the isles of Kittim^r and see; also send to Kedar, carefully consider and see if anything like this has happened. ¹¹Has a nation ever changed its gods, though they were not gods? But My people have exchanged their glory for something that does not profit. ¹²Be awestruck, O heavens, at this! bristle with horror and be exceedingly desolate, says the LORD, ¹³because My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and they have hewn out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which cannot hold water.

621 B.C.

¹⁴Is Israel a servant, or a homeborn slave? Why has he become a victim? ¹⁵The young lions have roared over him and have made their voice resound; they have made his land a waste, and his cities a ruin without inhabitants. ¹⁶Also the men of Noph and Tahpanhes^s have shorn the crown of your head. ¹⁷Did you not bring this on to yourself when you forsook the LORD your God when He guided you in the way? ¹⁸And now what are you doing in the way of Egypt, to drink of the waters of the Nile? And what are you doing in the way of Assyria, to drink from the waters of the Euphrates? ¹⁹You will be chastened by your own wickedness; your own backslidings will reprove you; therefore, know and see that this evil and bitter thing is due to your forsaking the LORD your God and having no reverence for Me, says the Lord God of hosts.^t

²⁰From of old you have shattered your yoke and have snapped your bands. Also you have said, "I will not serve Thee." Yes, upon every high hill and under every shady tree you have bowed down like a harlot. ²¹Yet I, on

k) His ministry will be both offensive and defensive.

l) Your betrothal time. m) In the Orient, the wife followed the husband.

n) The most precious part of the harvest, the part waved by the priests before the LORD [Lev. 23:10-14; Num. 18:12, 13].

p) "Breath," "nothingness," "bubble" — characteristic terms for false gods in contrast to the true and living God. By following these empty gods, Israel assimilated their character; like god, like people.

q) The religious leaders later arraigned against Jeremiah.

r) Generally the coast lands of the Mediterranean — the extreme western world.

s) Both well-known towns in Josiah's day. The former, Memphis, the capital of Lower [Northern] Egypt; the latter in Upper Egypt.

t) Vs. 18 is connected with vs. 13: Israel had forsaken God, the Fountain of living waters, and was drinking from the rivers of Egypt and Assyria.

u) The theme of vs. 19: Sin carries its own punishment.

My part, planted you as a choice vine, of completely reliable stock. How then did you turn into bastard shoots of an alien vine to Me? ²²Although you wash yourself with nitre^v and though you use soap^w abundantly, your perversity is still ingrained before Me, says the Lord God. ²³How can you say, "I have not followed after Baals?"^x Look at your action in the valley, and realize what you have done. You are as a swift, young she-camel^y entangling her walk; ²⁴like a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness, in the heat of her passion snuffing up the wind; in the time of her mating, who can turn her lust away? All those pursuing her will not be disappointed, because in her month they shall find her. ²⁵Protect your foot from bareness and your throat from dryness; but you have said repeatedly, "It is useless, because I love strangers and after them I will go." ²⁶As a thief is ashamed when he is caught, just so the house of Israel is ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, ²⁷who say to a piece of wood, "You are my father," and to the stone, "You have borne me"; but to Me they have turned the neck^z and not their faces. However, in the time of calamity they will cry, "Arise and deliver us!" ²⁸Where now are your gods that you manufactured? Let them arise, if in the hour of calamity they can deliver you! Notice, your gods are as numerous as your cities, O Judah!

²⁹Why do you complain to Me?^a For all of you have rebelled against Me, says the LORD. ³⁰In vain I have stricken your children; you accepted no discipline. Your own swords have devoured your prophets like a destructive lion. ³¹O generation, will you not lis-

ten to the word of the LORD? Have I been a desert to Israel? A land of deep darkness? Why therefore do My people say, "We roam, at large; we will come no more to you?" ³²Can a virgin forget her ornaments or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number. ³³Why do you trim your way for making love? Therefore, even to the evil women you have taught your ways. ³⁴Also there is found on your skirts the lifeblood of the innocent poor, although you did not catch them in the act of burglary.^b Nevertheless, in spite of all these things, ³⁵you keep on saying, "I am innocent; surely His anger has turned away from me." See! I will bring judgment upon you because of your saying, "I have not sinned." ³⁶Why do you roam about so much, to change your ways? You shall be ashamed of Egypt just as you were ashamed of Assyria. ³⁷You will go away from him also with your hands upon your head;^c for the LORD has rejected all your confidences. You will not prosper in them.

626-621 B.C.

3 IF A MAN PUTS AWAY HIS WIFE and she goes from him and becomes another man's wife,^d will he return to her? Would not that land be greatly polluted? Yet you have played the harlot with a multitude of lovers and have returned to Me, says the LORD. ²Lift up your eyes to the bare hills and see! Where have you not been dishonored? You have waited for lovers by the roadside like an Arab in the wilderness;^e you have defiled the land with your fornication and your wickedness. ³Therefore the early showers have been withheld, and the spring rain has not come;^f still you have the brow of a harlot;^g you even choose not

v) Carbonate of soda, used for making soap.

w) Vegetable alkali obtained from ashes of plants. These were the two most powerful detergents known; both used in washing and scouring garments, also for refining metals [Malachi 3:2].

x) Canaan's gods of fertility.

y) Which has never yet had a foal, famed for amazing speed, used to carry dispatches in haste - ancient telegraph [Esther 8:10]. z) Figure of apostasy. a) The LORD's patience is too sorely tried.

b) Subjected to oppression and abuse.

c) As Tamar, Absalom's sister, went out after Amnon had abused her [II Samuel 13:19].

d) See Deut. 24:1-4: When a woman was given a bill of divorce by her husband and married another, a bill of divorce given her by her second husband did not set her free to remarry her first husband.

e) As the Bedouin freebooter is eager to plunder a passing caravan, so Israel is eager to worship false gods.

f) The latter rain fell in March and April, the second rainy season; the "early" rain [James 5:7] fell in October and November. g) Shameless.

to feel ashamed. ⁴Have you not just now cried to Me, "My Father, Thou art a friend from my youth?" ⁵Will He be angry forever? Will He keep it to the end?" See, you have spoken, but you have done all the evil you could do.

⁶In the days of Josiah the king, the LORD said to me: Have you seen what that faithless Israel did, how she went upon every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the harlot? ⁷And after she has done all of this, I said, Return to Me; but she did not return. Her treacherous sister Judah saw it. ⁸Also she saw that for all the adulteries which faithless Israel had done, I sent her away and gave her a divorce bill;^h but her faithless sister, Judah, did not fear; instead she too went and played the harlot. ⁹Also through the wantonness of her harlotry she defiled the land, committing adultery with stones and stocks.ⁱ ¹⁰Yet in spite of all this, her faithless sister, Judah, has not returned to Me with her whole heart, but in pretense, says the LORD.

¹¹Then the LORD said to me: Backsliding Israel has shown herself more righteous than faithless Judah.^j ¹²Go, and announce these words toward the north,^k and say, "Return, backsliding Israel, says the LORD. I will not look in anger upon you; for I am a merciful God. The LORD says, I will not be angry forever. ¹³Only admit your iniquity, that you have rebelled against the LORD your God and promiscuously consorted with strangers under every green tree; that you have not obeyed My voice, says the LORD. ¹⁴Return, O backsliding children, says the LORD, because I am your husband; then I will take you, one of a city and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.^l ¹⁵I will give you shepherds after My own heart,

who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶Besides, when you are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says the LORD, they shall no more say, 'The ark^m of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, because they will not remember it or miss it; for it shall not be made again.

¹⁷At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD,ⁿ and all nations^o will be gathered to it, in the name of the LORD to Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart. ¹⁸In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land which I gave as an inheritance to their fathers. ¹⁹But I said, How^p I would place you among My children and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful heritage of all nations! Then^q I said you would call Me, 'My Father,' and would not turn from following Me. ²⁰Surely, as a deceitful wife has forsaken her husband, so you have been deceitful with Me, O house of Israel, says the LORD."

²¹A voice is heard upon the bare heights, the weeping, the supplication of the children of Israel, because they have distorted their way; they have forgotten the LORD their God. ²²Return, O backsliding children, I will heal your backsliding. "See, we have come to Thee because Thou art the LORD our God.^r ²³Truly the hills are a delusion, the orgies on the mountains. Indeed, the salvation of Israel is in the LORD our God. ²⁴But shame^s has consumed the labor of our fathers from our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. ²⁵Let us lie down^t in our shame, and

h) By sending her into exile. i) Worshipping idols of stone and of wood.

j) Judah had advantages: succession of kings from David's dynasty, temple, Levites, and the warning example of Israel.

k) Toward Assyria and Media. The ten tribes had been carried captive there in 722 B.C.

l) Although they have wandered from God and are now in "a far country" and "in want," they may count on a Father's welcome, if they return in a filial spirit [Luke 15:19].

m) The ark, with its mercy seat, marking God's presence, was a center of reverence.

n) The LORD's glory and visible presence shall be manifested throughout the holy city.

o) Gentiles will be gathered into the kingdom of God.

p) Not a question, but, "How gloriously!" "How honorably!" q) Time: Exodus from Egypt.

r) The offer of pardon is accepted.

s) "Bosheth" — Baal, the god of shame, the god who brings disgrace, whose worship is an opprobrium to the worshiper.

t) Repentance for the misdeeds of the past shall be so strong that they will be overwhelmed with emotion and lie prostrate. Cf. II Samuel 12:16; 13:31; I Kings 21:4, for the practice of such a custom under painful feelings.

let our confusion cover us, for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day; also we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God."

4 IF YOU RETURN, O ISRAEL, SAYS the LORD, you should return to Me and put away your abominations^u from My presence and cease wandering,^v and swear, "As the LORD lives,"^w in truth, in justice, and in righteousness; then nations shall bless each other by Him, and in Him shall they glory.^x For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns.^y ⁴Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and cut off the foreskins of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My indignation go forth as fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

⁵Announce in Judah, publish in Jerusalem, and say, "Blow the trumpet in the land." Cry aloud and say, "All of you get together, and let us enter fortified cities!" ⁶Lift up a standard toward Zion and flee for refuge; do not remain,^z for I am bringing evil from the north,^z a great destruction. ⁷A lion has gone up from his lair and a destroyer of nations.^z He has struck his tent to make your territory desolate, and your cities shall be destroyed without inhabitants.

⁸For this gird yourselves with sackcloth; lament and wail, for the fierce anger of the LORD is not turned back from us.^a ⁹It shall be in that day, says the LORD, that the hearts^b of both the king and princes shall fail; the priests shall be amazed, and the prophets shall be astounded. ¹⁰They will say, "Ah, Lord God, Thou surely hast misled this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'You

shall have peace', — and the sword touches the soul." ¹¹At that time it shall be said to this people and to Jerusalem, "A glowing wind^c from the bare heights in the desert comes toward the daughter of My people, not to winnow,^d nor to cleanse. ¹²A wind too strong for this shall come at My orders. Now I will speak with judgment upon them. ¹³See! He comes up like clouds^e and his chariots as a tempest;^f his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are all spoiled! ¹⁴Purify your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem, in order that you may be saved; how long will you permit your vain^g thoughts to remain in you? ¹⁵For a message comes from Dan^h and bad news from the hills of Ephraim. ¹⁶Announce to the nations, publish concerning Jerusalem, that besiegers are coming from a far country, and they shout against the cities of Judah. ¹⁷Like keepers of the field they are surrounding her because she has rebelled against Me, says the LORD. ¹⁸Your ways and your works have brought these things upon you, due to your wickedness. Surely it is bitter because it has reached even into your heart.

¹⁹O my feelings, my feelings!ⁱ Let one writhe! Walls of my heart! My heart is torn within me! I cannot keep silent!^j For my soul hears the cry of the trumpet, a shout of battle. ²⁰Devastation upon devastation is proclaimed; for the whole land is laid waste. Suddenly my tents are destroyed, and my curtains are torn down in a moment. ²¹How long must I see the war signals and hear the trumpet blasts? ²²For my people are foolish; they do not know me; they are stupid children; they have no understanding; they are experts in doing evil, but they do not know how to do good.

²³I beheld the earth, and see, it was

u) Idols [I Kings 11:5, 7].

v) The living God is not sworn to, but sworn by. w) Need of repentance — the broken heart.

x) Mark out a route for those seeking shelter inside the walls of Jerusalem. y) Babylonia.

z) Not merely destroying individuals, but nations.

a) The wicked days of Manasseh [698-643 B.C.] are unrepented of by Israel.

b) "Understanding," intellect will be paralyzed.

c) A scorching sirocco from a cloudless sky [ch. 18:17; Job 1:19], figure of the invader.

d) The eastern mode of winnowing grain: by casting and scattering in the wind.

e) See the enemy Gog coming up against Israel "as a cloud to cover the land" [Ezek. 38:16].

f) Sweeping all before it [Isa. 5:28, 29]. g) Sin of any kind, especially worship of idols.

h) In northern Palestine: one of two religious centers made by Jeroboam I. [931].

i) "Bowels" — the seat of deeply felt emotions [Song of Songs 5:4; Isa. 16:11; 63:15; ch. 31:20].

j) The exclamations following one another are expressive of the prophet's intense emotion.

formless and empty, and the heavens had no light.^k ²⁴I beheld the mountains, and look! They trembled, and all the hills were in commotion. ²⁵I looked, and see! There was no man, and all the birds of heaven had fled. ²⁶I looked, and behold! The garden land was a desert, and all the cities were broken down before the LORD in the presence of His fierce anger.

²⁷For thus says the LORD, All the land will be a desolation, yet I will not bring it to a finish. ²⁸On account of this, let the earth mourn and the heavens be black, because I have spoken; I have purposed; I have not repented, nor will I turn back from it.

²⁹At the noise of the horsemen and bowmen every city flees; they enter thickets, and they climb among the rocks; every city is forsaken, and no man dwells in them. ³⁰And you, ruined creature, what will you do? Clothe^l yourself in scarlet? Adorn yourself with ornaments of gold? Paint your eyes with antimony?^m You beautify yourself in vain; your paramoursⁿ despise you; they are seeking your life. ³¹For I have heard the voice of a woman in labor, a cry as of one giving birth to her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion,^o panting, begging for help, "Oh, woe is me! For my soul faints because of the slain."

5 ROAM AROUND THROUGH THE BAZAARS of Jerusalem; look closely and consider! Search her marts to see if you can find anyone who practices justice and searches for truth, so that I may deal graciously with her. ²Although they say, "As the LORD lives," yet they swear falsely.^p ³O LORD, do not Thy eyes search for truth? Thou hast beaten them, but they felt no rebuke; Thou hast disciplined them, but they spurned correction. They have made their faces harder than flint; they have refused to

repent. ⁴Then I said, "These are only the poor; they have no understanding; for they do not know the way of the LORD, the judgment of their God." ⁵I will go to the great and will speak to them; for they know the way of the LORD, the judgment of their God." But they all alike had broken the yoke; they had burst apart the bonds. ⁶Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them; a wolf from the desert shall destroy them; a leopard^q is lurking by their cities; everyone who goes out of them will be torn to bits, because their rebellions are many and their desertions are appalling. ⁷How can I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me and have sworn by those who are no gods. When I had filled them up, they committed adultery and trooped to the harlots' houses. ⁸They were like well-fed, lusty stallions, each neighing with passion after his neighbor's wife.^r ⁹Shall not I punish them for these things? says the LORD, and shall I not avenge myself on such a nation as this? ¹⁰Go up and spoil her vineyards,^s but make no complete end; strip away her branches, because they are not the LORD's.

¹¹For the house of Jacob and the house of Israel have been altogether faithless toward Me. ¹²They have acted deceptively against the LORD and have said, "He will not see! No calamity will come upon us, nor shall we see the sword or famine." ¹³The prophets will become as whirlwind; the word is not in them." Thus shall it be done to them.

¹⁴Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts: Because they have spoken this word, see! I am making My word in your mouth a fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. ¹⁵Look! I am bringing upon you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, says the LORD. It is a lasting and age-

k) See Gen. 1:2; Isa. 34:11.

l) Jerusalem like a woman adorning herself to gain the attention and assistance of her admirers [Isa. 57:9; Ezek. 23:40, 41].

m) Or "subium" — the edge of the eyelids was blackened for the purpose of increasing by contrast the lustre of the eyes and making them look larger [Jezebel in II Kings 9:30; Ezek. 23:40].

n) Political friends or allies [Ezek. 23:5, 7, 9, 12, 16, 30].

o) The personified population of Zion.

p) To swear by their God should be a token of loyalty to Him; but it was not [see Deut. 10:20].

q) A leopard will conceal himself near a village or watering place and wait for hours its opportunity of pouncing upon the cattle, or on the people.

r) Profligate Judeans.

s) Judah is here likened to vineyards [cf. Isa. 5:1-7].

old nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor can you understand what they say. ¹⁶Their quiver^t is like an open grave; they are all mighty men.^u ¹⁷They shall eat up your harvest and your food; they shall consume your sons and your daughters; they shall devour your flocks and your herds; they shall eat your vines and your fig trees; your impregnable cities in which you trust they shall destroy with the sword. ¹⁸But even in those days, says the LORD, I will not make a complete end of you. ¹⁹And when they shall say, "Why has the LORD our God done all these things to us?" you shall say to them, "As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve strangers in a land that is not yours."^v

²⁰Declare this in the house of Jacob, and proclaim it in the house of Judah: ²¹Listen to this, foolish and heartless^w people, who have eyes but do not see; who have ears, but do not hear. ²²Do you not reverence Me? says the LORD. Do you not tremble in My presence? I have set the dunes as the boundary for the sea, an eternal barrier which it cannot pass; though the waves leap, they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it. ²³But this people has a rebellious and contentious heart; they turned aside and wandered away.^x ²⁴They did not say in their heart, "Let us reverence the LORD our God, the One who gives the early and latter rains in their seasons and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest."^y ²⁵Your iniquity has turned these away,^z and your sins have withholden the good from you. ²⁶For wicked men were found among My people. They lurk like fowls, lying in wait. They act like a trap; they catch men. ²⁷Like a basket full of birds, their houses are full of treachery;

therefore they have become great and rich; ²⁸they have grown fat and sleek.^a They know no limit in their wickedness; they do not know justice to make the cause of the orphan to succeed; they do not defend the rights of the innocent. ²⁹Shall I not punish for these things? says the LORD. Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?

³⁰An astounding and horrible thing has occurred in the land: ³¹the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule according to their own hands; and My people like it so. But what will they do when the end comes?

6 FLEE FOR SAFETY, O PEOPLE OF Benjamin, from the midst of Jerusalem! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,^b and erect a sign on Bethhaccerem;^c for harm is looming from the north, a great destruction. ²The comely and luxurious I will destroy, the daughter of Zion. ³Shepherds with their flocks^d shall come against her; they shall pitch their tents around her; they shall pasture every one in his place.^e ⁴Sanctify yourselves^f for war against her; arise, and let us attack at noontime. Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of evening are lengthening! ⁵Arise, and let us attack by night; let us destroy her palaces. ⁶For thus says the LORD of hosts: Hew down her trees; cast up a siege mound around Jerusalem. This is the city that must be punished; there is nothing but oppression within her. ⁷As a well keeps its water cool, so she keeps fresh her wickedness; violence and destruction are heard in her; sickness and wounds are continually before Me. ⁸Be disciplined,^g O Jerusalem, lest I be alienated from you; lest I make your land desolate, without inhabitants.

⁹Thus says the LORD of hosts: Glean

t) As part of warlike equipment [Isa. 22:6].

u) Warriors [II Sam. 23:8]. v) So Deut. 29:24-26; I Kings 9:8, 9; Jer. 16:10-13.

w) The heart was regarded by the Hebrews as the seat of understanding [Job 12:24; 36:13; Hosea 7:11]. x) Not content with revolt they became foes of God.

y) The appointed harvest weeks are the seven between the Feast of the Passover and the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost [see Deut. 16:9]. z) The blessings mentioned in the preceding verse.

a) The Hebrews regarded fatness as a mark of contented self-indulgence and associated it with impiety [Job 15:27; Ps. 73:7].

b) In the hill country of Judah, about 12 miles south of Jerusalem; the home of the prophet Amos.

c) Vineyard house about 3 miles northeast of Tekoa, overlooking the Dead Sea.

d) Bedouin invaders [ch. 12:10]. e) Ravaging the country [Micah 5:6].

f) Alluding to a custom of opening a campaign with sacrifice [I Sam. 7:8-10].

g) Not intellectual "instruction," but moral discipline.

thoroughly as a vine the remnant of Israel; like a grape gatherer, pass your hand again over its branches. ¹⁰To whom shall I speak and testify so that they will hear? See, their ears are uncircumcised; therefore they are not able to understand. Behold, the word of the LORD is to them a reproach; they take no pleasure in it. ¹¹Therefore I am full of the wrath of the LORD; I am weary of holding it in. Pour it out upon the children of the streets and upon the joint circle of young men as well; both the husband and the wife shall be taken, the old man and the very aged. ¹²Their houses shall be given to others, together with their fields and wives; for I will stretch out my hand against the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD. ¹³Every one from the least of them to the greatest is guilty of unjust gain; every one from the prophet to the priest practices deceit.^h ¹⁴Hence they have healed the wound of my people slightly, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. ¹⁵Were they embarrassed when they committed abominations? No, they were not at all embarrassed; they did not even know how to blush; therefore they shall fall among the fallen; during the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown, says the LORD.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads, and look; ask for the ancient paths, where is the good way;ⁱ then walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk in it." ¹⁷I placed watchmen^j over you, saying, Listen to the sound of the trumpet! But they said, "We will not listen." ¹⁸Therefore hear, O congregation, what will happen to them. ¹⁹Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing calamity upon this people, the fruit of their schemes, because they have not given heed to My words, and as for My

teaching, they spurned it. ²⁰To what purpose does frankincense come to Me from Sheba^k and cinnamon cane from a far country?^l Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor are your sacrifices pleasing to Me. ²¹Therefore thus says the LORD: I am laying before the people stumbling blocks against which they shall stumble, fathers and sons together; neighbor and friend shall perish.

²²Thus says the LORD: See, a people is coming from the north country; a great nation is rising from the extremity of the earth. ²³They seize the bow and spear; they are cruel and merciless; their voice sounds like the sea; they ride upon horses, arrayed for battle against you, O daughter of Zion. ²⁴We have heard the reports of it; our hands hang slack,^m and anguish has seized us like pain of a woman in labor. ²⁵Go not in the field, nor walk the road, for the enemy has a sword; terror is on every side. ²⁶O daughter of My people, gird yourself with sackcloth, and then roll in ashes; mourn as for an only son, making most bitter lamentation; for the destroyer shall suddenly come upon us.

²⁷I have made you an assayer and examinerⁿ among my people, so that you may test and analyze their actions. ²⁸They are all grievous revolters, going about as talebearers; they are as brass and iron;^o all of them deal corruptly. ²⁹The bellows blow fiercely, and the lead is consumed by fire;^p in vain the refining goes on, for the wicked are not removed. ³⁰They are called refuse silver, because the LORD has rejected them.

607 B.C.

7 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH FROM THE LORD: ²Stand in the gate of the LORD's house and proclaim there this word: Hear the word of the LORD, all you men of Judah,

h) Seeking their own advancement; not the welfare of their people.

i) In searching for the old paths, they will find the Lord's path [Deut. 32:7].

j) His prophets [Ezek. 3:17; 33:7].

k) South Arabia, noted for producing fragrant resin called frankincense. l) Probably India.

m) Helplessness [Isa. 5:24].

n) A moral analyst, a tester of people's natures - God speaking to Jeremiah.

o) Worthless people; evildoers [Ezek. 22:18, 20]. Their impudence resembles brass and their obstinacy, iron.

p) In refining, the goldsmith mixes lead with the alloy containing the gold or silver, fused in a furnace on a vessel of earth or bone ash; a current of air is turned upon the molten mass [not upon the fire]; the lead then oxidizes and, acting as a flux, carries away the alloy, leaving the pure gold or silver.

who enter these gates to worship the LORD. ³Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your actions,^a and I will let you dwell in this place. ⁴Do not trust in false words, saying, "The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD is this."^r ⁵If you completely mend your ways and your actions; if you truly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; ⁶if you do not oppress the immigrant, the fatherless, or the widow;^a or shed innocent blood^d in this place; and if you do not follow after other gods to your own hurt; ⁷then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever.^u

⁸See, you are trusting in words of falsehood which cannot profit. ⁹Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods, whom you have not known, ¹⁰and then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, "We are delivered,"^v only to go on committing all these abominations? ¹¹Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den^w of robbers in your eyes? Observe, I, even I Myself, have seen it, says the LORD.

¹²Go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I made My name to dwell at first,^x and see what I did to it on account of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³And now, because you have done all these things, says the LORD, when I persistently spoke to you, you did not listen; and when I called you, you did not answer; ¹⁴therefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name and in which you are trusting, and to the place that I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shi-

loh.^y ¹⁵I will cast you out of My sight, just as I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim.^z

¹⁶As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; do not intercede to Me, for I will not hear you. ¹⁷Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven,^a and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke Me to anger. ¹⁹Is it not I they provoke? says the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own confusion? ²⁰Therefore thus says the Lord God: See, My anger and My indignation will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it shall burn, and it shall not be extinguished.

²¹Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat the flesh.^b ²²For I did not speak to your fathers, and I did not command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices in the day^c that I brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²³But this command I gave them: Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people; walk in all the way that I shall command you, that it may be well with you.^d ²⁴But they did not listen or incline their ear, but they habitually walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart; they went backward and not forward. ²⁵From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have repeatedly sent you all My servants, the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. ²⁶Yet they did not

q) General lines of conduct and individual acts which, by frequency and repetition, form habits.

r) Threefold repetition for emphasis [ch. 22:29; Isa. 6:3].

s) The defenseless and needy classes of society [Ex. 22:21-23; Deut. 24:14, 17].

t) Judicial murders, violent attacks on prophets and godly men, sacrifice of infants to Moloch.

u) Literally, from eternity and to eternity, strongest Hebrew formula for perpetuity.

v) Secure, so they can go on sinning with impunity, because they observe the externals of religion.

w) Matt. 21:13; Luke 19:46. Many caves in the limestone strata of Palestine were in ancient times dens of robbers. x) Josh. 18:1; Judg. 18:31; I Sam. 1:3.

y) The destruction of Shiloh is alluded to in ch. 26:6; Ps. 78:60; but not mentioned in the historical books; probably happened after the Philistine victory described in I Sam. 4.

z) Ephraim, the ten northern tribes, carried into captivity in 722 B.C. by Sargon II of Assyria.

a) Probably Ashtoreth or Astarte [II Kings 21:3-5; Jer. 44:17, 18, 19].

b) Words of irony and contempt; the burnt offering was not eaten by the worshiper; only parts of the peace offering.

c) The first day encamped before Mount Sinai; the spiritual covenants came first; sacrifice, the third day [see Ex. 19]. d) Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 28:1, 2.

listen to Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their necks, doing worse than their fathers.

²⁷You shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. ²⁸And you will say to them, "This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD its God and did not receive correction; truth^e has perished; it is cut off from their lips.

²⁹"Cut off your hair^f and throw it away; raise a lamentation on the bare heights; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath."

³⁰For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight, says the LORD; they have placed their abominations^g in the house, which is called by My name, to defile it. ³¹They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My mind. ³²Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when it shall no more be called Topheth, the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter; for they shall bury in Topheth because there is no room elsewhere. ³³The dead bodies of this people shall be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and none shall frighten them away.^h ³⁴I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, for the land shall become a desolation.

609 B.C.

8 AT THAT TIME, SAYS THE LORD, the houses of the kings of Judah, the bones of the princes, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be brought out of their sepulchres. ²They shall be spread be-

fore the sun and the moon and all the hosts of heaven,ⁱ which they have loved, which they have served, after which they have walked and which they have sought and worshiped; they shall not be gathered or buried; they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth. ³And death shall be preferred to life by all the remnant that remains of this evil family in all the places I have driven them, says the LORD of hosts.

⁴You shall further say to them: Thus says the LORD: When men fall, do they not rise again? If one turns away, does he not come back? ⁵Why then is this people of Jerusalem turned away in perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit,^j refusing to return. ⁶I have given heed and listened, but they have not spoken properly; no man repents of his wickedness, saying, "What have I done?" Everyone turns away to his own devices like a horse rushing into battle. ⁷Even the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times; the turtledove, swallow, and crane observe the time of their coming^k but My people do not know the ordinances of the LORD.

⁸How dare you say, "We are wise, and the teaching of the LORD is with us"? But see, the falsifying pen of the scribes made it into a fabrication.^l ⁹The wise men are put to shame, they are dumbfounded and trapped; since they have spurned the word of the LORD, what kind of wisdom is there in them? ¹⁰Therefore I will give their wives to others and their fields to conquerors, because everyone, from the least to the greatest, practices covetousness; everyone deals deceitfully, from the prophet to the priest. ¹¹They have healed the wound of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. ¹²Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all abashed; they did not even know how

e) Faithfulness, loyalty.

f) To poll the hair was a mark of mourning [Job 1:20; Micah 1:16]. g) See II Kings 23:13.

h) As David, slaying Goliath, did to the Philistines [I Sam. 17:46].

i) See Deut. 4:19; 17:3; II Kings 21:3, 5; Jer. 19:13.

j) Insincerity toward Jehovah; false teachings of idolatry [ch. 14:14; 23:26].

k) Migratory birds, which return to Palestine every spring with suddenness and regularity.

l) Jeremiah implies that the scribes have falsified the traditional body of divine directions respecting religious practices.

to blush. Therefore they shall fall with the fallen; in the time of their visitation they shall stumble, says the LORD.

¹³When I would gather them, says the LORD, there are no grapes on the vines, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are dried up,^m and what I gave them has eluded them. ¹⁴Why do we remain seated? Assemble yourselves! Let us go into fortified cities and perish there! For the LORD our God has marked us for doom and has given us a poisonous drink^a because we have sinned against the LORD. ¹⁵We looked for peace, but no encouragement came; for a time of healing, but look, defeat. ¹⁶The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan; at the sound of the neighing of their stallions the whole land trembles. They come and devour the land and all that it produces, the city and those dwelling in it. ¹⁷For see, I am sending among you serpents, adders, that cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you, says the LORD.

¹⁸My sorrow is uncontrollable! My heart is pained within Me! ¹⁹Observe the cry of the daughter of My people from a distant land,^o "Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not in her?" Why have they provoked Me with their graven images and with foreign idols? ²⁰The harvest^p is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.^q ²¹For the hurt of the daughter of My people I am hurt;^r I mourn, and confusion has overwhelmed Me.^s ²²Is there no balm in Gilead?^t Is there no physician? Why, then, has the health of the daughter of My people not been restored?

608-597 B.C.

9 OH, THAT MY HEAD WERE WATERS
and my eyes a fountain of tears, so

that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

²Oh, that I had in the desert a lodging place for wayfarers,^u so that I might leave My people and go from them. For they are all adulterers, an assembly of deceivers. ³They bend their tongue like a bow,^v so that falsehood and not truth have grown strong in the land;^w for they proceed from evil to evil; consequently, they do not know Me, says the LORD. ⁴Let every man watch his neighbor and place no trust in any brother; for every brother is a supplanter and every neighbor goes about gossiping. ⁵Every one deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongues to speak falsely; they commit iniquity and twist truth unto weariness. ⁶Here injury lives on injury and deceit on deceit, on account of which they refuse to know Me, says the LORD.

⁷Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Take notice! I will smelt^x them and assay them; for what can I do because of the daughter of My people? ⁸Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each one speaks peaceably to his neighbor, but in his heart he devises an ambush for him. ⁹Shall I not punish them for these things? says the LORD, and shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?

¹⁰For the mountains will I take up weeping and wailing, and a dirge for the pastures of the desert,^y because they are burned up, so that no man passes through, neither is the lowing of cattle heard; both the fowls of the air and the beasts have fled and are gone.

¹¹I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a lair of night-dogs;^z and I will

m) The people are like a tree with worthless fruit on it.

n) The name of the herb "rosh" which yields some extremely bitter fruit or extract [Lam. 3:5, 19]; gall, hile, figure of something very bitter; so they blame God for their misfortune.

o) The people in exile are complaining bitterly that the LORD has forsaken them.

p) The "harvest" lasted from April to June.

q) The "summer" was the period of "ingathering of summer fruits." If the harvest failed, the people might still look forward to the fruit season; but if the fruit, too, failed, famine stared them in the face. r) "Shattered" mentally, prostrated by grief.

s) Referring to the drab and squalid attire and appearance of a mourner in the East [II Sam. 19:24; Esther 4:1].

t) Mountain range or hill country east of Jordan, noted for its balsam and famous physicians.

u) During the reign of Jehoiaikim — where caravans stop, either in the open air or under a roof.

v) Aim darts toward the innocent [Psalm 64:3-5].

w) Those in authority abuse their power and position.

x) Figure for purifying by severe discipline: "refine" in Jer. 6:29 and in Zech. 13:9; "purge away" in Isa. 1:25; "tried" in Psalm 66:10.

y) Literally, "a driving place" for cattle; hence, "uncultivated pasture ground."

z) See ch. 9:12; 49:33; 51:37. Packs of night-dogs still haunt deserted cities in Syria.

make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.

¹²Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? ¹³The LORD says: Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them^a and have not obeyed My voice or walked according to it; ¹⁴but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them. ¹⁵Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Observe! I will feed this people with wormwood and give them poisonous water to drink. ¹⁶I will scatter them among the nations, whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them.

¹⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider and call for the mourning women^b to come, and send for skilful women to hasten hither; ¹⁸let them hasten and take up a lamentation for us; let our eyes run down with tears, and our eyelids gush with waters. ¹⁹For a mournful song is heard in Zion, "How ruined we are! We are utterly ashamed, because we have forsaken the land, and they have overthrown our dwellings." ²⁰Hear, O women, the word of the LORD, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth! Teach your daughters a lamentation, and each to her neighbor a dirge. ²¹For death has come up into our windows; it is entered into our palaces, cutting off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares. ²²Speak! Thus says the LORD: The corpses of men shall fall like manure upon the open field, like cut grain after the reaper, and none shall gather them.

²³Thus says the LORD: Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man^c boast in his strength, let not the rich man boast in his riches; ²⁴but let the one who glories boast in this, that he understands and knows^d Me, that I am the LORD who practices loving-kindness, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these I delight, says the LORD.

²⁵Note! The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will punish all these circumcised who are still uncircumcised^e — ²⁶Egypt, Judah, Edom, the children of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert, that clipped^f the corners of their hair; for all these nations are uncircumcised,^g but all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. 597 B.C.

10 HEAR THE WORD WHICH THE LORD is speaking to you, O house of Israel! ²Thus says the LORD: Do not learn the way of the nations nor be terrified by the signs of the heavens,^h because the nations are terrified by them. ³For the customs of the peoples are false. A tree from the forest is cut down and fashioned with an axe by the hands of the craftsmen. ⁴They beautify it with gold and silver; they further fasten it with hammer and nails so that it cannot move. ⁵Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber garden; they cannot speak; they must be carried, for they cannot march. Do not fear them, for they can do no evil; neither do they have the power to do good.

⁶Where is any like Thee, O LORD? Thou art great, and Thy name is great in power. ⁷Who should not revere Thee, O King of the nations, for toward Thee itⁱ is befitting; for among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is none like Thee. ⁸They^j are both stupid and foolish; the instruction^k of idols is

a) Alluding particularly to Deut. 4:8, 44.

b) Acting as professional mourners, they recite from memory or extemporize for the occasion, poetry, with a weird haunting effect, which extolls the virtues of the deceased and bewails his loss.

c) "Wise . . . mighty . . . rich" — the three classes that might expect to defend and preserve themselves and their city in times of national disaster.

d) The former refers to the intellect, the latter to the emotions.

e) Literally, "with a foreskin." The ungodly Jews are circumcised physically, but are equally in need of the spiritual circumcision [ch. 4:4].

f) See ch. 25:23, 49:32. Certain Arab tribes shaved their hair off their temples, contrary to Jewish practice [Lev. 19:27]. g) Physically.

h) Extraordinary celestial appearances, such as eclipses and comets. i) Adoration.

j) Idolatrous nations. k) Moral education [Prov. 4:1, 13; 8:10, 33; 13:1].

wooden!¹ ⁹Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. They are the work of craftsmen and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is scarlet and purple; they are all the work of skilled men. ¹⁰But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God, the everlasting King.^m At his wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure His indignation.

¹¹Thus^a shall you say to them, "The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

¹²It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding stretched out the heavens.

¹³When He utters His voice,^o there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, and He brings forth the wind from His storehouses.^p ¹⁴Every man is dull-hearted and without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven images, for his images are false; there is no life in them.

¹⁵They are worthless, a work of mockery; at the time of their punishment they will perish. ¹⁶Not like these is He who is Jacob's portion; for He is the Creator of all things; and Israel is the tribe of His inheritance.^q The LORD of hosts is His name.

¹⁷Gather up your bundle from the ground,^r O you who live under the siege, ¹⁸for thus says the LORD: Take note! I am at this time flinging out the inhabitants of the land, and I will distress them so that they may feel it.

¹⁹Woe^s is me because of my hurt! My wound is grievous; but I said, "Surely this is my sickness and I will bear it." ²⁰My tent is destroyed, and all my cords are broken; my children

are gone forth from me, and they are not; there is none to stretch forth my tent again, and to set up my curtains.^t ²¹For the shepherds^u are thoughtless and do not search for the LORD; therefore they have not prospered, and their whole flock is scattered. ²²Listen! A new flash! Look: A great commotion is coming from the land of the north, to make the cities of Judah a desolation, a lair of night-dogs.

²³I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.^v ²⁴Correct me, O LORD, but justly; not in Thy anger, lest Thou render me too insignificant.^w ²⁵Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations which do not know Thee, and upon the peoples that have not called on Thy name; for they have devoured Jacob and consumed him and have laid waste his habitation.

620 B.C.

11 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH FROM THE LORD: ²Hear the words of this covenant, and announce them to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³You shall say to them, So says the LORD God of Israel: Cursed be the man who does not listen to the words of this covenant,^x ⁴which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace,^y saying, Listen to My voice, and do all that I command you; then you shall be My people, and I will be your God, ⁵in order that I may fulfill the agreement I made with your fathers, to give to them a land flowing with milk and honey, as on this day. Then I answered and said, "Amen,"^z O LORD."

⁶Then the LORD said to me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem:

1) Wooden as the idols are; no better than the idol itself. Idolatry is destitute of moral and spiritual force. m) Cf. II Chron. 15:3; Ps. 10:16; 42:2.

n) This verse is written in Aramaic, which the exiled Hebrews acquired and continued using after their return. o) Thunder [Ps. 18:14; 29:3-9].

p) Ps. 135:7, effects of the thunderstorm; man is dumb before it. q) See Ps. 16:5.

r) In preparation for going into exile.

s) The community in vss. 19, 20 is personified, dramatically bewailing its fate.

t) My tent-hangings [ch. 4:20]. u) Figure of rulers, as in ch. 2:8; 3:15; 23:1, etc.

v) See Prov. 16:9.

w) See ch. 29:6; 30:19; "Be few." "Lest Thou rub me out," Martin Luther put it. As in Isa. 40, man stands here in the presence of His sovereign God, of whom and to whom are all things.

x) See Deut. 11:28; 27:26; 28:13; 29:9.

y) Furnace in which iron is smelted—figure of severe suffering [Deut. 4:20; I Kings 8:51].

z) "Let it be so," or "so be it."

Listen to the words of this covenant and do them. ⁷For I earnestly admonished your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising up early^a and admonishing, saying, Obey My voice. ⁸Yet they neither obeyed nor inclined their ear, but every one walked in the stubbornness of his own evil heart; consequently, I brought^b upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but which they did not observe.

^cImmediately after 621 B.C.

⁹Again the LORD said to me: There is a conspiracy among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰They have returned to the iniquities of their fathers who refused to hear My words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their fathers. ¹¹Therefore, thus says the LORD: Observe, I am bringing calamity upon them which they cannot escape; though they shall cry to Me, I will not listen to them.^c ¹²Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall go and cry out to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they cannot save them in the time of their calamity. ¹³For your gods have become as numerous as your cities, O Judah; and as numerous as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars which you built to the shameful thing,^d altars to burn incense to Baal.

¹⁴Therefore do not pray in behalf of this people, or lift up a cry or a prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble. ¹⁵What right has my beloved^e in my house when she has committed wicked acts? Can vows and sacrificial flesh remove wickedness from you? Can you then rejoice? ¹⁶"A green olive tree, fair, with goodly fruit," the LORD once

called you; but at the roaring^f of a great tempest He will set fire to it and consume its branches.^g ¹⁷For the LORD of hosts, who planted you, has threatened adversity against you, because of the great evil which the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, goading Me by burning incense to Baal.

¹⁸The LORD revealed it to me and I knew it; then He showed me their actions. ¹⁹But I was like a pet^h lamb led to the slaughter. I did not know that they had concocted plots against me, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its sap,ⁱ and let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name may be remembered no more." ²⁰But, O LORD of hosts, who judgest rightly, who tests^j the reins^k and heart,^l let me see Thy vengeance on them; for to Thee have I committed my case. ²¹Therefore, thus says the LORD about the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, saying, "Stop prophesying in the name of the LORD, or you will die by our hand" — ²²therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: See, I will punish them; the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine, ²³and there shall be no remnant left of them. For I will bring calamity upon the men of Anathoth in the year of their punishment.

12 **RIGHTEOUS ART THOU, O LORD,** when I complain to Thee; yet will I argue with Thee about justice. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all who are very treacherous flourish? ²Thou plantest them, and they sprout; they grow^m and bring forth fruit; Thou art near in their mouth but far from their inmost selves. ³Thou, O LORD, knowest me; Thou seest me and triest my heart toward Thee. Pull them out like sheep

a) Giving it special attention. b) See the treatise in Deut. 8:19; 28:15 ff.

c) The essence of prayer is friendly conversation — impossible without love. d) Baal [ch. 3:24]. e) Judah [ch. 12:7]. f) As the rising of the tempest.

g) See Ps. 52:8; Hosea 14:6; during a great storm the olive tree was struck suddenly by lightning, sadly marring its beauty. h) "Tame" — trustful, unsuspecting.

i) Figure for a person in the full strength and vigor of life.

j) He is cognizant of man's emotions and affections, as well as of his thoughts and purposes [see ch. 17:10; 20:12; Ps. 7:9; 26:2].

k) Kidneys — innermost self, the seat of "feeling" [Prov. 23:16; Ps. 16:7; 73:21; Job 19:27]. l) The "heart," the seat of "understanding" [Prov. 15:14; 20:5]. m) Ps. 37:35.

for the slaughter, and mark them for the day of butchering.^o ⁴How long will the land mourn and the grass of every green field wither? For the wickedness of these that dwell in it, the beast and the bird are swept away, because they say, "He will not see our ending."^p

⁵If you have raced with the footmen and they have worn you out, how then will you compete with horses? And if in a land of peace you are not secure, what will you do in the Jordan jungle?^q ⁶For even your brothers and the house of your father, even they have treated you treacherously; they pursue you with an alarm cry; do not believe them, though they speak flattering words to you.

⁷I have forsaken My house, I have cast off My heritage; I have given the beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies. ⁸My heritage has become to Me like a lion^r in the forest; she utters her voice against Me; therefore I consider her hateful. ⁹Is^s My heritage to Me like a speckled bird of prey? Are the birds of prey against her all around?^t ¹Go, assemble all the beasts of the field; bring them to devour.^u

¹⁰Many shepherds^v have laid waste My vineyard; they have trampled underfoot My portion; they have made My pleasant portion a forlorn wilderness.

¹¹They have made it a waste; solitary, it wails to Me.^w The whole land is made desolate, but no man lays it to heart.^x ¹²Upon all the bare heights in the wilderness^y the spoilers are come; for the sword of the LORD has consumed from one end of the earth to the other; no flesh has peace. ¹³They have sown wheat but have reaped thorns; they have uselessly exhausted themselves, but they profit nothing; and they shall be ashamed of their harvests

because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

¹⁴Thus says the LORD regarding all My evil neighbors who touch the inheritance which I have given My people Israel to inherit: Observe, I will pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck the house of Judah from the midst of them. ¹⁵And after I have plucked them up, I will return and have compassion on them, and I will bring back each to his inheritance and each to his land. ¹⁶And it shall be, if they will diligently learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, "As the LORD lives," even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of My people. ¹⁷But if they will not listen, then I will utterly uproot that nation and destroy it, says the LORD.

605 B.C.

13 **THUS THE LORD SPOKE TO ME:** Go and buy a linen waistcloth, put it on your loins, and do not dip it in water. ²So I bought the waistcloth according to the word of the LORD and put it on my loins. ³Then the word of the LORD came to me a second time: ⁴Take the waistcloth that you have bought, which is upon your loins, and arise, go to Euphrates,^z and bury it there in a cleft of the rock. ⁵So I went and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded. ⁶After many days the LORD said to me: Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the waistcloth from the place where I commanded you to hide it. ⁷Then I went to Euphrates and digged and took the waistcloth from the place where I had buried it. And look, the waistcloth was ruined;^a it was good for nothing. ⁸Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁹Thus says the LORD: Just so I will ruin the pride of Judah and the excessive pride of

o) As though they were victims for sacrifice.

p) Not see his predictions fulfilled; they will outlive him, or put him out of the way.

q) The luxuriant growth of bushes and thick vegetation fringing the banks of the Jordan, infested with lions and other wild beasts, consequently dangerous to enter.

r) Unruly, uncontrollable, My open enemy.

s) A bird of unusual plumage which the other birds of the same kind attack.

t) Questions of astonishment, but true. u) Beasts of prey. v) Figure of invaders [ch. 6:3].

w) As a trouble resting upon Me.

x) No one has considered what would be the end of the policy which Judah has been pursuing.

y) The uncultivated pasture lands.

z) "Perath" means the Euphrates River when it has the article. Here it probably refers to "Parah," a town about three miles northeast of Anathoth [Josh. 18:23], located in a wild and rocky valley watered by a copious spring, Wady Fara, which runs into the Wady Kelt flowing down past Jericho into the Jordan.

a) It had been in a moist place, so the water had penetrated.

Jerusalem. ¹⁰This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who stubbornly follow their own hearts and have gone after other gods to serve them and to worship them, shall be like this waistcloth, which is good for nothing. ¹¹Just as the waistcloth cleaves to the loins of a man, so I made to cleave to Me all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah, says the LORD, that they might be for Me a people, a name, and a glory; but they would not listen.

¹²Now you shall speak to them this word: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, Every jar shall be filled with wine, and they will say to you, "Do we not know full well that every jar is filled with wine?" ¹³Then you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD: Behold, I will fill with drunkenness^b all the inhabitants of this land, the kings who sit on the throne of David, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁴And I will dash^c them one against another, the fathers and sons, says the LORD. I will not pity or spare or have compassion, that I should not destroy them.

¹⁵Listen and give ear; be not proud,^d because the LORD has spoken. ¹⁶Give glory to the LORD your God^e before He brings darkness, before your feet stumble on the twilight mountains and while you hope for light. He turns it into gloom and makes it gross darkness. ¹⁷But if you will not hear it, my soul will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes shall weep bitterly and run with tears, because the flock of the LORD has been taken captive. ¹⁸Say to the king and to the queen mother, "Take a lowly seat, for your crown of beauty^f has been removed from your head."

¹⁹The cities of the South^g are shut up, with none to open them. All Judah is carried into captivity, completely taken into exile. ²⁰Raise your eyes and see those coming from the North.^h

Where is the flock that was given you, your beautiful flock? ²¹What will you say when they set as head over you those whom you trained to be friends with you? ²²Will not pangs take hold of you, like those of a woman in labor? ²³And if you say in your heart, "Why have these things come upon me?" it is for the greatness of your iniquity that your skirts are lifted and your heels are rudely exposed. ²⁴Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do no good who are accustomed to do evil. ²⁵I will scatter you like chaff driven by the desert wind. ²⁶This is your lot, the portion I have measured out to you, says the LORD, because you have forgotten Me and have trusted in falsehoods. ²⁷Also I, on My part, will strip off your skirts up to your face and your nakedness will be exposed. ²⁸I have seen your detestable behavior, your adulteries and lustful cries, your lewd harlotries on the foothills in the fields. Woe to you, O Jerusalem! How long will it be before you are made clean?

603 B.C.

14 THE WORD OF THE LORD WHICH came to Jeremiah concerning the drought: ²Judah mourns and her gatesⁱ languish; her people are mourning on the ground; the cry of Jerusalem goes up. ³Her noblemen send their servants for water; they come to the wells; they find no water; they return with their vessels empty; they are disappointed^k and confounded and cover their heads.^l ⁴Because of the ground they are frustrated, since there is no rain on the land; the plowmen are ashamed; they cover their heads. ⁵Even the hind in the field forsakes her newborn calf because there is no grass. ⁶The wild asses stand on bare heights; they pant for air like jackals; their eyes fail^m because there is no vegetation.

b) Mental paralysis and bewilderment, rendering man helpless in the face of a great calamity. c) Ch. 25:15-18; Ps. 60:3; Isa. 51:17. d) Refusing to listen to the LORD's warnings.

e) Recognize His majesty by obeying His words. f) "Headdress."

g) "The Negeb," a particular district in southern Judah. h) See ch. 4:6; 6:1, 22.

i) "You asked for it," we remark today [ch. 2:36; 4:30; Ezek. 23:22].

j) Place of public discourses [Ruth 4:1, 2, 11]. k) See Job 4:20; Joel 1:11. l) A sign of grief.

m) Looking in vain for food [Job 11:20; Lam. 4:17].

⁷Though our iniquities testify against us,^a do it,^o O LORD, for Thy name's sake; for our backslidings are many; against Thee have we sinned. ⁸O Thou Hope of Israel, its Savior in time of adversity, why shouldst Thou be like a stranger in the land, as a traveling man who turns aside for a night?^p ⁹Why shouldst Thou be like a man surprised, like a strong man^q who cannot save? Yet Thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not.

¹⁰Thus says the LORD concerning this people: They have loved to wander thus; they have not curbed their feet; therefore the LORD does not accept them; now He will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.^r

¹¹Then the LORD said to me: Do not even pray for the prosperity of this people. ¹²When they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt offering and oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.^s

¹³Then I said, "Alas, Lord God: see, the prophets tell them, 'You shall not see the sword, neither shall you experience famine, but I will give you assured peace' in this place."^t ¹⁴The LORD said to me: The prophets are prophesying lies in My name; I did not send them, neither did I command them, nor did I speak to them. They are prophesying to you a deceitful vision, a worthless divination, and the distortion of their own minds.^u ¹⁵Therefore, thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name: Although I did not send them, yet they say, "Sword and famine shall not come on this land." By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed,¹⁰ and the people to whom they prophesy shall be flung out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword, with no one to bury

them, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out their wickedness upon them.

¹⁷You shall pronounce this word to them: Let my eyes run with tears night and day, and let them not cease; for the virgin daughter of my people is smitten with a great breach, with a very ugly wound. ¹⁸If I go forth into the field, look, these slain by the sword! And if I enter into the city, note the diseases of famine.^v Both prophet and priest roam in the land,^w not knowing what to do.^x ¹⁹Hast Thou utterly rejected Judah? Does Thy soul despise Zion? Why then hast Thou smitten us so that there is no healing for us? We expected peace, but no good came; a time of healing, but behold, dismay! ²⁰We confess^y our wickedness, O LORD, and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against Thee! ²¹For Thy name's sake do not reject the throne of Thy glory; remember, and do not break Thy covenant with us.^z ²²Are there any among the fallen gods^a of the nations that can make rain? Or can the heavens give copious showers? Art Thou not He, the LORD our God? We wait for Thee, for Thou doest all these things.

603 B.C.

15 THEN THE LORD SAID TO ME, Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind would not incline toward this people. Send them out of My sight, and let them go forth! ²When they say to you, "Where shall we go?" you shall tell them, Thus says the LORD: Those who are for death,^b to death; and those who are for the sword, to the sword; and those who are for famine, to famine; and those who are for captivity, to captivity. ³I will appoint over them four destroyers, says the LORD: the sword to slay, the dogs to tear, the fowls of the heavens and the beasts of

a) Like Moses and Nehemiah, pleading for their ill-behaving people, Jeremiah identifies himself with those who deserve punishment. It is not "they" and "them" but "we" and "us."

o) I Kings 8:32, 39; Ezek. 20:9, 14, 22. p) As a passing visitor or traveler.

q) A warrior. Contrast ch. 20:11; Zeph. 3:17. r) A quotation from Hosea 8:13.

s) Threefold punishment found frequently in the roll of Jeremiah.

t) "Peace of stability" or "faithfulness." u) See ch. 23:16, 26, 32.

v) Jeremiah imagines himself to be witnessing the approaching invasion, siege, and exile.

w) Degradation from an honorable office. x) See ch. 15:14; 17:4. y) See ch. 3:13; Isa. 59:12.

z) Jeremiah, priest and prophet, puts himself, as did Jesus, in the place of his sinful people.

a) Unreal gods [ch. 2:5; 8:19]. b) By pestilence [ch. 18:21].

the earth to devour and to destroy. ⁴And I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, because of what Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.^c ⁵For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem? Or who will commiserate you? Or who will turn aside to inquire of your welfare? ⁶You have forsaken Me, says the LORD. You keep on going backward; therefore I have stretched out My hand against you and destroyed you; I am weary of grieving. ⁷I have sifted them with a sifting sieve^d in the gates of the land; I am broken-hearted, for I have destroyed My people, because they did not return from their ways. ⁸I have increased the number of your widows more than the sands of the sea; I have brought against the mothers of young men^e a devastation at noonday; I have caused agitation and dismay to fall suddenly upon them. ⁹She who bore seven has languished; her soul has expired;^f her sun^g has gone down while it was still day. She has been put to shame and disgraced. And the remainder of them I will give to the sword before their enemies, says the LORD.

¹⁰Woe is me, my mother, that you have borne me, a man of strife and contention to the whole earth! I have lent no money, nor have I borrowed any money, yet they all curse me.^h

¹¹The LORD said: I will leave you some who shall prosper again, and I will help you among the enemy in the time of trouble and in the hour of calamity. ¹²Can one break iron, iron from the north, and bronze?ⁱ ¹³Your wealth and your treasures will I give

for spoil, without price, for all your sins, throughout all your territory. ¹⁴And I will make you serve your enemies in a land which you do not know; for a fire is kindled in My anger^j which shall burn for ever.

¹⁵Thou knowest, O LORD, remember me and visit me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. Take me not away in Thy patience;^k know that for Thy sake I suffer reproach.

¹⁶Thy words were found, and I ate them,^l and Thy words were to me a joy and a rejoicing of my heart; for I bear Thy name, O LORD, God of hosts.

¹⁷I did not sit in the assembly of merrymakers, nor did I rejoice; because of Thy hand^m I have sat alone; for Thou hast filled me with indignation.

¹⁸Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Wilt Thou be to me like a deceitful brook, as waters that dry up?

¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD: If you return, then will I restore you, and you shall stand before Me.ⁿ If you bring out the precious from the worthless,^o you shall be My mouth.^p They shall return to you, but you shall not return to them,^q and I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze. They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you; for I am with you to save you and to deliver you, says the LORD. ²¹I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked and redeem you from the grip of the tyrants.

604-597 B.C.

16 THEN^q THE WORD OF THE LORD came to me: ²You must not take a wife, you must not have sons and

c) Manasseh had repented and was forgiven, but the consequences of his sin were plaguing the people.

d) A wooden fork about six feet long with five or six prongs, bound together by fresh hide; when the hide shrinks, it forms a tight band. e) The young warriors slain in battle.

f) Mental collapse at the death of her sons in battle; see Job 11:20.

g) The brightness of her home. h) His unpopularity was due to his predictions of coming disaster.

i) Can anything avail to resist the power of the Chaldeans, the "Northern Colossus"?

j) So Deut. 32:22.

k) Through Thy mercy towards my enemies. The prophet is confident that the Babylonians will effect their purpose.

l) I found Thy word and assimilated it, made it part of myself; so did Ezekiel [2:8-3:3], eating a written scroll; so also John [Rev. 10:9, 10].

m) The grasp of the Lord's hand, seizing him and bringing him into a prophetic accord [I Kings 18:46; II Kings 3:15; Isaiah 8:11; Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22].

n) Be His servant. If Jeremiah turns back from his distrust and despair, the LORD will co-operate with him and help him again to resume his place as His minister.

o) Like a refiner, separating the pure and divine from the slag of earthly passion and weakness.

p) As My spokesman or prophet [Ex. 4:16], Aaron is called Moses' mouth.

q) During the latter half of Jehoiakim's reign.

daughters in this place. ³For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and the daughters, who are born in this place and concerning the mothers who bore them and the fathers who begot them in this land: ⁴They shall die of the pestilence;^r they shall not be mourned, neither shall they be buried; they shall be as fertilizer on the topsoil. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be food for the birds of the air and for the beasts of the field.

⁵For thus says the LORD: Do not enter the house of grief, neither go to lament, nor to comfort them; for I have withdrawn My good will from this people, says the LORD, even kindness and compassion. ⁶Both great and small shall die in this land; they shall not be buried; no one shall mourn^s for them, or gash himself, or make himself bald^t for them. ⁷No one shall break bread for the mourner or comfort him for the dead; neither shall they give him the cup of consolation to drink for his father or his mother.^u ⁸You shall not enter the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink. ⁹For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Observe! I will banish from this place before your eyes and in your days the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

¹⁰Now, when you tell this people all these words, and they ask you, "Why has the LORD decreed all this great evil against us? What is our crime? What sin have we committed against the LORD, our God?" ¹¹then you shall tell them: "Because your fathers forsook Me, says the LORD, because they followed after foreign gods, serving and worshiping them; because they forsook Me and did not keep My teaching; ¹²and because you have done worse than your fathers; for look, every one of you is following your own

stubborn, evil mind, refusing to listen to Me. ¹³So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, who will grant you no favor." ¹⁴Therefore, take notice, the days are coming, says the LORD, when it shall no more be said, "As the LORD lives, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt," ¹⁵but, "As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the north country, and from all the countries whither He had driven them." For I will bring them back into their own land that I gave to their fathers.

¹⁶Behold, I will send many fishers, says the LORD, and they shall catch them; and afterwards I will send many hunters, and they shall hunt them^v out of every mountain and high hill and cleft of the rocks. ¹⁷For My eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from Me, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes. ¹⁸And I will double the recompense of their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land with the dead bodies of their detestable idols^w and have filled My heritage with their abominations. ¹⁹O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the hour of trouble, to Thee shall nations come from the ends of the earth, and they shall say, "Our fathers got hold of unmitigated lies, vain and without profit."^x ²⁰Can a man make for himself gods, when they are not gods?^y ²¹Therefore, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know My hand and My authority, and they shall know that My name is the LORD.

597 B.C.

17 THE SIN OF JUDAH IS WRITTEN with a pen of iron;^z with the point of a diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart and on the horns of their altars, ²while their chil-

^r) "Deaths of sickness."

^s) With the loud and piercing cries of grief with which in the East a death is bewailed [Mark 5:38]. ^t) Marks of mourning [Amos 8:10; Micah 1:16].

^u) Allusion to the custom, when the first outbreak of grief had subsided, the friends of the mourners would endeavor to comfort them and induce them to take food [II Sam. 3:35; 12:17].

^v) Those who forsake God expose themselves to fake leaders and to superstition to take His place in life. ^w) Called "dead bodies" in contempt [Lev. 26:30]. ^x) Ch. 2:8, 11; Isa. 44:9, 10.

^y) Either God is worshiped or a god is found or made to which to bow.

^z) Used for incising indelible characters on hard surface [Job 19:24].

dren remember their altars and their Asherim,^a by the spreading trees^b upon the high hills, ³on the mountains in the field. Your wealth and all your treasure I will give for spoil as the price of your sin throughout all your territories. ⁴You shall abandon your heritage which I gave you, and I will make you serve your enemies in a land which you do not know. You have kindled My wrath into a fire that will burn forever.

⁵Thus says the LORD: Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, whose heart departs from the LORD. ⁶He is like a juniper tree^c in a desert and shall not be aware when good comes; he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, an uninhabited salt land. ⁷Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose confidence is the LORD. ⁸He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and it does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, for it does not fail to yield fruit. ⁹The heart is deceitful above all things and utterly corrupt; who can know it? ¹⁰I the LORD search the heart and test the inner self to give to everyone according to his ways, in accordance with the fruit of his actions. ¹¹Like a partridge that collects a brood that she did not hatch,^d so is he who unfairly collects riches; in the midst of his days they will forsake him, and at his final end he will be a fool.^e ¹²A glorious throne, on high from the beginning, is the place of our sanctuary! ¹³O LORD, the Hope of Israel, all who forsake Thee shall be put to shame; those who turn aside from Thee shall be written on the ground,^f because they have forsaken the LORD, the Fountain of living waters.^g

¹⁴Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved;

for Thou art my praise, ¹⁵See, they say to me, "Why tarries the word of the LORD? Let it come!"^h ¹⁶I have not urged Thee to send calamity, nor have I desired the woeful day, Thou knowest; that which came out of my lips was known to Thee. ¹⁷Be no terror to me; Thou art my refuge in the day of adversity. ¹⁸Let my persecutors be put to shame, but let me not be put to shame; let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed; bring upon them the day of calamity; destroy them with double destruction.ⁱ

Near 621 B.C.

¹⁹Thus said the LORD to me: Go, and stand in the People's Gate where the kings of Judah enter and go out; in all the gates of Jerusalem say to them: ²⁰"Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter by these gates. ²¹Thus says the LORD: Pay attention for the sake of your lives, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. ²²Do not carry a burden out of your house on the Sabbath or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy as I commanded your fathers. ²³Yet they did not listen or incline their ear, but they stiffened their neck that they might not hear and receive instruction. ²⁴But if you listen to Me, says the LORD, and bring no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy and do no work on it, ²⁵then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall be inhabited forever. ²⁶The people shall come from the cities of Judah and from the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the low land, from the hill country, and from

a) Shame images carved with sexual suggestions [see Judg. 6:25, 26].

b) Often alluded to as places of idolatrous rites [see Deut. 12:2].

c) The dwarf juniper tree, of gloomy and stunted appearance, with its leaves cropped close by wild goats.

d) The partridge lays a large number of eggs which the Arabs eagerly seek for food; hence, the bird often hatches no young. e) Showing himself to be morally and spiritually bankrupt.

f) From which their names will soon be obliterated. g) Ever fresh and never failing [ch. 2:13].

h) A taunting question [Isa. 5:19; Ezek. 12:22].

i) Jeremiah has spoken and done all that the LORD commanded. Why should He abandon him to his foes? He wonders.

the south,¹ bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, oblations and frankincense, bringing thank offerings to the house of the LORD. ²⁷But if you do not listen to Me, to keep the Sabbath day holy, not to bear a burden and not to enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem^k and not be extinguished."

Prior to 605 B.C.

18 THE WORD WHICH CAME TO Jeremiah from the LORD: ²Arise, go down to the potter's house,¹ and there I will help you to understand My words. ³So I went down to the potter's house, and look, he was doing a piece of work on the wheel.^m ⁴The vessel he was making of the clay was misformed in the hands of the potter. So he remade it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. ⁵Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁶O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter did? says the LORD. Take notice, just as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand,ⁿ O house of Israel. ⁷If suddenly I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, to pluck up, to break down, and to destroy it, ⁸and if that nation concerning which I have spoken turns from its evil, then I will feel grieved about the punishment that I planned to apply to it. ⁹And if at any moment I speak concerning a nation or a kingdom, to build and to plant it, ¹⁰and if it does evil in my sight, not listening to My voice, then will I change from the good which I had intended to do to it.^o

¹¹Therefore, now say to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Thus says the LORD: Behold, I am preparing calamity against you and devising a plan against you. Return, I pray you, everyone from his evil way, and amend your ways and your doings."^p ¹²But they say, "There is no use;^q for we will follow after our own schemes, and behave each in accordance with the wilfulness^r of his evil heart." ¹³Therefore, thus says the LORD: Inquire among the nations, who ever heard of anything comparable to this? The virgin Israel has done an exceedingly horrible thing. ¹⁴Does the snow of Lebanon leave the rocks of the field? Or do the cold, flowing streams dry up?^s ¹⁵But My people have forgotten Me; they burn incense to false gods; and they have stumbled in their ways, in the ancient roads,^t and have walked in bypaths, not the highway, ¹⁶making their land a desolation and a perpetual hissing; everyone who passes by it is appalled and shakes his head."^u ¹⁷I will scatter them before the enemy like a hot east wind;^v I will show them my back, not my face, in the day of their calamity.

¹⁸Then they said, "Come, and let us devise schemes against Jeremiah; for direction^w shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet.^x Come, and let us smite him with the tongue,^y and let us not heed any of his words."

¹⁹Give heed to me, O LORD, hear what my opponents say. ²⁰Shall evil be recompensed for good? Yet they have dug a pit for my life. Remember how I stood before Thee to speak good for

j) Three districts of Judah.

k) These words are based on the refrain in the book of Amos [ch. 1:4, 7, 10, 12].

l) "The potter's field" lay just beyond the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem [Zech. 11:13; Matt. 27:10].

m) Hebrew: "on the two [circular] stones" — the lower one was turned by the feet; the upper [on the same vertical axle] supported the clay.

n) A strong assertion of the LORD's absolute power and right over the creatures He makes and the nations He calls into being [cf. Isa. 45:9; Rom. 9:20, 21].

o) The LORD's action is not arbitrary but always in accordance with our behavior toward Him. p) Turn from evil and return to God and goodness [II Kings 17:13; Jer. 7:3].

q) Ch. 2:25. The speakers are not despondent over their state and prospects, but they would silence the troublesome preacher. This language of the Jews marks the last stage of hardened wickedness. r) "Firmness" or "stubbornness" [ch. 13:10; 23:17; Ps. 81:13].

s) The snow of Lebanon never fails; its gushing streams never dry up; a contrast to Israel's fickleness. t) Ch. 6:16. u) "Wagging the head" — in mockery and ridicule.

v) A scorching, suffocating, and destructive wind, which is apt to spring up suddenly with great violence, from the desert on the east or southeast.

w) Direction to the laity what to do on points of ceremonial observance [ch. 8:8].

x) They could not conceive of the day when the state would come to an end and the religious leaders be no longer able to fulfil their various duties [Ezek. 7:26].

y) Bring some serious accusation against him, such as a charge of treason.

them, to turn back Thy anger from them. ²¹Therefore deliver up their children to famine; give them over to the power of the sword,² and let their wives become childless and widowed; let their men meet death by pestilence and their young men be smitten by the sword in battle. ²²Let a cry^a be heard from their houses, when Thou bringest the marauder suddenly upon them! For they have dug a pit to take me and laid snares for my feet. ²³Yet Thou, O LORD, knowest all their scheming to slay me. Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from Thy sight; but let them be made to stumble before Thee; deal Thou with them in the time of Thy indignation.

19 **THUS SAYS THE LORD:** GO AND buy a potter's earthen jar, take some of the elders of the people and some of the older priests,² and go out to the Ben-hinnom Valley close to the entrance of the Potsherd Gate, and there proclaim the message I give you. ³Say, "Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and dwellers of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take note, I am bringing such a calamity upon this place that the ears of every hearer shall tingle.^b ⁴Because the people have abandoned Me and have desecrated this place by burning incense to other gods, which neither they nor their fathers nor the kings of Judah have known, and because they have filled this place with the blood of innocents,^c ⁵and have erected shrines to Baal for burning alive their sons in the fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, a thing that never entered My mind; ⁶therefore, see, the days are coming, says the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth, nor the Ben-hinnom Valley, but the Valley of Slaughter. ⁷I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before

their enemies and by the hands of those seeking their life. I will give their corpses as food for the birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth. ⁸I will make this city an astonishment and a scorn so that every one who passes by will be amazed and hiss because of all its calamities.^d ⁹And I will make the people eat the flesh of their own sons and daughters, and every one shall eat the flesh of his neighbor in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life mistreat them."^e

¹⁰Then you shall break the jar in the sight of the men who go with you, ¹¹and shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: So will I break this people and this city as one breaks a potter's vessel, so that it cannot be repaired. Men shall bury in Topheth because there shall be no other place to bury. ¹²This is how I will treat this place, says the LORD, and its inhabitants, making this city like Topheth. ¹³The houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be as unclean as Topheth — all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven^f and have poured out drink offerings to foreign gods."^g

¹⁴Then Jeremiah left Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, and he stood inside the court of the LORD's house, where he told all the people, ¹⁵"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold I am bringing upon this city and upon all her environs all the calamity that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear My words."

20 **NOW PASHUR THE SON OF IMMER** the priest, who was overseer^h in the LORD's house, heard Jeremiah prophesying this message. ²Then Pashur beat Jeremiah the prophet and put him in the stocks that were in the

2) Literally: "Spill them into the hands of the sword."

a) Such as arises when a city is given over to be sacked.

b) See the expression in I Sam. 3:11; II Kings 21:12. c) See II Kings 21:16; 24:4, of Manasseh.

d) "Plagues" or "blows." e) See Deut. 28:53. f) See II Kings 23:5; Zeph. 1:5.

g) Invariably the LORD gave His people over to the nations whose idols they worshiped. Babylon was guided by astrologers. h) Chief officer or ruler.

upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD.¹ ³The next day Pashur released Jeremiah from the stocks, and Jeremiah said to him, "The LORD's name for you is not Pashur, but Magor-missabib."⁴ For thus says the LORD: Take note, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; they shall fall by the sword of their enemies as you look on. And all Judah I will give into the hand of the king of Babylon, who shall carry them captive to Babylon and shall slay them with the sword. ⁵I will also hand over all the wealth of this city, all its possessions, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hands of their enemies who shall rifle and seize them and cart them off to Babylon. ⁶And you, Pashur, and all who live in your house, shall go into captivity; to Babylon you shall go; there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have prophesied falsely."⁷

⁷Thou didst persuade me, O LORD, and I was persuaded;¹ Thou art stronger than I, and Thou hast prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone ridicules me. ⁸For whenever I speak, I cry out, I must shout, "Violence and spoil!" For the word of the LORD has become to me a reproach and a derision all day long. ⁹If I say, "I will not think of Him or speak in His name again," then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in;^m I cannot continue. ¹⁰For I hear much muttering. Terror is on every side. "Silence him! Let us silence him,"ⁿ all my familiar friends remark, watching for my fall.^o "Perhaps he will be enticed;^p then we shall overcome him and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me as a fear-inspiring warrior. Therefore my perse-

cutors will stumble and not prevail. They shall be greatly ashamed because they have acted unwisely. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹²But, O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous, who sees the heart and the mind, let me see Thy vengeance upon them; for to Thee have I committed my case. ¹³Sing to the LORD; give praise to the LORD. For He has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.^q

¹⁴Cursed be the day when I was born! The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed! ¹⁵Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, saying, "A son is born to you," making him very glad. ¹⁶And let that man be like the cities^r which the LORD crushed without pity; let him hear shrieks^s at dawn and the war cry at noon, ¹⁷because he did not kill me in the womb so that my mother should have been my grave and her womb for ever great. ¹⁸Why did I come forth from the womb to see toil and sorrow and spend my days in shame?

588 B.C.

21 THE MESSAGE THAT CAME TO Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Zedekiah sent Pashur the son of Malchiah and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, saying, ²"Inquire, I pray you, of the LORD for us, because Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, is making war on us.^t Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wondrous works and will force him to retreat."

³But Jeremiah said to them, ⁴"This shall you say to Zedekiah: 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Observe, I will turn back the weapons of war which are in your hands, with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and against the Babylonians who are besieging you outside the walls, and I will gather them in the midst of this city. ⁵Also, I Myself will

i) The north gate of the inner court of the temple.

j) "Terror on every side." Same expression in ch. 46:5; Lam. 2:22.

k) Pashur and his friends pursued a policy directly opposite to Jeremiah's - that fear of the Babylonians was groundless.

l) Overpowered by the LORD to become his prophet and induced into a position fraught with vexations and disappointments, which he never anticipated. m) "Enduring."

n) Report him to authorities for treason.

o) "Limping" - halting; figure for "fatal step," "ruin" [cf. Ps. 35:15; 38:17].

p) Saying an unguarded word, that might be construed as treason. q) A jubilant thanksgiving.

r) Sodom and Gomorrah. s) Of his household and friends, attacked by the foe.

t) When the siege had just begun.

fight against you with an outstretched hand, with a strong arm, in anger, in fury, and in great indignation. ⁶I will strike down the dwellers of this city, both man and beast; they shall die of a great pestilence." ⁷Afterwards, says the LORD, I will deliver Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his servants and the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hands of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their lives. He shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not spare nor have pity or compassion on them."

⁸"And to this people you shall say, 'Thus says the LORD: See, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.' ⁹Any one remaining in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you, shall live and shall have his life as a prize of war." ¹⁰For I have set My face against this city for evil and not for good, says the LORD. It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."

¹¹"And to the house of the king of Judah say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, ¹²O house of David! Thus says the LORD: Practice judgment in the morning, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed, lest My indignation go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of your evil doings.' ¹³Look, I am against you, O mistress^x of the valley, O rock of the plain, says the LORD; you who say, 'Who shall come down upon us? Or who shall push into our lairs?' ¹⁴I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, says

the LORD; I will kindle a fire in her forest,^z and it shall consume all that is around her."

608 B.C.

22 ¹THUS SAYS THE LORD: GO DOWN^a to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, ²"Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, who is sitting upon the throne of David, you, your servants, and your people who enter these gates. ³Thus says the LORD: Execute right and justice. Deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do neither wrong nor violence to the immigrant, the fatherless, or the widow; neither shed innocent blood in this place. ⁴For if you really obey this word, then shall there enter the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, their servants, and their people. ⁵But if you will not hear these words, I swear by Myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a ruin.

⁶"For thus says the LORD regarding the house of the king of Judah: As Gilead^b you are to me, as the summit of Lebanon. Yet I will certainly make you a wilderness, an uninhabited city. ⁷I will prepare destroyers against you, every one with his weapons; and they shall cut down your choice cedars and cast them into the fire. ⁸Many nations shall pass by this city and will say to one another, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this great city?' ⁹And they will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God and worshiped other gods and served them.'"

609 B.C.

¹⁰Weep not for the dead,^c nor commiserate him; but weep sorely for him who goes away,^d for he shall never return to see his native country again.

u) How would we feel toward a pastor who told us that for our sins we would be defeated in war? v) See Deut. 30:15.

w) He will escape with it [cf. ch. 38:2; 39:18]. The only way of escape was to submit to God's instrument of judgment. This apparently unpatriotic advice later led to Jeremiah's arrest, imprisonment, and demand for his death [ch. 37:13-16].

x) The feminine gender denotes the personification of the community.

y) Place of security, like lions in their forest homes.

z) The queen city, Jerusalem, is figured as a forest [see Isa. 9:18, of Israel], destroyed by a sudden conflagration. a) From the temple mount, located on the top of Zion, to the palace.

b) Named as examples of finely wooded regions.

c) Josiah, slain by Pharaoh Necho at the battle of Megiddo, 609 B.C. [II Kings 23:29].

d) Jehoahaz succeeded his father Josiah, but after a reign of three months, 609 B.C. he was taken captive by Pharaoh Necho and carried into Egypt, where he died [II Kings 23:31-35].

¹¹For thus says the LORD about Shallum^e the son of Josiah, king of Judah, who reigned instead of Josiah his father, who went forth out of this place: He shall return here no more. ¹²Also, he shall die in the place where you have carried him into exile; he shall never see this land again.

608 B.C.

¹³Woe to him^f who builds his palace by unfairness and his roof chambers^g by injustice; who forces his neighbor to work for nothing and does not give him his wages; ¹⁴who says, "I will build myself a wide house and spacious roof chambers," and cuts out windows for it, paneling it with cedar and painting it with vermilion.^h ¹⁵Will you reign, because you compete with cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justly and rightly? Then it was well with him. ¹⁶He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is it not this to know Me? says the LORD. ¹⁷But you have set your eyes and your heart only upon dishonest gain, even shedding innocent blood, and practicing oppression and violence.

¹⁸Therefore, thus says the LORD about Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: They shall not lament for him, saying, "Ah, my brother!" or "Ah, sister!" They shall not lament for him, saying, "Ah, master!" or "Ah, his majesty!"ⁱ ¹⁹He shall be buried with the burial of a donkey, dragged along and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

597 B.C.

²⁰Go up to Lebanon, cry out, and lift up your voice in Bashan. Cry from Abarim,^j for all your lovers^k are destroyed. ²¹I spoke to you in your prosperity. You said, "I will not listen." This has been your way since you were

young; you have not listened to My voice. ²²All your leaders the wind shall consume, and your lovers shall go in captivity; then you will be ashamed and confused because of all your wickedness. ²³O inhabitress of Lebanon, the one nestling among the cedars,^l how you will groan when pangs come upon you, like the pain of a woman in labor! ²⁴As I live, says the LORD, though Coniah^m the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet upon My right hand, yet would I pluck you from there. ²⁵And I will hand you over to these seeking your life, to the men whom you are dreading, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and the Chaldeans. ²⁶I will hurl you and your motherⁿ who bore you, into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. ²⁷But to the land to which their soul yearns to return, they shall not return.

²⁸Is this man Coniah a despised, broken vessel?^o Is he a vessel in which no one delights?^p Why then are he and his offspring hurled and cast into an unknown land? ²⁹O land, land, land! hear the word of the LORD! ³⁰Thus says the LORD: Register this man as childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days; for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting upon the throne of David and ruling again in Judah.

593 B.C.

23 WOЕ TO THE SHEPHERDS WHO destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture, says the LORD. ²Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who feed My people: you have scattered My sheep and driven them away and have not tended them. Look! I on My part will attend to you for the evil of your doings, says the LORD. ³I will also gather

e) Jehoahaz, called "Shallum" [I Chronicles 3:15].

f) Jehoiakim, 608-597 B.C., whose selfish and oppressive luxury is contrasted with the just rule of his father Josiah.

g) A chamber on the flat roof, with latticed windows, giving free circulation to the air, secluded and cool [Judges 3:20; II Kings 1:21].

h) Jehoiakim enlarged and beautified his palace with forced, unpaid labor.

i) Neither relatives nor subjects will bewail his loss [cf. ch. 34:5; I Kings 13:30].

j) The "parts across" — a range of mountains east of the Dead Sea, including Nebo, from which Moses saw the Promised Land [Deut. 34:1]. k) Your allies [ch. 4:30].

l) Jerusalem poetically depicted as nestling in the recesses of Lebanon, to portray its sense of security.

m) Jehoiachin, who, after a reign of three months, was carried captive to Babylon with the flower of the nation by Nebuchadnezzar [II Kings 25:27-30]. n) Nehushta [II Kings 24:8].

o) A broken terra-cotta figurine. p) See Hosea 8:8.

the remainder of My sheep from all the lands where I have driven them, and I will return them to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴I will raise up shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no longer nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵See, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch,^q and He shall reign as king, deal wisely,^r and execute judgment and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell securely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.^s

⁷Therefore, behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when they shall say no more, "As the LORD lives who brought the children of Israel from the land of Egypt," ⁸but, "As the LORD lives who brought up and who led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them." And they shall dwell in their own land.

⁹Concerning the prophets: My heart is broken within me; all my bones tremble; I am like a drunken man, like a man who has been overcome by wine, because of the LORD and because of His holy words. ¹⁰For the land is filled with adulterers; on account of the curse^t the land mourns, the pastures of the wilderness are dried up. They pursue evil, and they seek their might in unfairness. ¹¹Both prophet and priest are profane; even in My house have I found their wickedness, says the LORD. ¹²Therefore their way shall become to them as slippery places in the dark; they shall be thrust along and fall; for I will bring misfortune upon them in the year of their punishment, says the LORD.

¹³In the prophets of Samaria I saw something unsavory: they prophesied

by Baal and caused My people Israel to err. ¹⁴But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they encourage the hands of evildoers so that they do not repent every one from his wickedness. They are all of them become to Me as Sodom and its inhabitants as Gomorrah. ¹⁵Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets: See, I will feed them with wormwood and make them drink the poison of gall water; for from the prophets of Jerusalem profaneness is gone forth into all the land.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets that prophesy to you; they fill you with vain hopes; they utter the vision of their own heart and not from the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁷They say continually to those who detest the word of the LORD, "You shall have peace"; and to every one walking in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, "No evil shall come upon you." ¹⁸For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to perceive and hear My word? Who among them has listened to My word and obeyed it?^u

¹⁹Notice the tempest of the LORD! Fury has gone forth and a whirlwind: it shall whirl round upon the head of the wicked. ²⁰The LORD's anger will not subside until He has executed and until He has performed the purpose of His heart; in the latter days you shall understand it perfectly. ²¹I did not send those prophets, yet they ran; I had not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. ²²But if they had stood in My council, then they would have caused My people to hear My words and would have turned them back from the evil way, from the evil of their doings.

²³Am I a God close by, says the LORD, and not a God afar off? ²⁴Can a man hide himself in secret places and I shall not see him? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the

q) See ch. 33:15. Jeremiah's word for the Messiah, ideal king to come.

r) Dealing with wisdom, such as commanding success [Josh. 1:8; 1 Sam. 18:5, 14].

s) Receiving a name symbolizing the ideal character displayed by the nation [Isa. 1:26; 61:11], for God, as now we know, in Christ, is the source of our righteousness.

t) Because of its transgression [Isa. 4:5,6; Deut. 8:15,16].

u) The questions imply: "No one." None of these prophets was admitted into the council of the LORD and there heard His word [see I Kings 22:19-23].

LORD. ²⁵I have heard what the prophets say, who prophesy lies in My name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed." ²⁶How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies and who prophesy the conceit of their own heart; ²⁷who intend to cause My people to forget My name by their dreams, which they tell one another, as their fathers forgot My name through Baal? ²⁸The prophet who has a dream, let him tell his dream, and he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What has straw to do with grain? says the LORD. ²⁹Is not My word like a fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that shatters the rock?

³⁰Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who steal My words everyone from his neighbor.^v

³¹Look, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who use their own tongues and say, "The LORD says."^w ³²Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, says the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and reckless boasting; yet I did not send nor command them; neither do they profit this people at all, says the LORD.

³³And when one of this people, or the prophet, or a priest, asks you, "What is the LORD's burden?"^x then you shall say to them, "You are the burden! And I will cast you off," says the LORD. ³⁴And as for the prophet, priest, or one of the people who says, "The LORD's oracle," I will punish that man and his house.^y ³⁵Thus shall you say every one to his neighbor and every one to his brother, "What has the LORD answered?" or "What has the LORD spoken?" ³⁶But "the LORD's oracle" you shall mention no more, for every man's own word is his oracle, and you pervert the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God.

³⁷Thus shall you say to the prophet, "What has the LORD answered you?" or "What has the LORD spoken?" ³⁸But if you say, "The LORD's oracle," thus says the LORD, Because you say this word, "The LORD's oracle," when I sent to you saying, "You shall not say, 'The LORD's oracle,'" ³⁹therefore, behold, I will surely lift you up and cast you away from My presence, you and the city which I gave to you and your fathers. ⁴⁰And I will bring upon you an everlasting reproach and a perpetual ignominy which shall not be forgotten.

24 THE LORD SHOWED ME TWO baskets of figs^a arranged before the temple of the LORD after Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, together with the princes of Judah, the craftsmen, and the smiths from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. ²One basket had very good figs, like the first-ripe figs; the other basket had very bad figs, which were so bad, they could not be eaten. ³Then the LORD said to me: "What do you see, Jeremiah? I said, 'Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad, very bad, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad.'"

⁴Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁵Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: As these good figs, I will regard approvingly the exiles of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶For I will set My eyes upon them for their good, and I will bring them again to this land; I will build them and not pull them down; I will plant them and not pluck them up. ⁷And I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God; for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.

v) Having no prophetic inspiration of their own, they appropriate the prophecies of the true prophets. w) A formula constantly used by true prophets.

x) "Massa"; something "lifted" or "taken up." Either literally a burden or a figure, something "taken up" upon the lips, a solemn "utterance" or "oracle."

y) The LORD retorts: Not My words, but you yourselves, are the "burden"; and I will no longer be burdened with you.

z) They had despised Jeremiah's prophecies of coming disaster; hence they were never to use the word "burden" in the future. They were not to ask a prophet, "What message have you?" but, "What has the LORD answered, or said?"

a) Always the contrast between the godly and the ungodly — with a promise.

⁸As the bad figs which cannot be eaten because they are so foul, thus, says the LORD, will I treat Zedekiah the king of Judah and his princes and the remainder of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and those that dwell in the land of Egypt. ⁹I will give them up to be tossed back and forth among all the kingdoms of the earth for evil, to be a reproach and a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all places where I shall scatter them. ¹⁰I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them till they are consumed from off the land that I gave them and their fathers.^b

604 B.C.

25 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoia-kim^c the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon), ²which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: ³For twenty-three years^d now, from the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, to this day, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. ⁴Also, the LORD persistently sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending, but you neither listened nor inclined your ear to hear, ⁵saying, "Return every one of you from his evil way and from your wrong doings, and dwell in the land which the LORD has given you and your fathers from of old and forever. ⁶Go not after other gods to serve them and worship them or provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands; then I will bring upon you no calamity." ⁷But you have not listened to Me, says the LORD, that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt.

⁸Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed

My words, ⁹look, I will send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, and for Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, My servant,^e and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations all around; I will utterly destroy them and make them an abomination, a hissing, and an everlasting reproach. ¹⁰And I will remove from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the grinding of millstones,^f and the light of the lamp. ¹¹This whole land shall be a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste. ¹³I will bring upon that land all the words which I have pronounced against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴For many nations and great kings shall make them slaves,^g too. I will reward them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.

¹⁵For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel to me: Take this cup of the wine of indignation from My hand, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. ¹⁶They shall drink and stagger^h and be frantic, because of the sword which I am sending among them.

¹⁷So I took the cup from the hand of the LORD and gave it to all the peoples to whom the LORD had sent me, to drink it: ¹⁸Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and princes, to make them a waste and a horror, a hissing and a curse, as at this day; ¹⁹Pharaoh, king of Egypt, his servants, his princes, all his people, ²⁰all the mixed people;ⁱ all the kings of the land of Uz;^j and all the kings of the

b) Hearers and readers need never wonder whether the affairs of earth, private and public, are under divine control, including our times.

c) Four years after the Megiddo battle in which good king Josiah had been slain, 604 B.C.

d) 626-604 B.C. e) Kings and nations are under His command.

f) Heard daily in Eastern villages, a sign of the presence of life in it [Rev. 18:22].

g) Slaves or servants. h) Figure of bewilderment and helplessness [ch. 13:13].

i) The mixed foreign population, settled in Egypt for trade or other purposes [Ezek. 30:5].

j) The name of an Aramean tribe settled in the east or northeast of Edom [see Lam. 4:21; Job 1:1].

land of the Philistines — Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod.^k ²¹Edom and Moab and the children of Ammon; ²²all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea;^l ²³Dedan, Tema, Buz,^m and all who clip the corners of their hair;ⁿ ²⁴all the kings of Arabia^o and all the kings of the mixed tribes^p that dwell in the desert; ²⁵all the kings of Zimri,^q all the kings of Elam,^r and all the kings of Media; ²⁶all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, all the world kingdoms that are upon the face of the earth. After them the king of Sheshach^a shall drink.

²⁷Then you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink, and be drunk; vomit, and fall to rise no more, because of the sword which I am sending among you. ²⁸If they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts: You shall surely drink! ²⁹Look! If, with the city which is called by My name^t I am beginning to work calamity, should you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, says the LORD of hosts.

³⁰Now you prophesy against them all these words. Say to them: The LORD will roar^u from on high and utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily at His home-
stead^v and shout like those who tread the grapes,^w against all the inhabitants of the earth. ³¹The crash of battle will resound to the ends of the earth, for the LORD has a court case against the nations. He is entering into judgment with all flesh, and the wicked He will give to the sword, says the LORD.

³²Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, punishment is going forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest is stirring up from the uttermost corners of the earth! ³³Those slain by the LORD on that day shall extend from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be mourned, or gathered, or buried; they shall be as manure upon the face of the ground.

³⁴Howl, you shepherds, and cry; roll in ashes, you masters of the flock,^x for your days to be slaughtered are completed; you shall be dashed to pieces and fall like a choice vessel. ³⁵No refuge will remain for the shepherds nor escape for the keepers of the flocks. ³⁶Hear! The cry of the shepherds and the howling of the lords of the flock! For the LORD is laying waste their pasture, ³⁷and the peaceful meadows are devastated, because of the fierce indignation of the LORD. ³⁸Like a roaring lion He has left His covert.^y Yes, their land is become a waste because of the devouring sword and because of His fierce indignation.

607 B.C.

26 IN THE BEGINNING OF THE reign of Jehoiaikim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from the LORD, ²Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, who come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not restrain a word.^z ³It may be that they will listen and every man turn from his evil way, so that I may relent of the disaster which I am planning to bring upon them because of the evil of their doings.^a ⁴You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD: If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My teaching which

k) Such as survived the two year sieges by the Egyptian king, Psammetichus I [666-610 B.C.].

l) Phoenician colonies on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. m) Three tribes of northern Arabia.

n) See Lev. 19:27.

o) Another tribe or group of tribes dwelling in the steppes of northern Arabia [see Isa. 21:13-17].

p) Another local "mixed population" whose home was the wilderness. q) Unknown tribe.

r) In the farther east, on the other side of the Tigris, about 200 miles east of Babylon [see Dan. 8:2; Acts 2:9]. s) Babel — Babylon. t) In token of ownership [ch. 7:10,11].

u) Like a lion [Amos 1:2]. v) Figure for Judah [ch. 23:6].

w) Joyous shout of the vintagers as they trod the juice out of the grapes in the wine press [ch. 51:14].

x) Figure for the principal and wealthiest men of the nations who would have been God's representatives and the spiritual guides of the people.

y) Judah being a desolation, the Lord is compelled to leave her, just as a lion has to leave its slain when destroyed.

z) This chapter provides the narrative for the famous temple sermon in chapter 7.

a) In this life divine punishment is primarily disciplinary.

I have set before you, ⁶to heed the words of My servants the prophets whom I send to you continually, rising up early and sending them (but you have not listened), ⁶then I will make this house like Shiloh, and this city I will make a curse to all the nations of the earth.

⁷The priests, the prophets,^b and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the LORD's house. ⁸And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests, the prophets, and all the people seized him, saying, "You shall surely die! ⁹Why have you prophesied in the LORD's name, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without an inhabitant?'" And all the people were gathered around Jeremiah in the LORD's house.

¹⁰When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and sat in the entrance of the New Gate^c of the LORD's house. ¹¹Then the priests and the prophets said to all the princes and to all the people, "This man is worthy of death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears." ¹²Then Jeremiah told all the princes and all the people, "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that you have heard. ¹³Now therefore, amend your ways and your doings,^d and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will relent concerning this calamity which He has spoken against you. ¹⁴But as for me, you see, I am in your hands. Do to me as appears good and right to you. ¹⁵Only know for certain that if you put me to death you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves, upon this city, and upon its inhabitants; for in truth the LORD

sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

¹⁶Then the princes and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, "This man does not deserve death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God." ¹⁷Then certain of the elders of the land stood up and said to all the assembled people, ¹⁸"Micah,^e the Morasthite,^f prophesied in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house^g a wooded height.' ¹⁹Did Hezekiah and all Judah, indeed, put him to death? Did he not revere the LORD and entreat His favor, and did not the LORD feel grief about the calamity, which He had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great misfortune upon ourselves."

²⁰There was another man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim.^h He prophesied against this city and against this land in words like those of Jeremiah. ²¹And when King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the princes, heard those words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Urijah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. ²²Then King Jehoiakim sent some men to Egypt, Elnathan the son of Achborⁱ and others with him to Egypt. ²³They brought forth Urijah out of Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who slew him with the sword^j and cast his body into the cemetery of the common people.^k ²⁴But the hand of Ahikam^l the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that he was not given over to the people to put him to death.

597 B.C.

27 AT THE BEGINNING OF THE reign^m of Zedekiahⁿ the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this message

b) False prophets who would hear nothing of the coming disaster; they preferred to please.

c) Probably the gate leading into the upper [inner] court built by Jotham about a century before.

d) See ch. 7:5. e) Micahiah [Micah 1:1; 3:12].

f) Moreseth, Micah's home, a village about 23 miles s.w. of Jerusalem [Micah 1:14].

g) The temple. h) Modern Karyet el-Inab on the Jaffa road, seven miles n.w. of Jerusalem.

i) One of the "princes" [ch. 36:12].

j) Urijah was the scapegoat, after they dared not take Jeremiah. k) See II Kings 23:6.

l) Father of Gedaliah, Babylonian governor of the Judean province [586-581 B.C.], also friendly to Jeremiah [ch. 39:14; 40:5, 6]. Ahikam was one of the messengers sent by Josiah to inquire of the prophetess Huldah after the discovery of the roll of Deut. in 621 B.C. [II Kings 22:3, 12].

m) 597 B.C. n) Hebrew text has "Jehoiakim" but the context demands "Zedekiah."

came to Jeremiah from the LORD. ²Thus said the LORD to me: Make yourself thongs and yoke-bars^o and put them on your neck. ³Then send^p a message to the king of Moab, to the king of the Ammonites, to the king of Tyre and to the king of Sidon by the hand of the messengers who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. ⁴Give them this charge for their masters: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: This is what you shall say to your masters: ⁵It is I who made the earth, with the men and the beasts that are upon it, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and I give it to whomever it seems right to Me. ⁶Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, the king of Babylon, My servant; even the beasts of the field too I have given him to serve him. ⁷All nations shall serve him and his son and grandson, until the time comes around for his own land; then many nations and great kings shall make him their servant.^q ⁸But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and will not place its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, says the LORD, until I have destroyed it by his hand. ⁹So then, do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers,^r your soothsayers, or your sorcerers,^s who are saying to you, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." ¹⁰For they prophesy a lie to you; in consequence your feet will be removed from your land, for I will drive you out, and you will perish. ¹¹Whereas the nation that puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him, I will leave on its own land, to till and to dwell in it, says the LORD.

¹²To Zedekiah king of Judah, I spoke in like manner saying: Place

your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon; serve him and his people and live. ¹³Why should you and your people die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, as the LORD has threatened any nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? ¹⁴Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are saying to you, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon," for they prophesy a lie to you. ¹⁵I have not sent them, says the LORD, but they prophesy falsely in My name; consequently, I will drive you out, and you will perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you.

¹⁶Then I said to the priests^t and to all this people, Thus says the LORD: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, "Look, the vessels of the LORD's house will now shortly be brought back from Babylon," for they prophesy a lie to you. ¹⁷Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a waste? ¹⁸If they are prophets and if the LORD's word be really with them, let them plead with the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the LORD's house and in the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem, may not be carried to Babylon. ¹⁹For thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, the sea, the pedestals,^u and the remainder of the vessels which are left in this city, ²⁰which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon did not take away, when he took into exile Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem — ^v ²¹thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, regarding the vessels that remain in the LORD's house, in the house of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: ²²They shall be carried to Babylon^w and remain there until the day that I remember them, says the LORD. Then I will bring

o) In forming a yoke, the "thongs" used for binding the "bars" together [see Lev. 26:13].

p) Jer. 28:10 shows the yoke was not delivered to the five kings. q) See ch. 25:14.

r) See ch. 23:25-28.

s) All these fortune-tellers were living on the people, who had forsaken God, as thousands in our own land do today. t) Unfriendly to Jeremiah, disposed to listen to false prophets [ch. 26:11].

u) Mostly never restored, too heavy for safe transporting to Babylon; much of it broken up by the Chaldeans in Jerusalem [ch. 52:17]. v) See II Kings 24:11-16.

w) Ch. 52:17-19; II Kings 25:13-15.

them back and restore them to this place.^x

593 B.C.

28 THIS HAPPENED IN THE SAME year at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month. The prophet Hananiah the son of Azur, a Gibeonite,^y said to me in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and all the people, ²"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. ³Within two years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, which Nebuchadrezzar removed from this place and carried to Babylon. ⁴I will also bring back to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles from Judah who went to Babylon, says the LORD, because I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."

⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah addressed the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and of all the people who were standing in the LORD's house. ⁶The prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so;^z may the LORD fulfil the words which you have prophesied, by bringing back the vessels of the LORD's house and all the exiles from Babylon to this place. ⁷Yet hear, I plead with you, this word which I am about to speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸The prophets who have preceded me and you from of old prophesied calamity against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹But as for the prophet who prophesied only peace, when the word of that prophet is fulfilled, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

¹⁰Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke-bars from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and shattered them. ¹¹And Hananiah said in the presence of all the people, "Thus says the LORD: Even so will I break the yoke of

Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon within two years from off the neck of all the nations." But the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

¹²The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah some time after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke-bars from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying: ¹³Go, tell Hananiah, "Thus says the LORD: You have broken the wooden bars, but I will replace them with bars of iron. ¹⁴For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have placed an iron yoke upon the neck of all these nations, a yoke of slavery to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and serve him they shall; even the beasts of the field I have given him."^a

¹⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah! The LORD has never sent you; but you are making this people trust in a lie. ¹⁶Therefore thus says the LORD: Observe, I will remove you from off the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have advocated disloyalty to the LORD." ¹⁷So in that same year during the seventh month the prophet Hananiah died.

29 THESE ARE THE CONTENTS OF the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to those left of the elders of the exiles, to the priests, to the prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchadrezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ²This was after the surrender of King Jeconiah and the queen mother,^b the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the smiths from Jerusalem. ³The letter was sent to Elash the son of Shaphan^c and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon: ⁴Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem: ⁵Build houses and live in them; plant

x) See Ezra 1:7-11 for restoration of various gold and silver bowls, etc., returned by Cyrus 526 B.C.

y) Five miles northwest of Jerusalem, now the village of El-Jib.

z) Jeremiah could only wish the return of the Lord's people.

a) See ch. 27:6. God gave His people another chance to turn from falsehood to truth, from paganism to divine worship; but few gave heed. b) Nehushta [II Kings 24:8-12].

c) The brother of Ahikam the son of Shaphan [Jer. 26:24].

gardens and eat their products; ⁶take wives and bear sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage so that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there and do not decrease. ⁷Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD for it; for its welfare shall be your welfare.^d

⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not permit your prophets and soothsayers who are among you to deceive you; do not listen to their dreams. ⁹For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I did not send them, says the LORD. ¹⁰For thus says the LORD: As soon as the seventy years are completed for Babylon,^e I will visit you and fulfill My promise to you^f in returning you to this place. ¹¹For I know the thoughts I think^g concerning you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of hurt, to give you a future and a hope. ¹²Then you will call upon Me and will come to pray to Me, and I will hear you. ¹³You will seek Me and find Me when you will seek Me with all your heart.^h ¹⁴I will be found of you, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortune by gathering you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.ⁱ

¹⁵Because you have said, "The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon," ¹⁶thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your kinsmen who did not go with you into exile: ¹⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts, Take notice! I am sending upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence; and I will make them like ripe figs which are so bad they cannot be eaten. ¹⁸I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, and

I will make them a consternation to all the kingdoms of the earth,^j an execration, a terror, a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them, ¹⁹because they did not obey My words, says the LORD, which I continually sent to them by My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but they would not listen, says the LORD.

²⁰Hear the word of the LORD, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon: ²¹Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maa-seiah, who prophesy lies to you in My name: Look! I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay them before your eyes. ²²Because of them, this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah which are in Babylon: "The LORD make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire."^k ²³They committed a disgraceful thing^l in Israel; they have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and they have spoken false words in My name which I did not command them. I am He who knows, and I am witness, says the LORD.

²⁴To Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall say, ²⁵"Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You have sent letters in your own name to all the people who are in Jerusalem and to Zephaniah^m the son of Maa-seiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying that ²⁶the LORD has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, to have oversight in the house of the LORD over every ecstatic who makes himself mad, pretending to be a prophet,ⁿ to put him in the stocks and collar. ²⁷Why then have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, who prophesies to you? ²⁸For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying, 'The time^o is long;

d) Be productive, diligent, cooperative, build up your community; be a constructive part of it.

e) See Jer. 25:11, 12. f) The promises in ch. 24:4-7; 50:4, 5. g) See Deut. 4:29.

h) From which the anthem refrain, "If with all thine heart ye truly seek Me, ye shall ever surely find me." Memorize it. i) God's discipline is constructive, positive.

j) As God's mighty acts for Israel had become known to surrounding peoples, so would His punishments be published.

k) Denoting a state of mind or an action marked by utter disregard for moral or spiritual feeling, a gross act of immorality [see Gen. 34:7; II Sam. 13:12].

l) See ch. 21:1; 37:3 — a man of some standing.

m) With wild and frenzied gestures resembling a modern dervish. n) The time of the captivity.

build you houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their products.'"

²⁹And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet. ³⁰Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah: ³¹Send this message to all the exiles, Thus says the LORD regarding Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you and I did not send him, and he has made you to trust a lie, ³²therefore, thus says the LORD: Look, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his posterity; he shall not have a man living among this people; neither will he see the good that I will do to My people, says the LORD, because he has preached rebellion against the LORD.

587 B.C.

30 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH from the LORD. ²Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write all the words that I have spoken to you in a book. ³For note, the days are coming, says the LORD, that I will return the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. ⁴And these are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

⁵For thus says the LORD: We have heard a voice of trembling; there is terror and no peace. ⁶Ask now and see, can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail? And why has every face turned pale? ⁷Alas! that day is great; there is none like it. It is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it. ⁸And it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD of hosts, that I will break the yoke from off their neck, and I will burst their bonds; and strangers shall no more make servants of them. ⁹But they^p shall serve the LORD their God and David their king,^q whom I will raise up for them.

¹⁰And thou, fear them not, O Jacob, My servant, says the LORD, neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save you from afar, and your posterity from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return and enjoy peace and security, and none shall make him afraid.^r ¹¹For I am with you, says the LORD, to deliver you; for I will make a complete end of all the nations among whom I have scattered you, but of you will I not make a complete end; but I will discipline you with judgment^s and will nowise hold you guiltless. ¹²For, says the LORD, your injury is incurable, and your wound is grievous. ¹³There is none to plead your cause, no medicine for your bound up wound; there is no healing for you. ¹⁴All your lovers^t have forgotten you; they do not seek you; for I have stricken you with the blow of an enemy, the chastisement of a cruel foe, because your iniquity is great and your sins are numerous. ¹⁵Why do you cry over your injury? Your pain is incurable; because your guilt is great and your sins are numerous, I have done these things to you. ¹⁶However, all who devour you shall be devoured; and all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; those who exploit you shall be exploited, and all who prey upon you I will make a prey. ¹⁷For I will restore health to you, and I will heal your wounds, says the LORD, because they have called you an outcast, "It is Zion, for whom no one cares!"

¹⁸Thus says the LORD: Observe, I will return the captivity of Jacob's tents, and I will have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt upon its own mound,^u and the palace shall be inhabited after its accustomed manner. ¹⁹Out of them shall arise hymns of thanksgiving and the voices of merrymakers; I will multiply them, and they shall not be diminished; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. ²⁰Their children, too,

o) What is the cause of terror and agony they are all displaying? p) The Israelites.

q) The second David, the ideal King of the future (Hosea 3:5; Ezek. 34:23, 24) — the Messiah.

r) Or "disturb him." The expression is used of sheep lying undisturbed upon the pastures [Isa. 17:2], and of people [Lev. 26:6; Ezek. 39:26; Micah 4:4].

s) In a judicial spirit, not in anger. t) Allies. u) Upon its former site.

shall be as they were of old; their congregation shall be established before Me,^v and I will punish all who oppress them. ²¹Their prince shall be from among themselves, and their ruler shall come forth from their midst;^w I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach Me;^x for who else has the boldness on his own initiative to approach Me? says the LORD. ²²Then you shall be My people, and I will be your God. ²³Observe the tempest of the LORD! Indignation has gone forth, a sweeping tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked. ²⁴The fierce indignation of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the intents of his heart; in the latter days you shall understand this.

597 B.C.

31 AT THAT TIME, SAYS THE LORD, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. ²Thus says the LORD: In the wilderness^y the people who survived the sword found grace when Israel sought rest for himself. ³From afar^z the LORD has appeared to me, saying: I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have prolonged kindness to you. ⁴Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with timbrels^a and shall go forth in the dances of the merry-makers. ⁵Again you shall plant vineyards upon the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant and enjoy the fruit.^b ⁶For there will be a day when the vineyard watchmen in the hills of Ephraim will cry, "Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God."^c ⁷For thus says the LORD: Sing out with gladness for Jacob, and cry aloud for the leader of the nations;^d publish, praise, and say,

"The LORD has saved His people, the remnant of Israel."

⁸Take note, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the extreme corners of the earth; among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹They shall come with weeping, and I will lead them back with supplications. I will cause them to walk by streams of water,^e in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born.^f

¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations; publish it in the islands afar off, and say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock." ¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he. ¹²And they shall come and sing out their joy on the height of Zion and beam with joy over the bounty of the LORD, over the grain, over the new wine, and over the fresh oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; and their soul shall be like a watered garden;^g they shall pine away no more. ¹³Then the virgin shall rejoice in the dance, and the young men and old shall be merry; I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them and make them rejoice for their sorrow. ¹⁴And I will feast the soul^h of the priests with abundance,ⁱ and My people shall be satisfied with My bounty, says the LORD.

¹⁵Thus says the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah,^k lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel,^l weeping for her children, refuses to be comforted for

v) Under My eye and care [Gen. 17:18; Hosea 6:2].

w) No foreigner will rule over them; they will be under the rule of a native prince [Deut. 17:15].

x) Their future native ruler will have the right access to the altar and enjoy priestly privileges [Lev. 21:21, 23; Ezek. 44:13]. y) "Wilderness," now prophetic figure of the land of exile.

z) From Zion to the people in exile.

a) "Hand drums" — a ring of wood or metal covered with a tightly drawn skin, held up in one hand and struck by the fingers of the other.

b) Treat as common — the first produce of fruit trees being regarded as sacred, not used for food [Lev. 19:23-25]. c) The break between the northern and southern kingdoms is healed.

d) Foremost among the liberated nations. e) Isa. 49:10b.

f) Jacob treated Ephraim, favored grandson of Rachel, whom alone he had loved, as his first-born. Here God agrees, if Ephraim, leading northern Israel, will fall in line.

g) A "saturated," "thoroughly moistened" garden.

h) The "soul" as the seat of desire, particularly the appetite [Num. 11:6; Job 33:20; Micah 7:1].

i) Figure of rich satisfaction [Ps. 36:8; Isa. 55:2]. k) Five miles north of Jerusalem.

l) Wife of Jacob, mother of Joseph and Benjamin; died during the latter's birth.

her children, because they are not. ¹⁶Thus says the LORD: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, says the LORD, and they shall return from the land of the enemy. ¹⁷There is hope for your future, says the LORD; your children shall return to their own country.

¹⁸I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself and saying, "Thou hast disciplined me, and I was chastened like an untrained calf.^m Oh, bring me back that I may be restored,ⁿ for Thou art the LORD my God. ¹⁹For after I had turned away, I repented and after I was taught, I smote upon my thigh;^o I was shamed, even confounded, because I bore the reproach of my youth." ²⁰Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he My darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore My emotions stir^p for him; I will surely have compassion upon him, says the LORD.

²¹Set up road-marks for yourself; make yourself guideposts; set your heart toward the highway, even the way by which you went.^q Return, O virgin Israel, return to these cities. ²²How long will you vacillate, O you backsliding daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth: A woman shall encompass a man.^r

²³Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Once more they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in her cities when I restore their fortresses: "The LORD bless you, O habitation of righteousness,^s O holy mountain!"^t ²⁴And Judah and all her cities^u shall dwell there together and the farmers and they that move about with their flocks.^v ²⁵For I will revive the weary soul, and every pining soul I will replenish. ²⁶Upon this I awoke

and looked up, and my sleep^w was sweet to me.

²⁷See, the days are coming, says the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. ²⁸And it shall be that as I have been watchful over them to pluck up and to break down, to pull down, to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. ²⁹In those days they shall no longer say, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are blunted." ³⁰But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be blunted.^x

³¹See, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³²not like the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a Husband to them, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law in their inward parts, and upon their hearts will I write it; I will be their God and they shall be My people.^y ³⁴And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

³⁵Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the LORD

m) Undisciplined for work and for bearing the yoke. n) See the prodigal son in Luke 15.

o) Gesture of grief [Ezek. 21:12]. p) Isa. 63:16.

q) Turn your thoughts to the way by which you went into exile, so you may not miss the way back.

r) Zion, instead of holding aloof and waiting to be sought by her husband [the Lord], will affectionately cling "round about Him" [Hosea 2:19].

s) The inhabitants of restored Jerusalem invested with ideal perfections [Isa. 1:26; 32:1, 18].

t) Term of greeting used by those visiting Jerusalem. u) Their inhabitants.

v) Tilling their land and moving about with their flocks, unmolested [Isa. 30:23].

w) The first good night's sleep in a long time.

x) Thus far good Israelites had worshiped and obeyed God nationally. Now the relationship becomes personal, with personal responsibilities.

y) Idea of new birth, prophetic of the New Testament Gospel.

God of hosts is His name: ³⁶If these ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, then the descendants of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever. ³⁷Thus says the LORD: If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the inhabitants of Israel because of what they have done, says the LORD.

³⁸Look, the days are coming, says the LORD, that the city shall be built for the LORD from the tower of Hananel² to the Corner Gate.^a ³⁹And the measuring line shall go out further, straight to the hill Gareb,^b and shall then turn round to Goah.^c ⁴⁰The whole valley of the dead bodies and the altar ashes,^d and all the fields as far as the valley of Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate^e toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up nor overthrown any more forever.

587 B.C.

32 THE WORD CAME TO JEREMIAH from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. ²At that time the king of Babylon's army was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard,^f which was in the king of Judah's house. ³For^g Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him, saying, "Why do you prophesy and say,"^h "Thus says the LORD: Behold, I am giving this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; ⁴and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon and shall speak with him face to

face and see him eye to eye. ⁵And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain until I visit him, says the LORD; though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed?"

⁶Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me: ⁷See, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you, saying, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth,ⁱ for the right of redemption is yours to buy it.' ⁸Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in conformity with the word of the LORD in the court of the guard and said to me, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that it was the LORD's word.^j ⁹So I bought the field at Anathoth of Hanamel my cousin and weighed out the money to him, seventeen silver shekels.

¹⁰"I signed the deed, sealed it, secured witnesses, and weighed him the money on balances. ¹¹Then I took the purchase deed, both that which was sealed, containing the injunction and conditions,^k and the open copy. ¹²I handed the purchase deed to Baruch^l the son of Neriah the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's son and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the purchase deed and in the presence of all the Jews who sat in the guardhouse. ¹³I charged Baruch in their presence, ¹⁴"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, the purchase deed which is sealed and this open deed, and put them in an earthen vessel,^m so that they may endure for a long time. ¹⁵For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.'

z) At the northeast corner of the city [Neh. 3:1; 12:39].

a) At the northwest corner of the city [II Kings 14:13; II Chron. 26:9].

b) A high point southwest of the "Corner Gate."^h c) A point at the west end of the south wall.

d) The broad open depression just south of Siloam, where the brook Er-Rababi meets the brook Kidron.

e) On the east of Jerusalem overlooking the wady of Kidron at the southeast corner of the temple courts [Neh. 3:28].

f) A part of the court surrounding the palace railed off to guard prisoners.

g) Vss. 3-5 are parenthetical.

h) Indirectly Zedekiah's question suggests the reason Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard. i) Jeremiah's native home. j) The arrival of his cousin confirmed the word.

k) Technical legal terms: injunction — the seller's ceding possession of the property; conditions — stating the terms on which the property was purchased by the buyer.

l) Jeremiah's devoted friend and amanuensis [ch. 36:4-8; 45:1-5].

m) To secure them against dampness, etc. Earthen jars containing such duplicate contracts have been excavated by archaeologists.

16" After I had given the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, 17 "Alas, Lord God! See, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and by Thy outstretched arm. Nothing is too wonderful for Thee, 18 the One showing kindness to thousands, the One recompensing the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them; O great and mighty God, the LORD of hosts is His name, 19 great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, rewarding every one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings; 20 who hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt and to this day in Israel and among all mankind and hast made Thee a name, as at this day 21 and brought Thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, with wonders, with a strong hand, an outstretched arm, and with great terror. 22 Thou gavest them this land, which Thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. 23 They came in and possessed it; but they did not obey Thy voice, or walk in Thy law; they did nothing of all Thou commandest them to do; Thou hast sent all this punishment upon them. 24 Behold, the siege mounds^o are come to the city to take it; because of the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans who fight against it. What Thou hast spoken has come to pass, and behold, Thou seest it. 25 Yet, Thou, O LORD God, hast said to me, Purchase the field for money and secure witnesses — although the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans!"

26 Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah: 27 Observe, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too difficult for Me? 28 Therefore, thus says the LORD: See, I am giving this city into the hands of the Chaldeans

and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it.^p 29 The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come and set this city on fire and burn it with the houses upon whose roofs incense has been offered to Baal and drink offerings have been poured out to other gods in order to provoke Me to anger. 30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have done nothing but evil in My sight from their youth; for the children of Israel only vex Me with the work of their hands, says the LORD. 31 For this city has aroused My anger and My wrath from the day when it was built to this day, so that I will remove it from My sight 32 because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah which they did to vex Me — they, their kings, their princes, their priests, their prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 33 They have turned to Me their back and not their face; and although I taught them persistently, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive correction. 34 But they set their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it. 35 They built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, which I neither commanded them nor did it enter My mind — this abominable practice to make Judah sin. 36 Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, "It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence": 37 Look, I will gather them out of all the countries where I have driven them in My anger and My fury and in My great wrath; and I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. 38 Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God; 39 and I will give them one heart and

n) Thoughtfully read this prayer, repeat it audibly and silently. Use it personally.

o) Elevated embankments of earth, as high as the walls of the hostile city upon which the besiegers advanced to attack.

p) God is reasonable; He fully replies to the prophet's questioning. It is good for us to be frank with God; not irreverent or haughty, but confessing our limited knowledge and His omniscience. His Word is revelation of His thoughts toward us.

one way, that they may revere Me for ever for the good of them and of their children after them. ⁴⁰And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing good to them; and My reverence will I put in their heart that they may not turn away from Me. ⁴¹I will rejoice over doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness with all My heart and with all My soul.^a

⁴²For thus says the LORD: Just as I have brought upon this people all this great calamity, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise them. ⁴³Fields shall be bought in this land of which you are saying, "It is desolate, without man or beast; it is given into the hands of the Chaldeans." ⁴⁴They shall buy fields for money, sign the deeds, seal them, and secure witnesses in the land of Benjamin, in the places about Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the Shephelah,^c and in the cities of the south; for I will restore their fortunes, says the LORD.

587 B.C.

33 THEN THE WORD OF THE LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was shut up in the court of the guard: ²Thus says the LORD, who made the earth,^b who created it, and who established it — the LORD is His name: ³Call to Me and I will answer you and reveal to you great and mighty things which you do not know.^d ⁴For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel regarding the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah, which were broken down to make a defense against the siege mounds and the sword: ⁵The Chaldeans are coming to fight and to fill them with the dead bodies of the men whom I shall slay in My anger and in My fury. I have hid My face from this city because of all their wickedness. ⁶Look, I will bring to her restoration and health; and I

will heal them and reveal to them an abundance of peace and prosperity. ⁷I will bring back the captivity of Judah and of Israel, and I will rebuild them as they were formerly.^e ⁸Also, I will cleanse them^f from all their iniquity which they have committed against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities in which they have sinned and rebelled against Me. ⁹And she^g shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and a glory before all the nations of the earth, who shall hear of all the good which I will do for them, and they shall be amazed and shall wonder over all the good and all the peace that I bestow on her.

¹⁰Thus says the LORD: Again there shall be heard in this place of which you say,^h "It is waste, without man and beast," even in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man or inhabitant or beast, ¹¹the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride,ⁱ the voices of those who say, "Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for His mercy endures forever,"^j and who bring sacrifices of thanksgiving to the house of the LORD. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as formerly, says the LORD.

¹²Thus says the LORD of hosts: Again there shall be in this place, which is waste, without man or beast, in all its cities, habitations of shepherds resting their flocks. ¹³In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South, in the land of Benjamin, in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah,^k shall the flocks again pass along under the hands of the one who counts them, says the LORD.

¹⁴Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall fulfil that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

q) Wholeheartedly and whole-souledly.

r) The lowlands or plain between the Judean hills and the west coast.

s) His purposes as described in ch. 32:42; Isa. 40:12, 13, 26.

t) Things cut off, i.e., inaccessible, unattainable, or withheld [Isa. 48:6].

u) As in former times, as of old [Isa. 1:26]. v) Ezek. 36:25.

w) "This city" — Jerusalem, even as the worst of us after genuine repentance and faith in Christ may live to God's glory. x) Ch. 32:43.

y) The reversal of Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 25:10, for joy goes with genuine worship.

z) A liturgical refrain in later Psalms — 106:1; 107:1; 118:1, 29. a) Ch. 32:44.

¹⁵In those days and at that time, I will cause a Branch of righteousness to spring forth for David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely. And this is the name by which He shall be called, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."^b ¹⁷For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel,^c ¹⁸neither shall the priests, the Levites,^d lack a man before Me to offer burnt offerings and to burn oblations and to do sacrifices continually.

¹⁹Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁰Thus says the LORD: If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night so that day and night will not come at their appointed times, ²¹then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne, My covenant with the Levites the priests, My ministers. ²²As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David, My servant, and the Levites who minister to Me.

²³The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁴Are you not aware of what these people are saying, "The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has even cast them off"? And thus they have despised My people so that they are no longer a nation before Me. ²⁵Thus says the LORD: If my covenant with day and night does not stand, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, ²⁶then will I also cast away the descendants of Jacob and of David My servant, and I will not choose one of his descendants to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore

their fortune and have compassion on them.

588 B.C.

34 THE WORD WHICH CAME TO Jeremiah from the LORD when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms of the earth under his rule and all the peoples were fighting against Jerusalem and against all its cities: ²Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and say to him, "Thus says the LORD: Look! I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. ³You shall not escape from his hand, but you shall surely be taken and be delivered into his hand; your eyes shall look straight into the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with you face to face; and you shall go to Babylon. ⁴Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah^e king of Judah. Thus says the LORD concerning you: You shall not die by the sword; ⁵you shall die in peace, and as incense was burned for your fathers,^f the former kings who were before you, so shall men burn incense for you and lament for you, 'Alas, master!' For I have spoken the word, says the LORD."

⁶Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, ⁷when the king of Babylon's army was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that remained, against Lachish^g and Azekah;^h for these cities that remained of Judah were the only fortified cities.

⁸The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them, ⁹that every man should set free his Hebrew slaves, male

b) Our righteousness due to God – expression of the ideal character which the nation will then display [ch. 23:6]; future ideal King, see the symbolic name, "The Lord is there," in Ezek. 48:35.

c) I Kings 2:4; 9:5.

d) The priests of the tribe of Levi, the Levitical priests – a Deut. expression [Deut. 17:9; Josh. 3:3; Ezek. 44:15].

e) Zedekiah died in prison in Babylon after having had his eyes put out by Nebuchadrezzar at Riblah, in Coele-Syria north of Palestine.

f) See II Chron. 16:14; 21:19 – God's judgment tempered with mercy.

g) Now Tell-el-Hesi, about 35 miles s.w. of Jerusalem.

h) Probably about 15 miles s.w. of Jerusalem [Josh. 10:11; I Sam. 17:1, Neh. 11:30].

and female, so that no man should enslave a Jew, his relative.¹ ¹⁰All the princes and all the people who had entered into the covenant agreed that everyone would release his slave, male and female, so that they would not be enslaved again; they obeyed and released them.¹ ¹¹But afterwards they turned and caused the bondmen and bondmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for bondmen and bondmaids.

¹²The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ¹³Thus says the LORD, God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers in the day when I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying: ¹⁴At the end of seven years^k each of you must release your Hebrew relative who has been sold to you and has served you six years; you shall let him go free from you. But your fathers did not obey Me or incline their ear. ¹⁵You recently repented and did what was right in My eyes by proclaiming liberty, every man to his neighbor, and you made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name; ¹⁶but you turned around and profaned My name,¹ when each of you took back his male and female slave, whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them into subjection to be your slaves. ¹⁷Therefore, thus says the LORD: You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every man to his brother and every man to his neighbor. Look! I proclaim to you a liberty to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine, says the LORD, and I will make you a consternation to all the kingdoms of the earth. ¹⁸I will give the men who have transgressed My

covenant,^m who have not kept the words of the covenantⁿ which they have made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts — ^o ¹⁹the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf — ²⁰I will even give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives. Their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field. ²¹And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which has lifted the siege.

²²See! I will command, says the LORD, and will return them to this city; and they shall fight against it, take it, and burn it with fire. The cities of Judah will I make a desolation without inhabitant.

597 B.C.

35 THE WORD WHICH CAME TO Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: ²Go to the house of the Rechabites;^p then speak with them, and bring them to the house of the LORD into one of the chambers;^q there offer them wine to drink. ³So I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah and his brothers and all his sons, the whole house of Rechabites. ⁴I brought them to the house of the LORD into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah^r the son of Shallum, the keeper of the threshold.^s ⁵Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pitchers full of wine and

i) See law in Deut. 15:12. j) During the siege of Jerusalem.

k) When you come to the conclusion of your seven-year period, that is, at the beginning of the seventh year. l) Disowning the agreement sworn solemnly to in the temple.

m) See vs. 8, 10, 15.

n) A ceremony symbolically ratifying a covenant of agreement [Gen. 15:10, 17].

o) The contracting parties passed between the divided pieces of the victim, invoking upon themselves a similar fate if they failed to fulfil the stipulated conditions.

p) A subdivision of the Kenites, settled afterward in the south of Judah [Judg. 1:16; I Sam. 15:6; 27:10].

q) Arranged around the courts of the temple, serving partly as storehouses and partly as residences for priests, etc. [I Chron. 9:27; Ezek. 40:17; Neh. 10:37-39].

r) Probably father of the priest Zephaniah [ch. 21:1; 29:25].

s) One of the three "keepers of the threshold" — three gates to the temple. Officers ranked next to the chief priest and deputy [ch. 52:24; II Kings 12:9].

cups, and I said to them, "Drink wine."⁶ But they replied, "We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab,¹ our father, commanded us, 'You shall not drink wine, neither you nor your sons forever. ⁷Neither shall you build a house, or sow seed, or plant, or have a vineyard; but you shall dwell in tents all your days so that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.' ⁸We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, ⁹and not to build houses to dwell in. We have no vineyard or field or seed; ¹⁰but we have lived in tents and have obeyed and done all that Jonadab our father commanded us. ¹¹But when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up against the land, we said, 'Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Syrians.' ¹²So we are living in Jerusalem."

¹²Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah: ¹³Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will you not receive correction to listen to My words? says the LORD. ¹⁴The word which Jonadab the son of Rechab gave his sons, to drink no wine, has been observed, and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their father's commandment.^v But I, on My part, have spoken to you, rising up early and speaking, but you have not listened to Me. ¹⁵I have sent also to you all My servants, the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return, I plead with you, every man from his evil way; amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them; then you shall dwell in the land which I gave you and your fathers.^w But you did not incline your ear or listen to Me. ¹⁶The sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have kept the commandment which their father

gave them; but this people has not obeyed Me. ¹⁷Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Look, I am bringing upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the misery that I have pronounced against them, because I have spoken to them, but they have not listened; I have called to them and they have not answered.

¹⁸But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, observed all his instructions, and done all that he commanded you, ¹⁹therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before Me."^x
604 B.C.

36 IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF JEHOIAKIM the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²Acquire a scroll^y and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you about Israel and about Judah and about all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until this day. ³It may be that the house of Judah will consider all the misfortune which I am planning to apply to them, so that every one may turn from his evil way and that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. ⁴Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote upon the scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him. ⁵And Jeremiah instructed Baruch, "I am restrained;^z I cannot go into the house of the LORD; ⁶therefore, you go and read from the scroll, which you have written from my dictation, the words of the LORD, in the hearing of all the people in the LORD's house on a fast day. You shall read them too in the hearing of all the men of Judah who come out of their cities. ⁷Perhaps they will make their supplication^a before

t) II Kings 10:15, 23. u) "Aram" [cf. Gen. 25:20; Judg. 10:6; II Kings 24:2].

v) So there are non-church members, living by "The Golden Rule," which does not suffice for salvation, but which faithful church members may not follow equally well.

w) Jeremiah's summary in one phrase of the teaching of former prophets.

x) "To serve Me" (I Kings 10:8; Jer. 15:19). Morality led on to godliness.

y) How Jeremiah's prophecies were first committed to writing. z) Under a temple interdict.

a) See Jer. 37:20; 38:26; Dan. 9:18, 20.

the LORD, and every one will turn from his evil way; for great is the anger and the indignation that the LORD has pronounced against this people." ⁸And Baruch^b the son of Neriah did all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading from the scroll the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

⁹In the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month,^c all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD. ¹⁰Then, in the hearing of all the people, Baruch read from the scroll the words of Jeremiah, in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah^d son of Shaphan^e the secretary,^f in the upper court at the entrance of the New Gate^g of the LORD's house.

¹¹When Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the LORD from the scroll, ¹²he went down^h to the king's house, into the secretary's chamber, and all the princes were sitting there: Elishama the secretary, Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan the son of Achbor,ⁱ Gemariah the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the other princes. ¹³Micaiah told them all the words that he had heard when Baruch read the book in the hearing of the people. ¹⁴Then all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, son of Cushi, to say to Baruch, "Take in your hand the scroll that you read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. ¹⁵They said to him, "Sit down! Now read it to us." So Baruch read it to them. ¹⁶When they heard all the words, they turned in fear one toward another and said to Baruch, "We must report all these

words to the king." ¹⁷They quizzed Baruch, "Tell us, how did you write all these words? Was it at his dictation?" ¹⁸Baruch answered them, "He dictated all these words to me with his mouth, while I wrote them with ink on the scroll." ¹⁹Then the princes said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you are."

²⁰So they went to the king into the court;^j but they deposited the scroll in the office of Elishama the secretary and gave a full report to the king. ²¹Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it from the office of Elishama the secretary. Jehudi read it to the king and to the princes who stood beside the king. ²²It was the ninth month; the king was sitting in the winter house, and there was a fire burning in the brazier before him. ²³As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would snip them off^k with a scribe's knife and fling them into the fire that was in the brazier, until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier.

²⁴Yet neither the king, nor any of his servants who heard all these words, was afraid, nor did they rend their garments. ²⁵Even though Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah cautioned the king not to burn the roll, he would not listen to them. ²⁶And the king ordered prince Jerahmeel,^l Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; but the LORD hid them.

²⁷After the king had burned the scroll containing the words which Baruch wrote at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁸Take another scroll and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. ²⁹And concerning

b) Baruch is typical of the layman who assists his pastor.

c) Late Chisleu [Neh. 1:1], corresponding to our December. The Hebrew year in those times began in spring. d) Brother of Ahikam, who befriended Jeremiah in 607 B.C. [ch. 26:24].

e) Eighteen years before Shaphan had brought and read Deut. to Josiah after it had been discovered by the high priest, Hilkiah, in the temple [1 Kings 22:8-10].

f) "The king's scribe," an important minister of state [I Kings 4:3; Isa. 37:2]. g) Ch. 26:10. h) From the temple. i) Ch. 26:22. j) The open inner court of the palace.

k) The verb implies repeated action; as if disposing of the divine warrant would also dispose of the deserved punishment.

l) Probably a royal prince. See Jer. 38:6; I Kings 22:26b; Jehoiakim could not have had a grown son.

Jehoiakim king of Judah you shall say, "Thus says the LORD: You have burned this roll, saying, 'Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land and cut off from it man and beast?'³⁰ Therefore thus says the LORD about Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be flung out^m to the heat by day and the frost by night.³¹ I will punish him, his offspring, and his servants for their iniquity; I will bring upon them and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem and upon the men of Judah, all the disaster that I have pronounced against them; but they would not hear."

³²Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the scroll which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and many similar words were added to them.

588-586 B.C.

37 ZEDEKIAH THE SON OF JOSIAH, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, reigned instead of Coniahⁿ the son of Jehoiakim. ²But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the LORD which He spoke through the prophet Jeremiah. ³King Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah,^o to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Pray for us to the LORD our God!"^p ⁴Now Jeremiah was still coming in and going out among the people, for they had not yet put him in prison. ⁵Pharaoh's army^q had come out of Egypt, and when the Chaldeans, who were besieging Jerusalem, heard news of them, they retreated from Jerusalem.

⁶Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ⁷Thus shall you say to the king of Judah who sent you to Me to inquire of Me, "Observe!

Pharaoh's army, which came to help you, is about to return to Egypt to its own land; ⁸and the Chaldeans shall come and fight against this city; and they shall take it and burn it with fire. ⁹Thus says the LORD: Do not deceive yourselves by saying, 'The Chaldeans will surely stay away from us'; for they will not stay away. ¹⁰For even if you should smite the whole army of the Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and there remained of them only the wounded men, every one in his tent, even they would get up and burn this city with fire."

¹¹When the army of the Chaldeans had withdrawn from Jerusalem at the approach of Pharaoh's army, ¹²Jeremiah went out to leave Jerusalem and to go to the land of Benjamin to receive his portion^r there among the people. ¹³When he was at the Benjamin Gate,^a a sentinel named Irijah son of Shelemiah, son of Hananiah, seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." ¹⁴Then Jeremiah said, "It is false. I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Irijah would not listen to him, and he seized Jeremiah and brought him to the princes. ¹⁵The princes were angry with Jeremiah; they beat him and put him in the prison in the house of Jonathan the secretary,^t for it had been made a prison. ¹⁶Thus Jeremiah was placed in the dungeon cells, and he remained there many days.

¹⁷Then King Zedekiah sent for him and received him. The king questioned him secretly in his house and said, "Is there any word from the LORD?" Jeremiah said, "There is!" Then he said, "You shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon." ¹⁸Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah, "What wrong have I done against you or your servants or this people, that you have put me in prison? ¹⁹And where are your prophets which prophesied to you, 'The king of Babylon shall not come against you or against this land'? ²⁰Now hear, I beg of you,

m) Jer. 22:19. n) See Jer. 22:24. o) Jer. 21:1; 29:25.

p) The king is near repentance when he mentions "the LORD our God"; but he stopped with words. q) Sent by Pharaoh Hophra [Jer. 44:30]. r) Probably what he had bought [ch. 32:9].

s) On the north wall of the city, leading into the territory of Benjamin.

t) Shaphan, who was "secretary" 17 years before under Jehoiachin [ch. 36:10], was no longer in office.

O my master, the king; please, let my plea be accepted before you; do not send me back to the house of Jonathan the secretary, lest I die there." ²¹Then King Zedekiah gave orders, and they committed Jeremiah into the court of the guard; and daily a loaf of bread was given him from the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

38 NOW SHEPHATIAH THE SON OF Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashur, Jucal^u the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah^v heard the words that Jeremiah was speaking to all the people, saying, ²"Thus says the LORD: He who remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who surrenders to the Chaldeans shall live; he shall have his life as a prize for his loot, and he shall survive. ³Thus says the LORD: This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and they shall take it." ⁴Then the princes said to the king, "Let this man, we beg of you, be put to death; for he is weakening^w the hands of the soldiers who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the good of the people, but their destruction."

⁵King Zedekiah said, "See, he is in your hand; for the king can do nothing against you."^x ⁶Then they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern^y of Malchiah, the king's son, that was in the court of the guard. They let Jeremiah down with cords. There was no water in the cistern, but only mire, and Jeremiah sank in the mire.

⁷When Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern — the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate — ⁸Ebed-melech went out from the king's house and said to the king, ⁹"My master the king, these men have done altogether wrong

in the way they have treated Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern; he will starve on the spot because of the famine; for there is no bread left in the city." ¹⁰Then the king ordered Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, "Take three men with you, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies." ¹¹So Ebed-melech took the men with him, went into the house of the king underneath the treasury,^a and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by cords. ¹²Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Place the rags and clothes between your armpits and the cords."^b And Jeremiah did so. ¹³Then they drew Jeremiah up with the cords and lifted him out of the cistern, and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

¹⁴Then King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah the prophet and received him at the third entrance of the temple of the LORD. The king said to Jeremiah, "I will ask you something; hide nothing from me." ¹⁵Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I declare it to you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you counsel, you will not listen to me."^c ¹⁶So King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah secretly, "As the LORD lives who made our souls, I will not put you to death or deliver you into the hand of these men who are seeking your life." ¹⁷Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If you will surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then your life will be spared, and this city will not be burned with fire; and you and your house shall survive. ¹⁸But if you do not go out to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they will burn it with fire, and you will not escape out of their hands." ¹⁹King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Jews who deserted to the Chaldeans, lest I be delivered into their hands and they abuse

u) Jehucal in Jer. 37:3 v) Jer. 21:1, w) "Causes to droop down," weakening their morale.

x) Compare Pilate's statement concerning Jesus [Matt. 27:24].

y) An underground pit for the storage of water. z) See Jer. 37:13. a) Used as a lumber room.

b) A colored man felt sympathy and acted on it. c) Jeremiah was a hard bargainer.

me." ²⁰But Jeremiah said, "You shall not be given to them. Obey now, I plead with you, the voice of the LORD in what I speak to you, and it shall be well with you; your soul shall live. ²¹But if you refuse to go out, this is the word that the LORD has shown me: ^d ²²I saw all the women who were left^e in the king of Judah's house brought out to the king of Babylon's princes, while they said, 'Your trusted friends have deceived you and prevailed against you; now that your feet are sunk in the quicksand, they desert you.' ²³All your wives and your children shall be brought out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but you shall be seized by the hand of the king of Babylon; and this city shall be burned with fire."

²⁴Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no man know of these words, and you shall not die. ²⁵But if the princes hear that I have conferred with you and they come to you and say, 'Tell us now what you said to the king and what did the king say to you.' Hide nothing from us, and we will not put you to death," ²⁶then you shall say to them, 'I was presenting my plea before the king that he would not send me back to Jonathan's house to die there.'"

²⁷Then all the princes came to Jeremiah and asked him; and he answered them with the words as the king instructed him.^f So they left off speaking with him, for the matter^h had not been overheard. ²⁸So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken. He was still there when Jerusalem was taken.

586 B.C.

39 IN THE NINTH YEAR OF ZEDEKIAH king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jeru-

salem and besieged it. ²In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city. ³All the princes of the king of Babylon came and sat¹ in the middle gate: Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rabсарis, Nergal-shareser the Rabmag,^j with all the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. ⁴It eventuated^k when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled and left the city by night by the way of the king's garden, through the gate between the two walls;¹ and he went toward the Arabah.^m ⁵But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and when they had captured him, they brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, at Riblahⁿ in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence upon him. ⁶The king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes. The king of Babylon also slew all the nobles of Judah. ⁷He put out Zedekiah's eyes and bound him with chains to carry him to Babylon. ⁸The Chaldeans burned with fire the king's house and the houses of the people, and the walls of Jerusalem they broke down. ⁹The remainder of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had gone over to him, and the remaining skilled workers, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, carried into exile to Babylon. ¹⁰But poor people who owned nothing, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left in the land of Judah, and he gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

¹¹Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, gave charge concerning Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, ¹²"Take him and look after him; do him no harm, but treat him as he tells you." ¹³So Nebuzaradan the

d) Cf. Jer. 24:1: In a vision of the women leaving the palace and addressing the king in the mocking words of vs. 22b. e) 10,000 carried away in 597 B.C. with Jehoiachin.

f) News reporters of their day. g) There are facts we are wise not to reveal.

h) The details of Zedekiah's conversation with him. i) Held a solemn session for judgment.

j) Names and titles of officers.

k) Vss. 4-10 contain particulars of what happened one month after the capture of the city [II Kings 25:8-12; Jer. 52:12-16]. l) Those below the Fountain Gate [Neh. 2:14].

m) The deep valley through which the Jordan flowed and in which the Dead Sea lay [Deut. 1:1; 3:17].

n) Between the ranges of Lebanon and Hermon, about 100 miles north of Dan and 50 miles south of Hamath.

captain of the guard, Nebushasban chief of eunuchs, and Nergal-sharezer chief of Magi, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon,¹⁴ sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the guard and entrusted him to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan,^o that he should take him home.^p So he lived among the people.

¹⁵The word of the LORD^q came to Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the guard: ¹⁶Go and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: See, I will fulfil my words against this city for punishment and not for pleasure, and they shall be accomplished before you on that day. ¹⁷But I will deliver you on that day, says the LORD, and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. ¹⁸For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be for your booty because you have anchored your trust in Me, says the LORD."

586-581 B.C.

40 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH from the LORD after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah,^r when he had taken him bound in chains among all the exiles of Jerusalem and Judah who were carried captive to Babylon. ²The captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "The LORD your God has pronounced this punishment upon this place. ³The LORD has brought it about just as He decreed. Because you have sinned against the LORD and have not obeyed His voice, this thing is come upon you. ⁴And now, observe! I free you today from the chains on your hands. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you;^s but if it seems wrong to you to come with me to Babylon, then do not go.

See, the whole land is before you; go wherever it seems well and appropriate for you to go. ⁵If you are so minded, you may go back to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has made governor over the cities of Judah, and live with him among the people; but go wherever you think it is right to go." So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance of food and a present, and set him free. ⁶Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah,^t and lived with him among the people who were left in the land.

⁷Now^u when all the captains of the forces in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land and had committed to him men, women, children, and those of the poorest of the land who had not been deported into exile to Babylon, ⁸they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite,^v Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite,^w they and their men. ⁹Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men, saying, "Be not reluctant to serve the Chaldeans;^x live in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. ¹⁰As for me, look, I will live at Mizpah to represent you before the Chaldeans who may come to us; but as for you, gather wine, summer fruits, and oil, put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken."

¹¹Likewise, when all the Jews who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other countries heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam,

o) Gedaliah son of Ahikam, who, twenty years previously, had been instrumental in saving Jeremiah's life [ch. 26:24]. p) From the precincts of the palace in which the court was. q) Vss. 15-18 form a supplement to chapter 38. They relate to a period anterior to the capture of Jerusalem [ch. 39:1-14], while Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard [ch. 38:13, 28]. r) Chapters 40-44 relate events in the life of Jeremiah after the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. s) Jer. 39:12.

t) In Benjamin, probably on the commanding height now called Neby Semwil, four and one-half miles northwest of Jerusalem. u) Vss. 7-9 are abridged in II Kings 25:23, 24.

v) Netophah, a village not far from Jerusalem [Neh. 12:28].

w) Maacah, a land and people southeast of Hermon, east of the lake of Gennesareth [Deut. 3:14].

x) On account of the officers stationed by them in different parts of the country.

the son of Shaphan, as governor over them, ¹²then all the Jews returned from all the places where they had been driven and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruits in abundance.

¹³Now Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah ¹⁴and said to him, "Do you know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites^y has sent Ishmael^z the son of Nethaniah to assassinate you?" But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam would not believe them. ¹⁵Then Johanan the son of Kareah said secretly to Gedaliah in Mizpah, "Let me go, I beg of you, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it. Why should he take your life so that all the Jews who are gathered around you would be scattered and the remnant of Judah would perish?" ¹⁶But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, "You shall not do this thing, for you are falsely accusing Ishmael."

581 B.C.

41 ¹IN^a THE SEVENTH MONTH, ISHMAEL the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of royal descent and one of the chief officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. As they ate bread together there at Mizpah, ²Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him arose and slew with the sword Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and so killed him whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor over the land. ³Ishmael also slew the Jews who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there.^b

⁴The second day after the slaying of Gedaliah, before any one knew it, ⁵eighty men came from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, with their beards shorn, their clothes torn, and with

their bodies gashed,^c bringing oblations and frankincense to present them to the house of the LORD. ⁶Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he walked.^d When he met them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam." ⁷When they came into the city, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the men with them slew them and cast them into a cistern. ⁸But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not slay us, for we have hidden in the field^e wheat, barley, oil, and honey." So he refrained and did not slay them with their companions.

⁹Now the cistern, where Ishmael cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, was the great cistern that King Asa had made for a defense^f against Baasha king of Israel; Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain.

¹⁰Then Ishmael took away captive the whole remnant of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah took them away captive, and he departed to cross over to the Ammonites.

¹¹But when Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces with him heard of all the evil which Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had committed, ¹²they took all the men and went to fight against Ishmael the son of Nethaniah. They overtook him by the great Gibeon waters.^g ¹³When all the people with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces with him, they were glad; ¹⁴so all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned about, came back, and went over to Johanan the son of Kareah. ¹⁵But Ishmael the son of Netha-

y) The king of Ammon was unfriendly to the Chaldeans [ch. 27:3].

z) Regarded Gedaliah as a traitor and desired the governorship of the Judean province.

a) Cf. vs. 1-3 with II Kings 25:25. b) The Chaldeans who formed Gedaliah's bodyguard.

c) Mourning over the fate which had befallen Jerusalem. d) Feigning sympathy with them.

e) Allusion to large subterranean pits used for the storage of grain.

f) For the purpose of supplying Mizpah with water.

g) See II Sam. 2:13; now "El-Jib," about a mile north of Neby Samwil [Mizpah].

niah escaped from Johanan with eight men and fled to the Ammonites.

¹⁶Then Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces with him took all the rest of the people whom Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had carried away from Mizpah, after he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam — soldiers,^h women, children, and eunuchs,ⁱ whom Johanan brought back from Gibeon. ¹⁷They departed and dwelt in Geruth Chimham,^j which is near Bethlehem, intending to enter Egypt, ¹⁸due to the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

581 B.C.

42 THEN^k ALL THE CAPTAINS OF the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Azariah^l the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least to the greatest, came near ²and said to Jeremiah the prophet, "We beg of you, let our supplication be accepted before you, and pray for us to the LORD your God for all this remnant — for we are left but a few out of many, as the sight of your eyes confirms — ³that the LORD your God may declare to us the place we should go and what we should do." ⁴Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I understand you! Look! I will pray to the LORD your God as you have requested, and whatever the LORD shall answer I will tell you; I will keep nothing back from you." ⁵Then they said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act according to every word which the LORD your God shall send to us! ⁶Whether it be pleasing or whether it be hard, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the LORD our God."^m

⁷After ten days the word of the

LORD came to Jeremiah. ⁸Then he called Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, ⁹and said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your request before Him: ¹⁰If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you and not uproot you; for I will regret the calamity that I brought on you. ¹¹Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid; do not fear him, says the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to rescue you from his hand. ¹²I will grant you compassion, so that he may have compassion for you and let you reside in your own land. ¹³But if you say, 'We will not remain in this land,' spurning the voice of the LORD your God, ¹⁴saying, 'No! We will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall neither see war nor hear the sound of the trumpet, or have hunger for bread, and there we will dwell,' ¹⁵then hear the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Ifⁿ you set your faces to enter Egypt and to sojourn there, ¹⁶then the sword which you fear shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine which you are dreading shall follow close after you to Egypt, and there you shall die. ¹⁷All the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to live there, shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, and none of them shall survive or escape from the calamity that I will bring upon them. ¹⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: As My anger and My indignation have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so shall My indignation be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall be an execration, a desolation, a curse, and a reproach. You shall see this place no more. ¹⁹The LORD has said to you, O remnant of Judah, go not into Egypt. Now, there-

h) See Jer. 43:6; 44:20. i) The guardians of the young princesses [vs. 10].

j) So-called from Chimham, son of Barzillai the Gileadite who accompanied David to Jerusalem after Absalom's rebellion [II Sam. 19:37-40]. k) Abridged in II Kings 25:26.

l) Following the LXX, the pre-Christian Greek translation from the Hebrew, commonly called the Septuagint. m) "Your God" repeatedly, as if He were not their God.

n) One of the many "ifs" of God, giving His children a chance to choose His wholesome way.

fore, know for certain that I have warned you this day ²⁰that you have gone astray at the cost of your lives. For you sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD your God, and whatever the LORD our God says, declare to us and we will do it.' ²¹And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not listened to the voice of the LORD your God in anything with which He sent me to you. ²²Now, therefore, know for certain that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, in the place where you choose to go and live."

581 B.C.

43 WHEN JEREMIAH HAD FINISHED speaking to all the people all these words of the LORD their God, with which the LORD their God had sent him to them, ²Azariah the son of Hoshai and Johanan the son of Kareah and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are speaking falsely." The LORD our God did not send you to say, 'Do not go into Egypt to sojourn there'; ³but Baruch the son of Neriah has set you against us in order to deliver us into the hands of the Chaldeans, that they may kill us and carry us into exile to Babylon." ⁴So Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces and all the people did not obey the voice of the LORD to remain in the land of Judah. ⁵Instead, Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces took the whole remnant of Judah who had returned to live in the land of Judah from all the nations to which they had been driven — ⁶the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan;^p also Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the

son of Neriah. ⁷They came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the LORD, and they arrived at Tahpanhes.^q

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: ⁹Take large stones in your hand, and bury them in mortar under the pavement^r which is at the entrance of Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah, ¹⁰and say to them, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Look, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and He will set his throne above these stones that I have buried, and he will spread his glittering tapestry^s over them. ¹¹He shall come and shall smite the land of Egypt, giving to pestilence those who are doomed to pestilence, those for captivity to captivity, and those for the sword to the sword. ¹²He will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them and carry them away captive; he shall array himself with the land of Egypt as a shepherd puts on his garments,^t and he shall go out from there in peace. ¹³He shall break the obelisks of Bethshemesh^u that are in the land of Egypt, and the temples of the gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire."^v

581 B.C.

44 THE WORD THAT CAME TO JEREMIAH concerning all the Jews who lived in the land of Egypt, at Migdol,^w at Tahpanhes, at Noph,^x and in the section of Pathros:^y ²Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You have seen all the calamity that I brought upon Jerusalem and upon all the cities of Judah. Look, this day they are a waste, and no one dwells in them, ³because of their wickedness which they committed, provoking Me

o) To justify their own misdemeanor they had to accuse the prophet of lying. So the Bible is denied authority by many who do not care to carry out its instructions. p) Jer. 40:7; 41:10, 16.

q) Ch. 2:16. Now "Tell Defneh" on the northeastern frontier of Egypt. r) Oblong area. s) Either the carpet on which the royal throne stood or the pavilion about it.

t) Suggesting the ease with which Nebuchadnezzar would take possession of Egypt and treat it as his own.

u) House of the sun — about six miles northeast of modern Cairo, a famous temple dedicated to the sun, with an avenue of obelisks in front of it, built by Thutmes III of the 18th dynasty about 1500 B.C.

v) An inscription of Nebuchadnezzar states that in his 37th year [567 B.C.] he invaded Egypt, defeated its king Amasis [568-525 B.C.], and slaughtered or carried away soldiers and horses.

w) Probably the Magdalo of the Romans, east of Tahpanhes, on the extreme northeastern border of Egypt [Ezek. 29:10]. x) Memphis, near the site of modern Cairo [Jer. 2:16].

y) Upper Egypt, "The Land of the South."

to anger, in that they went to burn incense and serve other gods whom they did not know, neither they, nor you, nor your fathers. ⁴And I persistently sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them,² saying, "Oh, do not practice this abominable thing that I hate!" ⁵But they did not heed or incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense to other gods. ⁶Therefore My indignation and My anger were poured out and were kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they are become a waste and a desolation, as it is this day.

⁷Now, therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Why do you commit a great injury against yourselves, to cut off from you man and woman, infant and child from the midst of Judah, denying yourself a remnant? ⁸Why do you vex Me with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt where you came to abide, so that you may be cut off and become a curse and a hissing among all the nations of the earth? ⁹Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings of Judah, the wickedness of their princes, your own wickedness and of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁰They have not humbled themselves even to this day, nor have they revered or walked in My law and in My statutes which I set before^a you and before your fathers.

¹¹Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: See! I have set My face against you for calamity, to cut off all Judah entirely. ¹²I will take the remnant of Judah, who have set their faces to come into the land of Egypt to live, and they all shall be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall; by the sword and by famine they shall be consumed; from the least

even to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine; and they shall become an execration, a horror, a curse, and a reproach.^b ¹³I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, ¹⁴so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to live in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive to return to the land of Judah, to which they have a desire to return to dwell there; for none shall return except a few escapees.

¹⁵Then all the men who knew that their wives burned incense to other gods, and all the women that stood by—a great assembly—all the people who dwelt in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah, ¹⁶"As for the word which you have spoken to us in the LORD's name, we will not listen to you. ¹⁷But we will certainly perform every word that is gone out of our mouth,^c burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as both we and our fathers have done, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then we had plenty of food; we prospered and experienced no adversity. ¹⁸But since we ceased burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." And the women^d said, ¹⁹"When we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands' approval that we made her cakes portraying her and poured out drink offerings to her?"

²⁰Then Jeremiah said to all the people, men and women, and the people who had answered him, ²¹"As for the incense^e you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember it?

z) An expression occurring eight times in Jeremiah and not elsewhere. It intimates God's special interest, to which so little attention is paid. a) See Deut. 4:8; 11:32; Jer. 9:13; 26:4.

b) Again an "if" in God's announcement of doom; if they repent and obey, He is ready to bless them.

c) A solemn expression for a vow. See Judg. 11:35 ff—Jephthah's daughter; also Num. 30:2, 12.

d) When the women turn from God, the day of doom is near. e) Sweet smoke from sacrifices.

Did it not come into His mind? ²²The LORD could no longer endure your wicked behavior and the abominations which you have committed; therefore your land has become a waste, a desolation, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day. ²³It is because you burned incense, and because you sinned against the LORD and did not obey the LORD's voice or walk in His law and in His statutes and in His testimonies, that this calamity has come upon you, as at this day."

²⁴Jeremiah further said to all the people including the women, "Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who are in the land of Egypt. ²⁵Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You and your wives have spoken with your mouths, and with your hands you have fulfilled it,^f saying, 'We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink offerings to her.'^g Then establish your vows, and perform your vows! ²⁶Consequently, hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: Take note! I have sworn by My great name,^h says the LORD, that My name shall no more be mentioned from the mouth of any man of Judah, saying, 'As the Lord God lives,' in the land of Egypt. ²⁷Look! I am awake over them for punishment and not for favor.ⁱ All the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. ²⁸They that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, who came into the land of Egypt to live there, shall know whose word will stand, Mine or theirs. ²⁹And this shall be a sign to you, says the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, in order that you may know that My words shall surely stand against you

for affliction. ³⁰Thus says the LORD: Look, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hands of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, who also sought his life."^j

604 B.C.

45 THE WORD THAT JEREMIAH THE prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah when he had written these words in a book at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: ²"Thus says the LORD God of Israel to you, O Baruch: ³You said, 'Woe is me, because the LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.'^k ⁴This shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD: Observe, what I have built I will break down, and what I have planted I will pull up — that is, the whole land. ⁵Are you seeking great things for yourself? Do not seek them;^l for remember, I will bring misfortune upon all flesh, says the LORD; but I will grant you your life as a prize of war in all places where you may go."^m

46 THE WORD OF THE LORD WHICH came to Jeremiah the prophet regarding the nations, ²regarding Egypt, concerning the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth yearⁿ of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

³Set in line the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle! ⁴Harness the horses, mount the chargers, and stand forth with your helmets! Polish the lances, and put on the coats of mail! ⁵Why do I see them dismayed and turned backward? Their mighty men^o also are beaten down, are fled in haste, and they look not back. Terror is on every side,^o says the LORD. ⁶Let not

f) See the expression in I Kings 8:15, 24.

g) Being made in God's likeness, we are granted the power to defy His will — always to our destruction. h) I Kings 8:42. i) Ch. 1:10; 21:10; 31:28.

j) "Apries" in Greek [590-571 B.C.], deposed by a military revolution, fell into the hands of Amasis, his successor, who delivered him to the Egyptians by whom he was strangled.

k) To seek great things for ourselves brings disappointments; but seeking great things for God or for others greatness us. l) Chapters 36, 40, and 44 have the same historical background.

m) Equated with the first year of Nebuchadrezzar [604 B.C.]; battle of Carchemish [605 B.C.], the political turning point of the age. n) Warriors. o) See Jer. 6:25.

the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape! Northward by the river Euphrates they have stumbled and fallen.

⁷Who is this that rises up like the Nile, whose waters toss themselves like rivers? ⁸Egypt rises like the Nile, and his waters toss themselves like the streams. And he says, "I will rise up and cover the earth; I will destroy the city and those who dwell in it." ⁹Up,^p you horses, and go wild, you chariots; let the mighty men march forward: men of Cush^q and Put^r who handle the shield, and Lydians^s who handle and bend the bow! ¹⁰But that day belongs to the LORD God of hosts — a day of retribution, to inflict His punishment on His adversaries. The sword^t shall devour and be satiated and drink its fill of their blood.^u For the LORD God of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. ¹¹Go up to Gilead, and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt! In vain you have used many medicines; there is no healing for you. ¹²The nations have heard of your shame, and the earth is full of your cry; for the mighty man has stumbled against the mighty; they have both fallen together.

¹³The word which the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to smite the land of Egypt: ¹⁴Declare in Egypt, and publish in Migdol; announce in Noph and in Tahpanhes. Say, "Stand forth^v and be prepared, for the sword shall devour all around you." ¹⁵Why is your strong one^w dashed down? He did not stand because the LORD thrust him down. ¹⁶He^x made many stumble; they fell one upon another. They said, "Arise, and let us go again to our own peo-

ple, to the land of our nativity, because of the oppressing sword." ¹⁷Call the name of Pharaoh king of Egypt, "Brawler^y who lets the appointed time^z pass by." ¹⁸As I live, announces the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts, surely there shall come one^a like Tabor among the mountains and like Carmel by the sea. ¹⁹O thou daughter, the one^b dwelling in Egypt, prepare yourself to go into exile;^c for Noph shall become a desolation, a ruin without inhabitant!

²⁰Egypt is a graceful heifer; but a gadfly^d from the north has come upon her. ²¹Even her hired soldiers in the midst of her are like calves of the stall,^e for they also have turned back; they are fled together; they did not stand; for the day of their calamity has come upon them, the time of their retribution. ²²Her voice sounds like a serpent's;^f for her enemies march, and they come against her with axes like those who fell the trees. ²³They shall cut down her forest, says the LORD, though it be invulnerable, because they^g are more numerous than the locusts. ²⁴The daughter of Egypt shall be put to shame. She shall be given into the hand of the people from the North. ²⁵The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, says: See, I will punish Amon of No,^h Pharaoh, Egypt and her gods and her kings, Pharaoh, and those trusting in him. ²⁶I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their life, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and of his officers. Afterwards Egypt shall be inhabited as in the days of old, says the LORD.ⁱ

²⁷But you, fear not, O Jacob, My servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel; for be assured I will save you from afar, and your posterity from the land

p) Ironically bids the Egyptians to begin their attack with all their forces — availing nothing.

q) The Ethiopians. r) The Libyans [Ezek. 30:5; Dan. 11:43].

s) People dwelling on the western border of Egypt.

t) The sword of the Chaldeans which will annihilate the Egyptians.

u) Literally, "be soaked and saturated with" [Isa. 34:5, 7].

v) Take your stand to resist the invader [II Sam. 23:12].

w) Your "bull" — allusion to Apis, the sacred bull of the Egyptians [Ps. 22:12b]: "the strong ones" of Bashan — the "bulls" of Bashan. x) The LORD.

y) Symbolical of a great disaster [Jer. 20:3]. z) When he might have averted disaster.

a) A foe [Nebuchadnezzar], towering above all others.

b) Personification of the population of Egypt.

c) Prepare household goods, dress, provisions, etc., to go into exile. d) Figure for the Babylonians.

e) Well-nourished, but useless in war [Amos 6:4].

f) Inaudible, so weak and powerless will Egypt have then become. g) The host of the invaders.

h) Thebes, the capital of upper Egypt; Amon, the tutelary god of Thebes [Nahum 3:8].

i) Ezek. 29:13, 14 on the expectation of Egypt's future restoration.

of their captivity. Jacob shall return and enjoy rest and ease, and none shall make him afraid. ²⁸Fear not, O Jacob, My servant, announces the LORD, for I am with you. I will make a full end of all the nations, where I have driven you, but of you I will not make a full end. I will fairly correct you, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.¹

47 WHAT CAME AS THE LORD'S word to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines before Pharaoh smote Gaza.^k ²Thus says the LORD: See, waters are rising out of the North,¹ and they shall become an overflowing torrent; they shall flood the land and all that is in it, the city and those who dwell in it. Men shall cry out, and all the inhabitants of the land shall wail. ³At the tumult of the galloping of his steeds, at the clattering of his chariots, at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers look not back to their children, so feeble are their hands ⁴because of the day that is coming to destroy all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper that survives. For the LORD is destroying the Philistines, the remnant of the isle of Caphtor.^m ⁵Baldnessⁿ has come upon Gaza; Ashkelon has perished. O remnant of the Anakim,^o how long will you gash yourself?^p ⁶Ah, sword of the LORD! How long will it be until you are quiet? Put up yourself into your scabbard; rest, and be still! ⁷How can it be quiet, when the LORD has given it a charge? Against Ashkelon and against the seashore, there has He appointed it.

Prior to 605 B.C.

48 ABOUT MOAB:^q **1** **THUS SAYS THE LORD** of hosts, the God of Israel: Woe to Nebo,^r because it is laid waste; Kiriathaim is put to shame, it is taken; Misgab^s is put to shame and broken down; ²the renown of Moab is gone. In Heshbon^t they have devised ill against her, saying, "Come, and let us cut her off from being a nation." You, too, O Madmen,^u you shall be brought to silence; the sword shall pursue after you. ³Listen! A cry from Horonaim, of spoiling and great destruction! ⁴Moab is destroyed; a cry is to be heard as far as Zoar.^v ⁵For at the ascent of Luhith they go up with weeping; for at the descent to Horonaim they have heard a cry of destruction. ⁶Flee! Save your lives! Be like a donkey in the desert.^w ⁷For, because you have trusted in your strongholds and in your treasures, you also shall be taken; and Chemosh^x shall go forth into exile with his priests and princes. ⁸The spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape; the valley^y too shall perish, and the tableland^z shall be destroyed, as the LORD has spoken. ⁹Give wings to Moab, for she is eager to fly away; her cities shall become a desolation, without any to dwell in them. ¹⁰Cursed be anyone doing the LORD's work negligently; and cursed be anyone keeping back his sword from blood.

¹¹Moab has been at ease from his youth and has settled on his lees;^a he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, nor has he gone into exile; so his taste^b remains in him, and his scent is not changed. ¹²Therefore, take

j) God's punishment on earth is disciplinary; it is aimed at repentance and a change of behavior and is constructive when so accepted. So His offspring are His disciples.

k) The date of Pharaoh's smiting Gaza is uncertain. l) Referring to the Chaldeans.

m) Probably Crete or Cilicia [Amos 9:7; Deut. 2:23].

n) A mark of mourning [Jer. 16:6; Deut. 14:1; Micah 1:16].

o) A giant race, dwelling in or near Hebron in pre-historic times [Num. 13:22, 28; Josh. 11:21; Judg. 1:20]. p) Another mark of mourning [ch. 16:6; Deut. 14:1].

q) The rich plateau east of the Dead Sea. r) The city, not the mountain [Num. 33:47; Deut. 34:1]. s) "A high retreat."

t) An ancient, famous Moabite city, about 13 miles east of the upper end of the Dead Sea; the capital of Sihon king of the Amorites. After its allocation to Reuben, it fell into the hands of the Moabites [Josh. 13:17; Isa. 15:4]. u) Moab. v) At the extreme southeast of the Dead Sea.

w) Stripped and desolate [Jer. 17:6]. x) The national god of Moab.

y) As in Josh. 13:11, 27; probably the broad depression into which the Jordan valley opens as it approaches the Dead Sea. z) The plateau, about 2500 feet above the Mediterranean Sea, on which most Moabite cities lay [Deut. 3:10; Josh. 13:9].

a) As the sediment at the bottom of a wine vat accumulates and remains in its place when there is no pouring out, so Moab is too inactive, stale.

b) Experience of Moab's national character and its spirit of haughty independence [vs. 29].

note! The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will send tilters to him who will tilt him, empty his vessels, and dash their jars in pieces.¹³ Then Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed^c of Bethel, their confidence.^d ¹⁴How can you say, "We are heroes and valiant warriors?" ¹⁵The destroyer of Moab and of his cities has come up, and the flower of his young men is gone down to the slaughter, says the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. ¹⁶The calamity of Moab is near at hand, and his affliction is fast hastening. ¹⁷Be-moan him, all you who surround him and all who know his name; say, "How is the strong staff broken, the beautiful rod!"^e ¹⁸Come down from your glory, and sit on parched ground, O you daughter,^f the one inhabiting Dibon;^g for the spoiler of Moab is come against you; he has destroyed your fortresses. ¹⁹Stand by the way and watch, O inhabitress of Aroer!^h Ask him who flees and her who escapes; say, "What is the matter?"

²⁰Moab is put to shame, for it is shattered. Howl and cry! Tell it by the Arnon, that Moab is laid waste. ²¹Judgment has come upon the table-land, upon Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath, ²²Dibon, Nebo, Bethdiblahaim, ²³Kiriathaim, Bethgamul, Bethmeon, ²⁴Kerioth, Bozrahⁱ and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far and near. ²⁵The horn^j of Moab is sawed off, and his arm is broken, says the LORD.

²⁶Make him drunk,^k for he has magnified himself against the LORD; let Moab splash in his vomit,^l and let him also be held in derision. ²⁷Was

not Israel a derision to you? Was he found among thieves, that whenever you spoke of him you wagged the head?^m ²⁸Leave the cities, and dwell in the rocks, O you inhabitants of Moab, and be like the dove that makes her nest in the side of the cave's mouth!

²⁹We have heard of the pride of Moab — he is very proud — of his loftiness, his pride, and his arrogance, and the haughtiness of his heart. ³⁰I know his insolence, so speaks the LORD; his wrath and his boastings are untrue; his deeds are false. ³¹Therefore I howl for Moab, and I cry out for all Moab; for the men of Kirheresⁿ I moan.^o ³²With more than the weeping of Jazer I weep for you, O vine of Sibmah!^p Your branches passed over the sea,^q they reached even to Jazer; upon your summer fruits and upon your vintage the spoiler has descended. ³³Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruitful field and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to cease from the wine vats; no one treads the grapes with shouting;^r the shouting is not the shout of joy.^s ³⁴Heshbon and Elealeh cry out; as far as Jahaz they utter their voice, from Zoar to Horonaim and the third Eg-lath, for the waters of Nimrim also shall become desolate.^t ³⁵And I will cause to cease from Moab, so speaks the LORD, him who offers sacrifice in the high place and burns incense to his god. ³⁶Therefore My heart sounds for Moab like a flute, and My heart yearns like a flute for the men of Kirheres;^u therefore the riches they had gathered have perished. ³⁷For every head is bald, and every beard is

c) We would say, "be disappointed by." d) See Amos 5:5. e) Figures of strength and authority.

f) Figure for population [Jer. 46:19].

g) Thirteen miles east of the Dead Sea and four miles north of Arnon.

h) Four miles southeast of Dibon, but about 1500 feet below it, just on the north edge of the deep chasm through which the Arnon flows.

i) Probably Bezer of Deut. 4:43; Josh. 20:8; site uncertain.

j) A figure for power [Ps. 75:10; Lam. 2:3, 17]. k) Let him be bewildered by terror and despair.

l) A further trait of Moab's helplessness [Jer. 25:27].

m) Was Israel like a detected thief, for you to wag your head at him in mockery?

n) The Kirhariseth of II Kings 3:25; Isa. 16:7, was probably Kerah, 18 miles south of the Arnon, and 8 miles east of the Dead Sea, a strongly fortified place, situated on a very steep, rocky hill, surrounded by deep ravines.

o) With a low, plaintive cry, resembling the note of the dove.

p) As weeping over its ruined vineyards, so will I weep. q) Dead Sea.

r) "Hidad," the joyous shout, or hurrah, of the vintagers as they trod the juice out of the grapes in the wine presses. s) But shouting of attacking foes.

t) They will be dried up, their sources being stopped by the enemy [II Kings 3:25].

u) Named from Isa. 16:11.

clipped; upon all the hands are gashes, and on the loins is sackcloth. ³⁸Upon all the housetops of Moab and in the streets every one is wailing; for I have broken Moab like a vessel in which no one delights, says the LORD. ³⁹How it is broken! How they howl! How Moab has turned the back in shame! So Moab has become a derision and a horror to all that surround him.

⁴⁰For thus says the LORD: Observe! One like an eagle^v shall swoop down and spread out his wings against Moab.

⁴¹Kerioth^w shall be taken and the fortresses seized. The heart of the mighty men of Moab in that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her birth pangs. ⁴²Moab shall be destroyed and no longer be a people, because he has magnified himself against the LORD.

⁴³Terror, pit, and trap are before you, O inhabitant of Moab; so speaks the LORD. ⁴⁴He who flees from the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who climbs out of the pit shall be caught in the trap. For I will bring these things upon Moab in the year of their punishment,^x says the LORD. ⁴⁵Under the shadow of Heshbon they who fled stand powerless,^y for a fire has gone forth from Heshbon, and a flame from the house of Sihon;^z it has devoured the temples of Moab's head, and the craniums of the sons of tumult.^a ⁴⁶Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh are undone; for your sons have been taken away captive, and your daughters into captivity. ⁴⁷Yet will I restore the fortunes of Moab in the latter days, says the LORD. So much for the judgment upon Moab.

605 B.C.

49 CONCERNING THE AMMONITES, thus says the LORD: Has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why then has Milcom^b dispossessed Gad, and his people settled in its cities? ²Therefore,

look, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will cause the battle cry to be heard against Rabbah of the children of Ammon; it shall become a desolate mound, and her daughters^c shall be burned with fire. Then Israel shall dispossess those who dispossessed him, says the LORD. ³Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai^d is laid waste! Cry, O daughters of Rabbah! Gird yourselves with sackcloth; lament, and run back and forth among the hedges! For Milcom shall go into exile with his priests and his princes. ⁴Why do you glory in your valleys,^e O backsliding daughter, who trusts in her treasures, saying, "Who will come against us?" ⁵Look! I will bring terror upon you, says the Lord God of hosts, from all who are around you, and you shall be driven out, every man straight ahead, and there shall be none to gather the fugitives. ⁶But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites, says the LORD.

⁷Concerning Edom, thus says the LORD of hosts: Is wisdom no more in Teman?^f Has counsel perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom faded?^g

⁸Flee, turn back, hide deeply,^h O inhabitants of Dedan!ⁱ For when I punish him I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him. ⁹If grape pickers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? If thieves came by night, would they not destroy till they had enough?

¹⁰But I have stripped Esau bare; I have disclosed his lurking places, and he is not able to hide himself. His offspring is spoiled and his brother and his neighbors, and he is no more.

¹¹Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let your widows trust in Me.

¹²For thus says the LORD: Mind you, if those, who did not deserve to drink of the cup,^j must drink it, will

v) A figure of the foe, Nebuchadrezzar.

w) An important city of Moab, mentioned in Amos 2:2; also by Mesha on the Moabite Stone.

x) See ch. 11:23; 23:12. y) In vain the fugitive Moabites seek protection in Heshbon.

z) A political designation of Heshbon, Sihon's old capital [Num. 21:26; Deut. 2:26].

a) Moab's martial warriors. b) The national god of the Ammonites [1 Kings 11:5, 33].

c) Figure for surrounding towns or villages [Num. 21:25; 32:42; Josh. 15:45].

d) An Ammonite town. Not the Ai that Joshua conquered in the southern conquest.

e) Alluding to the broad open plain, about 2700 feet above the sea, surrounded on three sides by mountains in which Rabbah itself lay. f) A district in the north of Edom [Amos 1:12].

g) Aramaic "corrupted." h) Hide yourselves in inaccessible places.

i) Neighbors of Edom on the southeast who are here bidden to take flight if they wish to escape Edom's fate [Isa. 21:13]. j) The cup of the Lord's anger.

you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you shall surely drink. ¹³For I have sworn by Myself, says the LORD, that Bozrah^k shall become a horror, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all her cities shall become perpetual wastes.

¹⁴I have heard a rumor from the LORD, and an ambassador has been sent among the nations, saying, "Get together and come against her; rise up for battle." ¹⁵For, observe, I will make you small among the nations and despised among men. ¹⁶The dread for you, the pride of your heart has deceived you, O you who dwell in the clefts^l of the rock, who hold the height of the hill.^m Though you should make your nest like the eagle's, even from there I would bring you down, says the LORD. ¹⁷Edom shall become a horror; every one who passes by shall be horrified and shall hiss because of all its calamities. ¹⁸As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbor cities,ⁿ says the LORD, no man shall dwell there; no man shall sojourn in her. ¹⁹See, there shall come up one like a lion from the Jordan jungles^o against the enduring habitation.^p But in a moment I will chase them away, and whosoever is chosen, him will I appoint over it; for who is like Me, and who will set a time for Me?^q What shepherd can stand before Me? ²⁰Therefore, hear the counsel which the LORD has devised against Edom and the purposes which He has planned against the inhabitants of Teman. Even the little ones of the flock^r shall be dragged away; surely He shall make their homestead appalling because of them. ²¹At the sound of their

fall the earth trembles; the sound of their cry is heard at the Red Sea. ²²See, one like an eagle shall mount up and swoop and spread out his wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the mighty men of Edom in that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her birth pangs.

²³Concerning Damascus: Hamath^a and Arpad^t are put to shame, for they have heard bad tidings; they melted in fear,^u they are troubled like the sea; they cannot rest. ²⁴Damascus has waxed feeble; she turned herself to flee, and panic seized her; anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her as of a woman in her labors. ²⁵How the renowned city is forsaken, the city of My joy! ²⁶Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be silenced in that day, says the LORD of hosts. ²⁷I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the palaces of Benhadad.^v

²⁸Concerning Kedar^w and the kingdoms of Hazor^x which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote, thus says the LORD: Rise up! March against Kedar! Despoil the people of the east! ²⁹Their tents and their flocks shall be appropriated; their curtains, all their vessels^y and their camels shall be taken from them, and men shall cry to them, "Terror on every side!"^z ³⁰Flee, wander far away, hide completely, O inhabitants of Hazor! says the LORD. For Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon has schemed against you and has conceived a plan against you. ³¹Up,^a and march against a nation that is at ease, that lives carelessly, says the LORD, that has neither gates nor bars, that dwells alone.^b ³²Their camels shall be a

k) A city in the north of Edom, now Busaiah, about 20 miles southeast of the Dead Sea [Isa. 34:6; Amos 1:12]. l) Refuge or retreats.

m) Allusion to the physical topography of Edom. Petra, its capital, lay in an amphitheater of mountains, accessible only through the narrow gorge, called the Siq, winding in with precipitous sides from the west.

n) Admah and Zebaiim, destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah [Gen. 14:2, 8; 19:28].

o) "The pride of the Jordan" [Jer. 12:5; Zech. 11:3].

p) The abode of long standing, and likely to endure. q) See Job 9:19.

r) Edomites, the most helpless of peoples, whom their enemies, like dogs, will drag along and treat as they please [ch. 15:3]. s) 110 miles north of Damascus.

t) 95 miles north of Hamath and 10 miles north of Aleppo. Both cities appear in Isa. 10:9; 36:19; 37:13, and frequently in Assyrian inscriptions.

u) Rendered powerless through fear [Josh. 2:9, 24; Ps. 75:3]. v) See Amos 1:4.

w) A wealthy pastoral tribe [Isa. 60:7], famous also as bowmen [Isa. 21:17], living in villages [Isa. 42:11], in the wilderness to the east or southeast of Palestine [Isa. 21:16 ff; Jer. 2:10], often mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions.

x) Or "the village settlements" - Hazor probably a collective term denoting Arab tribes living in fixed settlements or villages. y) Tent hangings. z) Ch. 6:25; 20:3, 4, 10; 46:5.

a) Addressed to the assailants of Hazor. b) In seclusion, far from liability of attack.

booty, and the herds of their cattle shall be for a spoil. I will scatter to the winds those who clipped the corners of their hair; and from every side of them I will bring their calamity, says the LORD. ³³Hazor shall become a den of wild dogs, a desolation forever; no man shall live there, no man shall sojourn there.

³⁴That which came as the LORD's word to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam^c in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah. ³⁵Thus says the LORD of hosts: Look! I will break the bow of Elam, the main element of their strength.^d ³⁶I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and I will scatter them to all these winds; there shall be no nation to which the outcasts of Elam shall not come.^e ³⁷I will terrify Elam before their enemies, and before those who seek their life; I will bring adversity upon them, even My fierce indignation, says the LORD. I will send the sword after them until I have consumed them; ³⁸and I will set My throne^f in Elam and will destroy their king and princes, says the LORD. ³⁹But in the latter days I will restore the fortunes of Elam, says the LORD.

593 B.C.

50 THE WORD WHICH THE LORD spoke regarding Babylon, regarding the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet: ²Declare among the nations and publish, lift up a standard and publish; conceal it not, and say, "Babylon is taken; Bel^g is put to shame; Merodach is dismayed. Her images are put to shame; her idol-blocks^h are dismayed." ³For there has come up against her a nation out of the North;ⁱ it shall render her land a desolation, and none shall dwell in it; both man and beast shall flee away.

⁴In those days and in that time, says

the LORD, the children of Israel and the children of Judah shall come together, weeping as they come; and they shall seek the LORD their God. ⁵They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces turned toward it, saying, "Come and let us join ourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten."

⁶My people have been as lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to stray, turning them away on the mountains;^j they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place. ⁷All who found them have devoured them, and their adversaries said, "We are not guilty,"^k because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation^l of righteousness and the hope of their fathers, the LORD. ⁸Flee from the midst of Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks.^m

⁹For, note! I am stirring up and am bringing against Babylon a coalition of great nations from the north country, and they shall set themselves in array against her; from there she shall be taken.ⁿ Their arrows are like an expert warrior who returns not empty-handed.^o

¹⁰Chaldea shall be plundered, and all who plunder her shall have their fill, says the LORD. ¹¹Though you exult, though you rejoice, O you that plunder My heritage, though you skip like a calf in pasture and neigh like a stallion, ¹²your mother^p shall be utterly ashamed; she who bore you shall be disgraced. Look! You shall be the hindmost of the nations, a desert, as a dry land and a steppe.^q ¹³Because of the indignation of the LORD she shall not be inhabited but shall be wholly desolate; every one who passes by Babylon shall be appalled and shall hiss because of all her wounds.^r

c) On the east of Babylonia [ch. 25:25]. d) Their "atomic bomb."

e) As fugitives or as immigrants. f) The throne of judgment [ch. 1:15; 43:10].

g) A title of Merodach [Marduk], the supreme god of Babylon, meaning "lord" [Isa. 46:1].

h) A contemptuous name for idols; used thirty-nine times by Ezekiel, six times by the compiler of Kings, once in Lev., and in Deut., and here.

i) Media was northeast of Babylon [ch. 51:11, 28; Isa. 13:17].

j) Instead of pasturing them, they have lived on them by false teachings. k) Contrast ch. 2:3.

l) Literally, "honesty." [ch. 31:23]. m) Leading the way.

n) God, the sovereign Lord, moves peoples, who do not acknowledge Him, to discipline other nations, including Israel. o) See II Sam. 1:22.

p) Babylon regarded as the mother of its individual citizens. q) See ch. 2:6; 51:43.

r) Ch. 19:8; 49:17.

¹⁴Set yourselves in array against Babylon all around, all you who bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows; for she has sinned against the LORD.

¹⁵Shout against her round about; she has surrendered;^a her buttresses are fallen, her walls are thrown down. For this is the LORD's retribution; take vengeance on her. Do to her as she has done. ¹⁶Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him who handles the sickle in the time of harvest. For fear of the oppressing sword, they shall turn everyone to his own people, and everyone shall flee to his own land.¹

¹⁷Israel is a hunted sheep, driven away by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured him, and now at last Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon has gnawed his bones. ¹⁸Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Observe, I am bringing punishment upon the king of Babylon and on his land, as I punished the king of Assyria. ¹⁹I will bring Israel back to his homestead; he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul^u shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. ²⁰In those days and at that time, says the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be searched for, and there shall be none; the sins of Judah, too, and none shall be found; for I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.

²¹Go up against the land of Merathaim^v and against the inhabitants of Pekod.^w Slay and utterly destroy^x what is left, says the LORD, and do all that I have ordered you. ²²There is a sound of battle in the land and of great destruction.^y ²³How the hammer of the whole earth is cut asunder and broken! How Babylon has become a desolation among the nations! ²⁴I have laid a snare for you, and you were also taken, O Babylon, and you were not aware of it; you were found and caught because you have provoked the LORD.

²⁵The LORD has opened His armory and has brought out the weapons of his indignation;^z for the LORD God of hosts has a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans. ²⁶Come against her from every quarter; open her fodder-stores; pile her up like shocks of grain and destroy her utterly; let nothing be left of her. ²⁷Slay all her bulls;^a let them go down to the slaughter. Woe to them! For their day is come, the time of their retribution. ²⁸Listen! They^b flee and escape^b out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the recompense of the LORD our God, the retribution of His temple.^c

²⁹Muster the archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow. Encamp against her on every side; let no one escape. Recompense her according to her actions, do to her according to all that she has done; for she has proudly defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ³⁰Therefore her young men shall drop in her streets, and all her men of war shall be silenced in that day, says the LORD.^d ³¹See! I am against you, O you proud one, says the LORD God of hosts. For your day has come, the time when I will chasten you.^e ³²The proud one shall stumble and fall, with none to lift him up; I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall engulf all that is around him.

³³Thus says the LORD of hosts: The children of Israel and the children of Judah are oppressed together; all who took them captive hold them fast; they refuse to let them go. ³⁴Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is His name. He will surely defend their cause, so that He may give rest to the earth, but disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

³⁵A sword is upon the Chaldeans, says the LORD, upon the inhabitants of Babylon, upon her princes and her wise men! ³⁶A sword is upon the

s) Lam. 5:6. t) Isa. 13:14; allusion to foreigners settled in Babylon.

u) The seat or organ of appetites [ch. 31:14]. v) A name for Babylonia.

w) A people of Babylonia [Ezek. 23:23], mentioned by Sargon among tribes bordering on Elam.

x) "Ban" or "devote" [ch. 25:9]. y) Ch. 48:3; 51:54.

z) Figure for the nations who unconsciously perform His purpose against Babylon [Isa. 13:5].

a) Figure for young warriors [Isa. 34:7; Jer. 48:15]. b) The liberated Jews.

c) Punishment due for their burning His temple. d) Repeated from ch. 49:26.

e) See vs. 27; ch. 46:21.

boasters,^f and they shall dote,^g a sword is upon her warriors, and they shall be dismayed. ³⁷A sword is upon her horses and upon her chariots and upon all the foreign troops^h who are among her, and they shall become as women; a sword is upon her treasures, and they shall be robbed. ³⁸A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up. For it is a land of graven images, and through idolsⁱ they make themselves demented. ³⁹Therefore wild beasts^j of the desert, with howling creatures,^k shall resort there, and ostriches shall home in her. It shall be no more populated forever, neither inhabited for all generations. ⁴⁰As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbor cities, says the LORD, so no man shall live there, neither shall a son of man stay there.

⁴¹Look!^l A people comes from the North, and a great nation and many kings are stirring from the remote corners of the earth. ⁴²They lay hold of bow and spear; they are cruel and have no mercy. Their voices roar like the sea, and they ride upon horses, arrayed as a man to the battle against you, O daughter of Babylon! ⁴³The king of Babylon has heard the fame of them, and his hands hang helpless; distress has seized him and pain as of a woman in labor. ⁴⁴Look,^m there is one like a lion coming from the Jordan jungle against an enduring habitation; I will suddenly chase them away from it, and I will place over it whomever I choose. For who is like Me? And who will set a time for Me? And what shepherd can stand before Me? ⁴⁵Therefore hear the program of the LORD which He devised against Babylon, and the purposes that He has planned against the land of the Chaldeans. Surely they

shall drag them away, even the small ones of the flock; surely He shall make their homestead appalled before them. ⁴⁶At the tidings,ⁿ "Babylon is taken," the earth shall tremble, and the cry shall be heard among the nations.

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51 **THUS SPEAKS THE LORD:** TAKE note! I will arouse the spirit of a destroyer^o against Babylon and against the inhabitants of Lebkamai.^p ²I will send to Babylon winnowers who shall winnow her, and they shall empty her land when they come against her from every side on the day of trouble. ³Let not the archer bend his bow, and let him not lift himself up in his coat of mail.^q Do not spare her young men; utterly destroy all her host. ⁴The slain shall drop down in the land of the Chaldeans, the wounded in her streets. ⁵For Israel and Judah have not been left in widowhood^r by their God, the LORD of hosts, although their land^s is full of guilt before the Holy One of Israel. ⁶Flee out of the midst of Babylon; let every man save his life! Be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is a time of retribution for the LORD, the recompense He is repaying her.

⁷Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand making all the earth drunk; the nations drank of his wine; therefore the nations went mad!^t ⁸Suddenly Babylon has fallen and is broken! Howl for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. ⁹We^u would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; for her judgment reaches to heaven; it even pierces the sky. ¹⁰The LORD has revealed our righteousness.^v Come, let us declare in Zion the word of the LORD our God.

f) The prophets and diviners, who promised Babylon security [Isa. 44:25].

g) Become foolish [Isa. 19:3; Jer. 5:4]. h) Foreign mercenaries.

i) Objects of alarm, ironically for false gods. j) Arabic, "wild cats" [Isa. 34:14].

k) Probably wolves [Isa. 13:22].

l) Vss. 41-43 are repeated from ch. 6:22-24 with the necessary changes, adapting them from Judah to Babylon.

m) Vss. 44-46 are repeated from 49:19-21, with the necessary changes, adapting them from Edom to Babylon. n) Hebrew, "sound" or "voice." o) See ch. 22:7.

p) Meaning "the heart of," or "the midst," "center," of Chaldea.

q) Let none of the warriors of Babylon arm themselves to defend her, for it will be useless.

r) See the figure in Isa. 54:4. s) Of the Chaldeans.

t) Bewildered and helpless before her [ch. 25:16].

u) In vs. 9, 10 the Jews in Babylon are addressing other foreigners resident in Babylon to flee to their own land since the doom of Babylon is sealed.

v) Has shown openly the justice of our cause by the overthrow of our oppressors [Ps. 37:6; Isa. 62:1b, 2].

¹¹Polish^w the arrows; put on the shields.^x The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of Media,^y because His plan regarding Babylon is to destroy it; for that is the LORD's recompense, the retribution for His temple.^z

¹²Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon; make the watch strong;^a set up guards;^b prepare the ambushes; for the LORD has both devised and done what He spoke against the dwellers of Babylon. ¹³O you who dwell by many waters, rich in treasures, your end has come; the thread of your life is severed!^c ¹⁴The LORD of hosts has sworn by Himself: Surely I will fill you with men^d as numerous as locusts,^e and they shall sound forth a shout over you.

¹⁵It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom and by His understanding stretched out the heavens. ¹⁶When He utters His voice,^f there is a roar of waters in the heavens and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. He makes lightnings for the rain, and He brings forth the wind out of His treasures. ¹⁷Then every man becomes senseless and loses knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image. For his molten image is falsehood, and there is no spirit in them. ¹⁸They are vanity, a work of mockery; in the time of their punishment they shall perish. ¹⁹The portion of Jacob is not like these, for He is the Creator of all things; and Israel is the tribe of His inheritance; the LORD of hosts is His name.

²⁰You are My war club,^g My weapons of war; with you I will shatter the nations; with you I will destroy the kingdoms; ²¹with you I will shatter the horse and his rider; with you I will shatter the chariot and the charioteer;

²²with you I will shatter man and woman, and with you I will shatter the young man and the maid; ²³with you I will shatter the shepherd and his flock; with you I will shatter the farmer and his yoke of oxen; with you I will shatter governors and viceroys.^h ²⁴I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your eyes for all the harm that they have wrought in Zion, says the LORD.

²⁵See, I am against you, O destroying mountain, so speaks the LORD, who destroys all the earth. I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the crags and make you a burnt mountain.ⁱ ²⁶They shall not take from you even a stone for a corner nor a stone for foundations, but you shall be desolate forever, says the LORD.

²⁷Set up a standard on the earth; blow the trumpet among the nations; prepare the nations against her; muster against her the kingdoms of Ararat,^j Minni,^k and Ashkenaz;^l appoint a marshal^m against her; bring up horses like rough locusts.ⁿ ²⁸Prepare the nations for war against her, the kings of Media with their governors and every land under their dominion. ²⁹The land trembles and writhes in anguish; for the LORD's purposes against Babylon stand, to make the land of Babylonia a desolation without inhabitant. ³⁰The mighty men^o of Babylon have ceased to fight, they remain in fortresses; their power has failed, they have become like women; her dwelling places are on fire; her bars are broken. ³¹One post^p runs to meet another, and one^q messenger to meet the next, to tell the king of Babylon that his city is engulfed on every side, ³²that the fords^r have been seized; the bulwarks are burned with fire, and the men of war are panicky.

w) See Isa. 49:2. x) Suits of armor. y) Cyrus [Isa. 13:17; Ezra 1:1].

z) Ch. 50:28. a) Blockade it closely.

b) Men to watch the city closely by blockading it; thus "guarders," "blockaders."

c) The web of your destiny is finished [Isa. 38:12]. d) The assailants.

e) In the pupa stage of their development. f) In thunder.

g) Something that shatters or dashes in pieces [see Nahum 2:1].

h) Both words are of Assyrian origin, often used in the Assyrian inscriptions of governors of cities or provinces. i) As barren and exhausted as an extinct volcano.

j) "Urartu" of the Assyrian inscriptions, northwest of Lake Van, corresponding generally to modern Armenia. k) "Manna" of the Assyrian inscriptions, southeast of Lake Van.

l) Perhaps the "Ashguza" of the inscriptions, south of Lake Urumiyeh.

m) Some high military official [see Nahum 3:17].

n) Locust in the second or pupa stage; its wings are enveloped in hornlike sheaths and project roughly on the back. o) The warriors. p) See Esther 3:13, 15; Job 9:25.

q) "Teller" — news-bearer. r) Across the Euphrates.

³⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor at the time when it is trodden;^a yet a little while and the time of her harvest will come.^t ³⁴"Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me,"^u he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel;^v he has swallowed me up like a monster;^w he has filled his stomach with my delicacies; then he threw me out. ³⁵"The violence done to me and to my flesh^x be upon Babylon," let the inhabitress of Zion say, "My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea," let Jerusalem say.

³⁶Therefore thus says the LORD: Take note! I will defend your cause and require recompense; I will dry up her sea and make her fountain dry;^y ³⁷Babylon shall become heaps, a kennel for wild dogs, a horror, and a hissing, without inhabitant.

³⁸They shall jointly roar like young lions.^z They shall growl as lions' whelps. ³⁹When they are infuriated, I will prepare them a feast and make them drunk, that they may exult^a and sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up, says the LORD. ⁴⁰I will bring them down like lambs to be slaughtered, like rams and he-goats.^b ⁴¹How Sheshach^c is taken! And the praise of the whole earth seized! How Babylon has become a desolation among the nations! ⁴²The sea^d is come upon Babylon; she is covered with her multitudinous waves. ⁴³Her cities are become a desolation, dry land and a steppe, a land in which nobody dwells, neither shall any person pass through it. ⁴⁴I will punish Bel^e in Babylon, and I will take out of his mouth what he has swallowed up.^f The nations shall no longer

stream toward him. Yes, the wall of Babylon has fallen!

⁴⁶Move out from her midst, O My people! Let everyone save his life from the LORD's fierce indignation! ⁴⁶Be careful, lest your heart faint, and be not afraid concerning the rumor that is heard in the land. A rumor one year, another rumor the next year. There is violence in the land, ruler is against ruler.

⁴⁷Therefore, see! The days are coming when I will punish the graven images of Babylon; her whole land shall be put to shame, and all her slain shall fall in her midst. ⁴⁸Then heaven and earth, and all that is in them, shall herald their joy over Babylon; for from the North spoilers shall come against her, says the LORD. ⁴⁹Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel, as for Babylon have fallen the slain of all the earth.^g ⁵⁰You who have escaped the sword, go, and do not stand still.^h Remember the LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. ⁵¹Weⁱ are put to shame because we have heard reproach; dishonor has covered our faces, for strangers are come into the holy places of the LORD's house.

⁵²Therefore, take notice! The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will execute judgment upon her graven images, and through all her land the wounded shall groan. ⁵³Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength,^j yet from Me would spoilers come upon her, says the LORD. ⁵⁴Listen! A cry from Babylon!^k The noise of a great crash from the land of the Chaldeans! ⁵⁵For the LORD is devastating Babylon and silencing her loud report.^l Their waves^m roar like

s) Trodden down hard in readiness for the threshing.

t) Soon Babylon will be as the grain on the floor itself.

u) Israel is dramatically introduced as the speaker. v) Spoiled and stripped of everything.

w) "Tannia," denoting a large sea or river monster [as the crocodile of Ps. 74:13; Ezek. 29:3].

x) My torn and injured flesh.

y) Probably alluding to the great lake constructed by Nebuchadrezzar for the defense of Babylon.

z) So elated over their spoils.

a) That they may be elated, at least for the time, by the intoxication of the feast. b) Isa. 34:6.

c) Babel [Babylon]. d) The overwhelming numbers of invaders [ch. 46:7; Isa. 17:12].

e) Ch. 50:2. f) The plunder of subjugated nations.

g) Babylon must fall because of the havoc wrought by her among the peoples of the earth, particularly because of the slain Israelites.

h) Flee from the doom impending upon Babylon and hasten your return to Jerusalem [ch. 50:5].

i) The Israelites reply. j) Her lofty walls. k) Varied from ch. 48:3.

l) The hum of the great city. m) The surging masses of the foe.

many waters; the din of their voice is heightened,⁶⁶ for devastation has come upon her, even upon Babylon; her warriors are taken; their bows are broken in pieces; for the LORD is a God of recompense, He will surely repay.⁶⁷ I will intoxicate her princes, her wise men, her governors, her vice-roys and her warriors; they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awaken, says the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

⁶⁸Thus says the LORD of hosts: Babylon's broad wall shall be leveled to the ground, and her lofty gates shall be burned with fire. The people labor for emptiness, and the nations exhaust themselves only for fire.^a

⁶⁹The instruction which Jeremiah the prophet gave Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was quartermaster.^o

⁶⁹Jeremiah wrote in a book all the punishment that should come upon Babylon, all these words that are written concerning Babylon. ⁶¹And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you come to Babylon, then see that you read all these words, ⁶²and say, 'O LORD, Thou hast spoken concerning this place, that Thou wilt cut it off, so that nothing shall dwell in it, neither man nor beast, and it shall be desolate forever!'" ⁶³When you complete reading this book, tie a stone to it, and cast it into the middle of the Euphrates, ⁶⁴and say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the punishment that I am bringing upon her.'" Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.^p

52 ZEDEKIAH WAS TWENTY-ONE years of age when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ²He committed evil before the LORD, matching all that Jehoiakim had done. ³Surely because of the anger of

the LORD, things came to such a pitch in Jerusalem and Judah that He cast them out from before His face.^q

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴In the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came with his whole army against Jerusalem, laid siege to it and built siege mounds against it. ⁵So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ⁶In the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the famine was so severe in the city that there was no bread for the people of the land. ⁷Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war took flight. They left the city by night by way of the gate between the two walls by the king's garden, while the Chaldeans had surrounded the city. They took the road toward the Arabah.^r ⁸But the Chaldean army pursued the king and overtook Zedekiah on the plains of Jericho, and his whole army was scattered from him. ⁹They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence upon him. ¹⁰The king of Babylon slew Zedekiah's sons before his eyes; he also slew the princes of Judah at Riblah. ¹¹He then gouged out the eyes of Zedekiah, and the king of Babylon bound him in fetters, carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison until the day of his death.

¹²Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. ¹³He burned the LORD's house, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every prominent house he burned with fire. ¹⁴The whole army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, tore down all the walls around Jerusalem.

¹⁵The residue of the people who

n) See a citation like Hab. 2:13, fire and nothingness.

o) The captain of the "resting place" [see Num. 10:33], who selected the place where the king, when on a journey, would halt for the night.

p) The compiler's note, intended to mark off Jeremiah's own prophecies from the appendix (ch. 52), excerpted from II Kings.

q) From II Kings 24:18-25; vs. 28-30 from an independent source. This appendix is placed here to show that Jeremiah's main prediction was fulfilled. r) The Jordan valley.

were left in the city, and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the skilled workmen, were carried into exile by Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard.

¹⁶But Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left some of the poorest of the people to be vinedressers and farmers.

¹⁷The bronze columns that belonged to the LORD's house, the pedestals and the bronze sea^a that were part of the LORD's temple, the Chaldeans broke into pieces; and they carried everything of bronze to Babylon. ¹⁸The pots,^t too, and the shovels,^u the snuffers,^v and the basins,^v the spoons, and all the vessels of bronze used in the service of the temple, they took away; ¹⁹also the cups,^w the snuff dishes,^x the basins, the pots, the lampstands,^y the spoons and the libation bowls.^z Whatever was of gold and whatever was of silver, the captain of the guard took away. ²⁰The two columns, the one sea, the twelve bronze bulls which were under the sea, and the pedestals which King Solomon had made for the LORD's house, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weighing. ²¹As for the columns, the height of the one column was twenty-seven feet; its circumference was eighteen feet; its thickness was four inches, and it was hollow. ²²A capital of bronze was upon it; the height of one capital was seven and one-half feet; a network and pomegranates, all of bronze, were upon the capital round about. Similarly, the second column had the pomegranates. ²³Ninety-six pomegranates were visible; the entire number of all the pomegranates was a hundred upon the surrounding network.^a

²⁴The captain of the guard seized Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the

second priest, and the three keepers of the threshold. ²⁵He also took out of the city a eunuch who supervised the men of war, and seven men who were found in the city and who personally supervised the king's council;^b also the secretary of the commander of the army, who drafted the people of the land;^c and sixty men, natives of the land, who were found in the midst of the city. ²⁶Nebuzaradan the captain of the guards seized them and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah, ²⁷and the king of Babylon smote them; he put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried into exile out of its own land.

²⁸This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: In the seventh year, 3,023 Jews; ²⁹in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, he carried away captive out of Jerusalem 832 persons; ³⁰in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile of the Jews 745 persons; all the persons were 4600.

³¹This occurred in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah. In the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, Evil-merodach^d king of Babylon, in the year that he became king,^e raised the head^f of Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison; ³²he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon. ³³So Jehoiachin changed his prison garments and ate bread in his company^g regularly all the days of his life. ³⁴And for his support there was a perpetual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion^h until the day of his death as long as he lived.

s) See I Kings 7:15, 21, 23 ff., 27 ff.

t) Of bronze and for the altar of burnt offering [see Ex. 27:3; I Kings 7:45].

u) For the lamps [I Kings 7:49; 50].

v) Literally, "tossing vessels," for tossing the sacrificial blood against the sides of the altar [Lev. 1:5]. w) Of gold [I Kings 7:50]. x) For the lamps [Ex. 25:31; Num. 4:9].

y) See I Kings 7:49. z) For the table of showbread [see Ex. 25:23-30].

a) For vs. 21-23 [see I Kings 7:15-18]. b) Privileged courtiers or advisers [Esther 1:14].

c) Apparently an officer who registered those who had to serve in the army.

d) "Man of Marduk" - succeeded Nebuchadnezzar and reigned for two years [561-559 B.C.].

e) So II Kings 25:27. f) Gen. 40:13, 20; Ps. 3:3. g) Cf. II Sam. 9:7, 10.

h) See the same idiom in Ex. 16:4; Dan. 1:5.

THE BOOK OF

LAMENTATIONS^a

1 HOW SITS SHE ALL ALONE,^b
the city once great with people!
She has become like a widow;^c
she, great among the nations,
a princess in the provinces,
has now become a vassal.^d
²She weeps bitterly at night,
the tears flow always on her cheeks;
no one of all her lovers
now seeks to bring her comfort.
All her friends have dealt treacherously
with her;
they have become her enemies.
³From affliction and servitude
Judah has now gone into exile;
she dwells among the nations
and nowhere finds her rest.
All those who pursued her
overtook her in the narrow places.^e
⁴The highways to Zion are in
mourning,
no pilgrims come to her solemn
assemblies;^f
all her gates are deserted.^g
Her priests are in deep anguish.
Her virgins are afflicted,^h

she is herself in bitter distress.
⁵Those smiting her have come to lord
it over her;
all her foes are prospering.
For the LORD has afflicted her
because of the greatness of her
transgressions.
Her young children have gone as
captives
before the face of her foe.
⁶From the daughter of Zion has gone
all her splendor;ⁱ
her princes have become like stags
that can find no pasture;
they have gone without strength
before the one pursuing them.
⁷In the days of her affliction and
wandering
Jerusalem remembers all the
treasures which were hers in the
days of old.
When her people fell into the hands
of the enemy
and no one aided her,
her enemies saw her and mocked at
her destruction.

a) The Book of Lamentations is composed of five poems in the meter of the Hebrew Dirge (or Lament). Each poem except the 3rd, has 22 verses, the initial letter of each verse of the 1st, 2nd, and 4th poems being, progressively, those of the 22-letter Hebrew alphabet. The 3rd poem has 66 verses, each letter of the alphabet being used as the initial letter in three consecutive verses. Poem 5 is related to the Hebrew alphabet only in the number of its verses.

b) Lamentations bewails the capture, destruction, and devastation of Jerusalem by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon in 587. King Zedekiah, his sons, the chief priest, his close associates, and the leading men of the city were captured, his sons killed, the city and temple burned, everything of value taken, the wall of the city broken down, thousands of captives taken, and only a poor and desolate population left in city and land. For a brief report see Jer. 52.

c) "Alone," as in Isaiah 47:8,9; "in reproach," as in Isaiah 54:4; "forsaken," as in Isaiah 54:6.

d) Owed her conquerors "tribute, customs, and toll," as in Ezra 4:20.

e) From which she could not escape. Some think there is reference to her "spiritual straits," as in Psalm 118:5; the Hebrew word is closely akin to the word for "Egypt," and some understand it to refer to Egypt [cf. Jer. 44].

f) To some of these feasts pilgrims were expected from all over the world.

g) The gates were a common meeting place. h) No young men as prospective husbands.

i) Zion is "the perfection of beauty" [Psalm 50:2].

⁸Jerusalem sinned her grievous sin
and therefore came to be as one
unclean.
All who honored her now despise her,
for they have seen her nakedness;^k
she groans and turns her back to them.
⁹Her uncleanness was in her skirts;^l
she did not keep in mind the
consequences;
hence she fell grievously,
and there was for her no comforter.
Behold, O LORD, my affliction,
for the enemy has become arrogant.
¹⁰The adversary has spread out his
hand
on all her precious things;^m
for she has seen heathen nations
invade her sanctuary,
concerning whom Thou didst declare
they should never enter the
congregation belonging to Thee.ⁿ
¹¹All her people are in groaning
as they search for bread.
They have given their valuables for
food
that they may keep alive.
Look, O LORD, observe it well,
for I have become abject, despised.
¹²Is it nothing to you, all you who pass
by?
Look and see if there is any sorrow
like my sorrow,
which is being dealt out to me,
which the LORD inflicted
in the day of His fiery anger.
¹³From on high He sent fire into my
bones,^o
and it has subdued them;
He has spread a net for my feet,
He has turned me backward;
He has given me over to frustration
and faintness all day long.
¹⁴Bound together as a yoke are my
transgressions;
by His hand they are woven tight;
they are bound upon my neck.^p

He has made my strength to fail.
The LORD has delivered me into hands
which I am unable to withstand.
¹⁵The LORD has tossed aside
all the mighty men in my midst;
He has called against me a solemn
assembly
to crush my young men.
The LORD has trodden as in a wine
press
the virgin, the daughter of Judah.^q
¹⁶On account of these things I weep,
from my eyes flow copious tears;^r
for far from me is any comforter,
who should revive my soul.
My children have become desolate,
for the enemy has prevailed.
¹⁷Zion stretches forth her hands,
but for her there is no comforter;
The LORD has ordered concerning
Jacob,
that those around him be his
adversaries;
Jerusalem has become among them
as one who is unclean.
¹⁸Righteous in His doing is the LORD,
for I have rebelled against His voice.
Hear me now, all you peoples,
and behold my suffering.
My virgins and my choice young men
have gone into captivity.
¹⁹I called for those who had loved me,
but they played me false.
My priests and my elders perished in
the city
even as they sought for food
that they might keep themselves
alive.
²⁰Look on, O LORD, for I am in
distress,
my spirit is sorely troubled.
My heart is upset inside me,
for I have most grievously rebelled.
Abroad the sword has brought
bereavement;
in our homes is the silence of death.

k) Used many times in Old and New Testaments as a symbol of complete destitution.

l) The abiding evidence of her habitual uncleanness—idolatry, low degenerate conduct [Jer. 13:20-27]. m) Furniture and utensils for the sacrificial offerings in the temple [Jer. 52:17-20].

n) Because they are morally and ceremonially unclean, and no unclean person or thing may enter the sanctuary [Deut. 23:1-14].

o) The frame of her existence as a city. Jer. 52:13 says the enemy burned the temple, the royal palace, and "every great house," in the city.

p) Jer. 27:2, 28:10, 11, and 12-14 give vivid descriptions of the yoke on the neck as a symbol of subjugation and slavery.

q) Isaiah 62:5 tells of God's rejoicing over Jerusalem as a young man rejoices over marriage to a virgin. Hosea 2:19, 20 speaks of Israel as a virgin whom the LORD will betroth to Him "in righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, tender mercies, and faithfulness."

r) Jer. 14:17 says of Jerusalem, "Let my eyes run down with tears night and day."

²¹They have heard how I moan,
with no one to comfort me.
All my enemies have heard of my
trials,
they exult that Thou hast done it;
Thou hast brought the day which
Thou hadst declared;
may they fare like me.
²²Let all their evil come before Thee;
and deal Thou with them
as Thou hast dealt with me
for all my transgressions.
For many are my groanings,
and my heart is forlorn.

2 HOW THE LORD IN HIS ANGER HAS covered

the daughter of Zion with a cloud!
The beauty of Israel He has cast down
from heaven to earth.

His footstool^a He did not remember
in the day of His anger.

²The LORD has swallowed up, and
that without pity,
all the precious things of Jacob.

He has, in His wrath, destroyed the
strongholds

of the daughter of Judah;
He has cast to the ground and made
common

the kingdom and her princes.

³In His fiery anger He has cut off
every horn^t of Israel;

He has withdrawn His right hand
in the face of the enemy;

Yes, He has kindled a flaming fire in
the midst of Jacob,
and it has consumed all things
around.

⁴He has bent His bow as an enemy;
He has taken His stand,

His right hand firmly fixed as an
adversary.

He has destroyed all things desirable
to the eyes.

In the tent of the daughter of Zion
He has poured out His fury like fire.

⁵The LORD has become like an enemy;
He has swallowed up Israel;

He has swallowed up all her palaces;
He has destroyed all her fortresses,

and in the daughter of Judah

He has multiplied moaning and
mourning.

⁶He has demolished His tabernacle as
if but a vineyard,

He has destroyed His place of
assembly.

The LORD has caused feast and
Sabbath

to be forgotten in Zion.

In His indignation and anger

He has rejected the king and the
priest.

⁷The LORD has cast off His altar;

He has repudiated His holy place.

The walls of her palaces

He has given into the hand of her
enemy.

A shouting as on an appointed feast
day

they have raised in the house of the
LORD.

⁸The LORD has determined to make
desolate

the wall of the daughter of Zion.

He has stretched out His measuring
line;

He has not withdrawn His hand
from destruction.

He has caused both wall and rampart
to languish;

together they tottered.

⁹Her gates are sunk deep in the
ground;

He has broken and destroyed her
bars.^u

Her king and her princes are among
the nations.

There is no longer teaching of the
law,^v

and her prophets receive no vision
from the LORD.

¹⁰The elders of the daughter of Zion
sit on the ground and are silent;^w

they have thrown dust upon their
heads;^x

they have girded themselves with
sackcloth.^y

The virgins of Jerusalem

hang their heads to the ground.

¹¹My eyes are exhausted with weeping;
my emotions are deeply disturbed;

my grief is poured out on the earth

s) The temple, 1 Chron. 28:2.

t) Cf. ch. 2:17. In 1 Sam. 2:10 and Amos 6:13 a symbol of strength and daring.

u) Symbols of security [Jer. 49:31; Psalm 147:13].

v) No religious instruction can be given [cf. Ezek. 7:26].

w) Dumb with grief [Job 2:13; Ezek. 3:15].

x) A sign of lamentation [Josh. 7:6; Job 2:12].

y) Wailing bitterly [Jer. 6:26; 49:3].

LAMENTATIONS 2, 3

for the downfall of the daughter of
my people,
for the swooning of babies and
nurslings
in the open places of the city.
¹²To their mothers they keep crying,
"Where is there bread and wine?"^z
They collapse, as do the wounded
in the streets of the city;
and their lives ebb away
on the bosom of their mothers.
¹³What shall I say in bearing my
witness to you?
To what shall I liken you, O daughter
of Jerusalem?
What shall I compare with you, that I
may comfort you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For vast as the sea is your ruin;
who can bring you healing?
¹⁴Your prophets have seen for you
only vanities and empty visions;
they have not shown you your iniquity,
to hold you back from captivity.
They have seen and declared to you
visions of vanity and falsehood.^a
¹⁵All those passing along the way
clap their hands at you;^b
they hiss and wag their heads
at the daughter of Jerusalem.^c
This is the city of which man said,
"The perfection of beauty, a joy to
all the earth."
¹⁶All your enemies have opened wide
their mouths against you;
they hoot and gnash their teeth;^d
they say, "We have swallowed
her up!
This is certainly the day for which we
have looked;
we have found it; we have seen it
come."
¹⁷The LORD has done what He had
forewarned;
He has accomplished His word
which He declared in days of old.
He has thrown down; He has not
spared;
He has caused your enemy to rejoice
over you;

Both Affliction and Comfort from God

He has exalted the horn of your
enemies.
¹⁸Their heart cried out to the LORD.
O wall of the daughter of Zion,
let tears run like a brook day and
night;
Give yourself no respite, the daughter
of your eye no rest.^e
¹⁹Arise you, cry out in the night,
at the beginning of the night
watches.
Pour out your heart as waters before
the face of the LORD!
Lift up your hands to Him
for the life of your children that
faint with hunger at the corner
of every street.
²⁰Look, LORD, and carefully consider
to whom Thou hast done thus!
Shall women eat the fruit of their
womb,
the children whom they have
bounced upon their knees?
Shall priest and prophet be slain
in the sanctuary of the LORD?
²¹In the dust of the streets lie boy and
greybeard;
my virgins and my youth are felled
by the sword;
Thou hast slain them in the day of
Thy anger;
Thou hast slaughtered, Thou hast not
spared.
²²Thou hast called, as in a day of
solemn assembly,
my terrors from every side.
In the day of the anger of the LORD
not one escaped or survived;
Those I have fondled and brought up,
my enemy has destroyed.

3 I AM THE MAN WHO HAS SEEN
affliction^f
by the rod of His wrath.^g
²He has led me and brought me in
darkness
without a glimmer of light.
³Surely He has turned away from me;
He has turned His hand against me
all the day.

^z) Staple articles of food.

^a) The false prophets here in mind are described briefly in Jer. 14:14-16 and fully in 23:9-40.

^b) In derision [Job 27:23]. ^c) Poetic reference to the people of the city.

^d) In derisive mockery; see Psalm 35:15, 16.

^e) This expression is found only here. Some think it means tears from the eyes; others think it refers to the pupil of the eye that makes vision possible. ^f) For literary form, see ch. 1, note 1.

^g) In Isaiah 10:3 Assyria is "the rod of My anger"; here it is Babylon.

4He has made my skin and my flesh
turn old;
He has crushed my bones.
6He has piled up against me, and
surrounded me
with bitterness and distress.
6He has caused me to dwell in dark
places,
as the dead of former times.^b
7He has built a wall around me, I
cannot go forth;
He has weighted me down with
chains.
8Even when I cry aloud and call for
help,
He shuts out my prayer.
9He has walled in my ways with hewn
stones,ⁱ
He has made crooked all my paths.
10He is to me as a bear lying in wait,
as a lion in hidden places.
11He has turned aside my ways and
has torn me in pieces;^j
He has made me desolate.
12He has bent His bow,
and placed me as a mark for His
arrow.
13He has caused His arrows^k to enter
my inmost parts.
14I have become a derision to all my
people,
their laughingstock all the day long.
15He has filled me with bitterness;
He has saturated me with
wormwood.^l
16He has broken my teeth with gravel;^m
He has caused me to cringe in ashes.
17Thou hast removed my soul far from
peace;
I have forgotten what enjoyment is.
18I said, "Vanished is my strength
and my expectation from the LORD."
19Remember my affliction and my
anguish,
the wormwood and the gall.
20My soul holds them in remembrance
and is bowed down within me.

21Of this I remind myself,
therefore I still have hope:
22Because of the LORD's mercies we are
not consumed;
His compassions never fail.
23They are new every morning;
great is Thy faithfulness.
24The LORD is my portion, says my
soul,
therefore do I hope in Him.
25The LORD is good to those who wait
for Him,
to the soul that seeks Him.
26It is good if one hopes and quietly
waits
for the salvation of the LORD.
27It is good for a man to bear
a yoke in his youth.
28Let him sit alone and remain silent,
for He has laid it upon him.
29Let him press his mouth in the dust;ⁿ
there may yet be hope.
30Let him offer his cheek to the one
smiting him;^o
let him be sated with reproach.
31For the LORD will not cast off for
ever.
32For, although He may bring grief,
yet He will show compassion
according to the greatness of His
loving-kindness.
33For He does not afflict willingly
from His heart
and grieve the children of men,
34to crush under his feet
all the prisoners of the earth,
35to turn aside the rights of a man
before the face of the Most High,
36to refuse a man justice in court,^p
the LORD does not approve.
37Who speaks and it comes to pass
if the LORD has not ordained it?^q
38Do not calamity and welfare proceed
from the mouth of the Most High?
39Why should a living man complain?
Each (may lament) because of his
sin.

b) This idea is clearly expressed in Psalm 143:3.

i) 1 Kings 7:9-12 gives a vivid description of the careful completeness here implied.

j) As a lion or a bear would do.

k) The Hebrew phrase is "sons of his bow"; it is found only here. Cf. the expression "daughter of the eye" in ch. 2:18 with note.

l) Jer. 23:15 states this idea more vividly and completely.

m) Proverbs 20:17 is the only other passage with this word and idea: a vivid description of what is unwelcome and injurious.

n) In abject recognition of his unworthiness. Cf. Psalm 72:9; Micah 7:17 for fuller statement.

o) Job 16:9-11 gives a more complete description of the same act.

p) Favoritism and injustice in the courts was common in that day. q) The answer is, no one.

⁴⁰Let us search and test our ways,
 then let us return to the LORD.
⁴¹Let us lift our hearts with our hands
 to God in the heavens.
⁴²We have transgressed and rebelled,
 and Thou hast not forgiven.
⁴³Thou hast clothed Thyself with
 anger and pursued us;
 Thou hast slain and hast not pitied.
⁴⁴Thou hast screened Thyself with a
 cloud
 through which our worship cannot
 pass.
⁴⁵Thou hast made us offscouring and
 refuse
 in the midst of all the peoples.
⁴⁶All our enemies
 have opened their mouths against us.
⁴⁷Dread and destruction have come
 upon us,
 devastation and ruin.
⁴⁸Streams of tears flow down from my
 eyes
 because of the downfall of the
 daughter of my people.
⁴⁹My eye keeps flowing unceasingly;
 there is no intermission
⁵⁰until the LORD looks down from
 heaven
 and takes account of me.
⁵¹My eyes are paining my soul
 because of all the daughters of my
 city.
⁵²Those who were my enemies without
 cause
 have chased me as a bird.
⁵³They have cast me alive into a pit
 and have cast stones upon me.
⁵⁴Waters have closed over my head;
 I said in my heart, "I am gone."
⁵⁵Out of the depths of the pit
 I have called on Thy name, O my
 LORD,
⁵⁶Thou hast heard my cry;
 close not Thy ear to my sighs and
 my cries.
⁵⁷Thou didst draw near in the day
 that I called Thee;
 Thou saidst to me, Fear thou not.
⁵⁸Thou, O LORD, hast pleaded in the
 pleadings of my soul;
 Thou hast redeemed to me my life.

⁵⁹Thou, O LORD, hast seen the wrongs
 done to me;
 vindicate Thou me in righteous
 judgment.
⁶⁰Thou hast seen all their vengeance,
 all their devices against me.
⁶¹Thou hast heard all their tauntings,
 O LORD,
 all their reproaches against me,
⁶²the voices of those rising against me,
 and their mutterings against me all
 the day long.
⁶³Look well to their sitting down and
 their rising up;
 I am the theme of their taunt-song.
⁶⁴O LORD, Thou wilt recompense them
 according to the works of their
 hands;
⁶⁵Thou wilt give them dullness of
 heart;
 Thy curse will be upon them.
⁶⁶Thou wilt pursue them in fierce
 indignation,
 and destroy them from under the
 LORD's heavens.

4 HOW THE GOLD HAS BECOME DIM; how the fine gold has lost its luster!

The holy stones* lie scattered about
 at the corners of the streets.
²The precious sons of Zion,
 in value like to fine gold,
 how they have been reckoned as
 earthenware,
 the work of the hands of the potter!
³Even jackals present their breasts
 and suckle their young;
 the daughter of my people has become
 as cruel
 as ostriches in the wilderness.
⁴The tongue of the nursing babe
 cleaves to his palate in thirst;
 the young children ask for bread,
 with no one to break it to them.
⁵Those used to eating dainties
 are famishing in the streets.
 Those once clothed in scarlet
 lie nestling in the dunghills.
⁶For the sin of the daughter of my
 people
 is greater than the sin of Sodom,

r) Both their times of leisure and of work; i.e., unceasingly.

s) Ch. 4 is closely related to ch. 2. The symbols "holy stones" [vs. 1] and "fine gold" [vs. 2] have as background the earthly materials of the temple, but they refer to the high and sacred value of the people.

which was overthrown in a moment,
with no man's hand laid upon her.
7 Her princes were brighter than snow,
whiter than milk.

They were ruddy in body as rubies,
they were sapphires in beauty of
form.

8 Their looks now are blacker than soot;
they are not recognized on the
streets.

Their skin, shrivelled upon their
bones,^t
has withered, is become dry as a
stick.

9 Those slain with the sword are
happier
than those who must perish from
hunger;

for these pine away, pierced through
from want of the fruits of the field.

10 The hands of compassionate mothers
have boiled their own children.

They became their food at the downfall
of the daughter of my people.

11 The LORD has executed His fury,
He has poured out the fierceness of
His anger;

He has kindled a fire in Zion, and it
has consumed her foundations.

12 The kings of the earth did not
believe,
nor did any of those inhabiting the
earth,
that an adversary and an enemy
would enter the gates of Jerusalem.

13 It was because of the sins of the
prophets,^u

and the iniquities of her priests,
who shed in her midst
the blood of the righteous.

14 They staggered, blind, through the
streets;

they were polluted with blood.
Those they should not touch
they were defiling with their
garments.

15 "Away! Unclean!"^v men shouted
aloud to them;

"Away! Away! Touch not!"

They fled and wandered about; men
said among the nations,

"They shall no longer sojourn with
us."

16 The LORD Himself has divided them;
He no longer looks favorably upon
them.

The faces of the priests they have not
honored;
to the elders they have not been
gracious.

17 Though we continue to live,
our eyes fail us as we look vainly
for help.

In our watching we have looked to a
nation
that made no attempt to save.^w

18 They have waylaid our every step
so that we could not go out on our
streets.

Our end is near, our days are num-
bered.

Yes, our end has come.

19 Those pursuing us were swifter
than the eagles of the heavens;
upon the mountains they chased us;
in the wilderness they lay in wait
for us.

20 In their pits they have placed the
breath of our life,
the anointed of the LORD,^x

of whom we had said,
"Under his shadow
we shall live among the nations."

21 Well may you rejoice and be glad,
O daughter of Edom,
who dwellest in the land of Uz;^y
for also to you shall a cup be passed.

You shall become drunk and strip
yourself.

22 Your iniquity is now completed, O
daughter of Zion;

He will not again carry you captive.

To your iniquity, O daughter of
Edom,^z He will now attend;
He will now uncover your sins.

t) Job 30:30 says: "My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat."

u) Jer. 14:14-16 gives a brief vivid statement about the prophets here in mind. 23:9-40 gives a very full statement concerning them.

v) This is the exact word that a leper must cry out to prevent people from coming into contact with him [Lev. 13:45].

w) Jer. 37:7 speaks of Egypt as one in whom Israel had placed hope as a helper, but she had failed them.

x) A reference to Zedekiah the king and his experiences as given in Jer. 52:7-11.

y) The land of Job: Job 1:1; Jer. 25:20 gives a suggestion as to the number of small kingdoms in the area.

z) Jer. 49:7-13; Ezek. 25:12-14; and Obadiah, vss. 11-13 promise the desolation of Edom because of her attitude toward Judah in the day of the destruction of Jerusalem.

5 REMEMBER, O LORD, WHAT HAS
 come to us;
 observe us and see our reproach.
2 Our inheritance has been turned over
 to strangers;
 our homes have been given to aliens.
3 We have become orphans, without
 fathers;
 our mothers now are as widows.
4 We must pay for the water we drink;
 our wood we secure at high cost.
5 Our pursuers now sit on our necks;^a
 we toil without rest.
6 To Egypt we have stretched out our
 hand,
 to Assyria also to have enough bread.
7 Our fathers sinned and are no more;
 their iniquities we have to bear.
8 Servants rule over us;
 no one delivers us from their hand.
9 With peril to our lives we secure our
 bread,
 in the face of the sword in the
 wilderness.
10 Our skin is as hot as an oven
 because of the fever heat of famine.
11 Women in Zion they have ravished,
 virgins in the cities of Judah.
12 Princes they hanged by their hands;
 the faces of elders they have not
 honored.

13 Young men have carried the grinding
 mill;
 youths have stumbled under loads
 of wood.
14 Elders have ceased to sit in the gates;^b
 young men no longer are playing
 their music.
15 The joy of our hearts has ceased;
 our dancing has been turned into
 mourning.
16 The crown has fallen from our head;
 woe to us, for we have sinned.
17 Because of this our heart is faint;
 because of these things our eyes are
 dim,
18 because on Mount Zion, which is
 desolate, the foxes roam about.
19 Thou, O LORD, art forever enthroned;
 Thy throne endures from generation
 to generation.
20 Why dost Thou forget us for ever,
 why dost Thou forsake us so long?
21 Turn us to Thee, O LORD, and we
 shall be turned,
 Renew our days as of old.
22 Wouldest Thou reject us completely?
 Art Thou excessively angered
 against us?

a) Joshua 10:24 reports the call of Joshua to those about to kill five captured kings. "Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings." In Jer. 30:8 it is said that the LORD will break the yoke of the oppressor "from off your necks."
 b) Deut. 16:18 [Am. Rev. Ver.] gives definite instruction that "judges and officers" shall sit in "all thy gates," and "they shall judge the people with righteous judgment."

EZEKIEL^a

592 B.C.

1 IN THE THIRTIETH YEAR,^b IN THE fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens opened, and I saw visions from God.² On the fifth day of the month, in the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin,^c ³the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the LORD's hand was there upon him.

⁴As I was looking, there came a stormy wind out of the north, accompanied by a great cloud, in what was a mass of fire with a brightness around it, while out of its center something gleamed like shining metal. ⁵Then out of its center emerged what looked like four living beings,^d and this was their appearance: their form was that of a man; ⁶each of them had four faces, and each of them had four wings. ⁷Their legs were straight, the soles of their feet were like the feet of oxen; and they sparkled like the surface of burnished bronze. ⁸Under their wings on their four sides there were human hands. As for their four faces and their wings, ⁹their wings

touched one another; and their faces did not turn as they went, but every one went straight forward. ¹⁰As for the form of their faces, each of the four had in front the face of a man; all four had, on the right side, the face of a lion; all four had the face of an ox on the left side; and all four had the face of an eagle at the back. ¹¹Such were their faces. When their wings were stretched out above, one pair of each touched those of the next being; the other pair covered the body.

¹²Each went straight forward, going wherever the spirit impelled them to go, without turning as they went. ¹³In the midst of the living beings there was what looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and out of the fire shot forth lightning. ¹⁴The living beings darted back and forth like flashes of lightning.

¹⁵As I was still looking at the living beings, I saw a wheel^e on the ground beside each of the four living beings. ¹⁶As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction, their appearance was like the gleam of a Tarshish stone. All four of them were formed alike;

a) Ezekiel, "God strengthens," was the "St. John" of the O.T., who saw many visions. A deep spiritual tone pervades all his messages. He was a priest among those carried captive to Babylon in 597 B.C. Five years later he was called to become a prophet. He preached to his companion exiles in Babylon 22 years [592-570 B.C.]. Twice Jerusalem was decimated: first, when her vassal king, Jehoiachin, and the flower of the nobility were taken by the king of Babylon in 597; again 9 years later, when Nebuchadnezzar, having discovered King Zedekiah's treachery in seeking help from Egypt to rebel, besieged Jerusalem, carrying away the best of the remnant to Babylon in 586 B.C.

b) Ezekiel's age. The Levites entered the service of the sanctuary at 30 [Num. 4:23, 30].

c) This was in 592, six years before the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

d) In ch. 10:15, 20, he calls them "cherubim."

e) From the Hebrew word *ophan*, meaning "wheel." From its plural form *ophanim*, came a sect in Judaism known as "The Ophanim," associated with seraphim and cherubim, as angels; mentioned in the Book of Enoch and in the Talmud, but not in the O.T.

they were so constructed that there seemed to be one wheel inside another wheel. ¹⁷When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went. ¹⁸The wheels had high and dreadful rims, and all four of the rims were full of eyes all around. ¹⁹When the living beings went, the wheels went with them; and when the living beings rose from the earth, the wheels rose too. ²⁰Wherever the spirit was to go, they went, and the wheels were lifted up alongside of them, for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels. ²¹When those went, these went; when those stood still, these stood still; and when those arose from the earth, the wheels arose along with them; for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels.^f

²²Over the heads of the living beings there was the semblance of an expanse, glittering like transparent crystal, spread out above their heads. ²³Under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one pair touching those of the next being,^g the other pair covering the body. ²⁴Whenever they went, the sound of their wings was like the sound of many waters, like the thunder of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp. When they stood still, they let down their wings, ²⁵and a voice from above their heads was heard. When they stood, they lowered their wings.

²⁶Above the vault over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone, and upon the throne a form like that of a man!^h ²⁷Upward from what had the appearance of His loins I saw a luster like that of shining metal, and downward from what had the appearance of His loins, there was something resembling fire with a bright halo all about it ²⁸like

the rainbow in the clouds after a shower. Such was the appearance of the glory of the LORD.ⁱ When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of One speaking.

2 HE SAID TO ME: SON OF MAN,^j stand on your feet^k so I may speak to you. ²The Spirit entered into me as He spoke to me and set me on my feet, and I heard Him speaking to me. ³He said to me: Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a nation of rebels, who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have sinned against Me to this very day.^l ⁴Their children, to whom I am sending you, are also impudent and stubborn. Say to them, "Thus says the LORD God";^m and they, whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house) shall know that there has been a prophet among them. ⁵And as for you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor afraid of their words; though briars and thorns are all around you and you dwell among scorpions, do not fear their words nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.ⁿ ⁶You shall speak My words to them, whether they will listen or refuse to listen; for they are rebellious. ⁷As for you, son of man, hear what I say to you; be not rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth, and eat what I give you.

⁸When I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and see, a written scroll was in it! ⁹He unrolled it before me, and it had writing both inside and out,^o and there were written on it words of lamentation, of sighing, and of woe.

3 HE SAID TO ME: SON OF MAN, EAT^p what you find here; eat this scroll;

f) The spirit of the living creatures is repeatedly emphasized [vss. 12, 20, 21; ch. 10:17].

g) Colossal genii are found on Assyrian monuments, their wings touching horizontally.

h) God as having the form of a man, supernaturally glorified [cf. Phil. 2:7].

i) The prophet saw the outward manifestation of the divine presence in ecstasy, invisible to the natural eye [cf. Exod. 33:18-23].

j) The title "son of man" occurs in this prophecy 87 times; Jesus employed it often of Himself to emphasize His humanity. Beside Ezekiel, only Daniel uses it in the O.T. [Dan. 7:13].

k) To stand up, when spoken to by a superior, implied both courtesy and willingness to learn.

l) Alluding to all twelve tribes [cf. chs. 16 and 23].

m) In Hebrew, *Adonai Yahweh*, a somewhat unusual combination, emphasizing God's Being.

n) The prophet repeats the expression "a rebellious house," 15 times.

o) Sizes of Hebrew scrolls differed greatly; they were usually of skin written with great care; seldom written on both sides, but this one was of great importance.

p) Symbolic of accepting and digesting God's Word.

then go and speak to the house of Israel. ²So I opened my mouth, and He had me eat the scroll. ³He said to me, Son of man, eat this scroll which I am now giving you; fill your stomach with it and digest it! Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey.

⁴He said to me: Son of man, go now to the house of Israel, and speak to them^a with My words. ⁵For it is not to a people of foreign speech and a difficult language to whom you are sent, but to the house of Israel; ⁶not to a people of foreign tongue and a hard language whose words you cannot understand. If I sent you to such, they would listen to you; ⁷but the house of Israel will not listen to you; for they are not willing to listen to Me, because the whole house of Israel is defiant; they are stubborn. ⁸But I will make your face^r as hard as their faces and your forehead as hard as their foreheads; ⁹like a diamond, harder than flint, I will make your forehead. Do not fear them nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. ¹⁰Son of man, He said to me, receive in your heart all the words that I shall speak to you, and hear with your ears. ¹¹Go, get to your fellow exiles, and tell them, "Thus says the LORD God," whether they listen or refuse to hear.

¹²Then the Spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of the LORD ascended from His place, I heard behind me the sound of a great rushing,^s ¹³the sound of the wings of the living beings as they touched one another and the sound of the wheels beside them, the sound of a great rushing. ¹⁴The Spirit lifted me up and took me away and I went, bitter and disturbed in my spirit, the hand of the LORD being heavy upon me. ¹⁵And I came to the exiles living at Tel Abib, by the river Chebar. There I remained with them, overwhelmed in spirit for seven days.

¹⁶At the end of seven days, the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁷Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; when you

hear a word from My mouth, you shall give them warning in My name. ¹⁸When I say to the wicked, You shall surely die, and you give him no warning, saying nothing to warn the wicked man from his wicked way to save his life, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but I will make you responsible for his blood. ¹⁹If, however, you warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness and from his wicked way, then he shall die in his iniquity; but as for you, you will have saved your soul. ²⁰Again, if a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and does wrong and I put a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you have not warned him, he shall die for his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but I will make you responsible for his blood.^t ²¹However, if you warn the upright man not to sin and he does not sin, then he shall surely live, because he took warning; and as for you, you will have saved your soul.

²²There the hand of the LORD came upon me, and He said to me, Arise, go out to the plain, and there I will speak with you. ²³So I got up and went to the plain; and, behold, there stood the glory of the LORD like the glory which I had seen by the river Chebar, and I fell face forward. ²⁴But the Spirit entered into me and set me upon my feet. He addressed me and said to me: Go inside and shut yourself up in your house.^u ²⁵As for you, son of man, they will bind you with ropes, so that you cannot go among them. ²⁶I will make your tongue cleave to your palate; you will remain dumb; you shall not be a reprover to them; for they are a rebellious house. ²⁷But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD God." Let him hear who will, and let him decline who will; for they are a rebellious house.

4 AND AS FOR YOU, SON OF MAN, GET a clay tablet and, placing it before

q) Not to discover what might please his audience, but what came directly from God.

r) The LORD's own face would be reflected in Ezekiel's; "God strengthens."

s) Made by the departure of the sacred chariot that was designed to bear the LORD's throne from Jerusalem to Babylon. t) The fairness of God's justice is impressed on the prophet's mind.

u) That is, cease preaching in public for the present.

you, trace on it the city of Jerusalem. ²Put siegeworks against it, build a watchtower against it, throw up a rampart against it, pitch army camps against it, and plant battering rams against it on every side. ³Then take an iron plate, place it as an iron wall between you and the city; and turn your face toward it, bringing it under a state of siege, and conduct the siege against it. This is to be a sign for the house of Israel.

⁴Then you lie on your left side^v and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. As many days as you lie on it, you will carry their iniquity.^w ⁵I am assigning to you a number of days equal to the years of their punishment, 390 days, during all of which you shall have on you the guilt of the house of Israel. ⁶When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, on your right side,^x and take on you the punishment of the house of Judah. I assign to you forty days, one day for each year. ⁷With your arm bared, you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and you shall prophesy against it. ⁸And, see, I am going to place binding cords upon you, that you may not turn from one side to the other till you have completed the days of your siege.

⁹Besides, take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt;^y put them all into a single vessel, and make them into bread; for during the 390 days that you are lying upon your side, you shall eat it. ¹⁰The food you shall eat each day shall be weighed, an ample half-pound, to be eaten at a fixed hour each day. ¹¹Water also shall be given you by measure, two pints, to be drunk at a fixed time. ¹²You shall eat it as a barley cake, baking it in the people's sight, on human dung.

¹³The LORD said, Even so shall the children of Israel eat their bread among the nations whither I will drive them. ¹⁴Whereupon I said, "Ah LORD God!

truly, I have never yet defiled myself with uncleanness; from my youth up, till now I have never eaten the flesh of any animal that died of itself nor flesh torn by wild beasts; nor has there ever come any abominable thing into my mouth."¹⁵ Then He told me, See, I will allow you cow's dung instead of man's excrement, and you may prepare your bread upon it.^z ¹⁶He further said to me: Son of man, see! I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem; with anxiety they shall eat bread rationed by weight, and in dismay they shall drink water rationed by measure, ¹⁷in order that they may lack bread and water and look at one another in dismay, wasting away under their punishment.

5 AND YOU, SON OF MAN, TAKE A sharp sword and use it as a barber's razor; run it over your head and your beard; then get scales for weighing, and divide your hair. ²One third you shall burn in the fire inside the city, when the days of the siege are over; one third you shall take and strike with the sword all around; and one third you shall scatter to the wind, and My unsheathed sword shall pursue it. ³Take, however, a few of your hairs, and tie them in the skirts of your robe; ⁴but of these, too, some shall be taken out and cast into the fire; burn them in the fire, and from it a fire will spread against the whole house of Israel.

⁵Thus says the LORD God: This is Jerusalem, which I have set in the center of the nations with other countries around her. ⁶Yet she has wickedly rebelled against My ordinances more than the nations, and against My statutes^a more than the countries surrounding her; for they have scorned My ordinances and have not followed My statutes. ⁷Therefore, thus says the LORD God: Because you have been more rebellious than the nations around you,

v) The "left" side indicates the north, hence the northern kingdom of Israel or Ephraim. w) Isa. 53:12, "bore the sin of many" is a significant parallel!

x) The "right" indicates the south, i.e. the kingdom of Judah. y) Spelt, a species of wheat. This unusual mixture involved ceremonial uncleanness in the popular mind of that day.

z) As a priest, Ezekiel would be particularly scrupulous about his diet, zealously observing every dietary law. Bedouin Arabs and the poor *fellahin* of the villages in western Asia still use cow dung and camel dung for fuel.

a) Ordinances were civil and legal; statutes were religious and ceremonial.

by not walking in My statutes or obeying My ordinances, nor having done after the ordinances of the nations that are round about you; ^atherefore, thus says the LORD God: Look! I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgments in the midst of you in the sight of the nations.^b ^cAnd because of all your abominable doings, I will do among you what I have never done before, and the like of which I will never do again. ^dFathers among you shall eat their sons, and sons shall eat their fathers; I will execute judgments among you, and all who are left of you I will scatter to all the winds.^e

^fWherefore, as I live, says the LORD God,^g because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable and loathsome impurities,^h My eye will not spare you; therefore, I will cut you down without mercy or pity!ⁱ ^jA third part of you shall die of pestilence or perish with famine among you; a third part shall fall by the sword around you; a third part I will scatter to all the winds, and My sword shall pursue them. ^kThus shall My anger be fully poured out, and My fury will be appeased upon them. They shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken in My zeal, when I have accomplished My fury upon them. ^lI will make you a desolation and a reproach among the nations around you in the sight of all those who pass by.^m ⁿYou shall be a byword and an object of scorn, a warning and a horror to the nations around you when I execute My judgments upon you in My indignation and furious chastisements. It is I, the LORD, who have said it.^o ^pWhen I send My fatal arrows of famine and destruction against you and prolong the agonies of famine on you, breaking your staff of

bread, ^qsending hunger and wild beasts among you, which will rob you of your children, sending pestilence and bloodshed to decimate you and the sword to destroy you, behold, it is I, the LORD, who have spoken it.

6 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO me: ¹Son of man, set your face^a toward the mountains of Israel;¹ prophesy against them; ²say, You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD God! Thus says the LORD God to the mountains and the hills, the creek-beds and the valleys: Listen! I, even I, will bring a sword on you, and I will abolish your high places. ³Your altars shall be demolished; your incense altars shall be broken, and I will cast down your slain before your idols; ⁴I will pile up the corpses of the Israelites before their idols and scatter your bones around your altars. ⁵Wherever you live, the cities shall be destroyed and the high places made desolate, so that your altars shall be ruined and made desolate, your idols smashed, your sun-images hewn down, and your evil-doings ended. ⁶The slain shall lie among you, and you will recognize that I am the LORD.

⁷Yet I will spare a few who escape the sword among the nations and when you have become scattered throughout the nations. ⁸Those who escape shall remember Me wherever they may be carried, when I have broken their adulterous hearts that turned from Me and their eyes that have run wantonly after idols.¹ Then they will loathe themselves because of the evils they have done through all their abominations. ¹⁰They shall know that I am the LORD,^k and that I have not for naught said that I would bring this punishment upon them.

¹¹Thus says the LORD God: Clap

b) Ezekiel insists that God will perform His judgments on Israel publicly, both as an example to them and to vindicate His Godhead to the world.

c) Ezekiel fixes his hopes on the faithful among the exiles in Babylon, out of whom a new Israel will be created [cf. chs. 33-37]. d) Ezekiel uses, "as I live," as said by God, 13 times.

e) False gods with their rites and images. f) These afflictions were all verified [cf. Lam. 2:15, 16]. g) "It is I, the LORD, who have spoken it," Ezekiel uses 13 times as a conclusion to His warnings.

h) One of Ezekiel's favorite phrases, "set your face against," employed by him 9 times, is here used to express his abhorrence of the idolatrous practices associated with the Canaanites.

i) As the Canaanites had put their shrines on the high places, where they indulged in sexual license as part of their worship, so many Israelites followed suit, either joining the natives or having their own shrines, so that the high places were divinely condemned, including the mountains as the highest places. j) Captivated by the licentious customs of the Canaanite religion.

k) This is one of Ezekiel's most characteristic expressions occurring over 60 times like a refrain, in recognition of His sole Godhead and supreme power.

your hands, stamp your foot,¹ and say, Alas, because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel; for they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.¹² He who is far off shall die of pestilence; he who is near shall fall by the sword, and he who is left over and preserved shall die of famine. Thus will I spend My fury upon them.¹³ You shall know that I am the LORD when your slain shall lie beside their altars on every high hill and upon every mountain top, under every green tree, under every leafy oak, wherever they offered pleasing odors to all their idols.^m ¹⁴I will stretch forth My hand against themⁿ and will make the land a desolation and a waste from the [south] desert to Riblah,^o through all their dwelling places. So shall they know that I am the LORD.

7 AGAIN THE WORD OF THE LORD came to me: ²Son of man, thus says the LORD God to the land of Israel:^p The end is coming; the end approaches on the four corners of the land. ³Now the end is upon you; I will let loose My anger against you;^q I will judge you according to your ways and repay you for all your abominations. ⁴My eye will not spare you, nor will I pity you; I will repay you for your evil ways while you are practicing them publicly, and you shall know that I am the LORD.

⁵Thus says the LORD God: See, it comes! Woe upon woe! ⁶An end is come; the end has come. It has awakened against you. Behold, it comes! ⁷Your day is near, inhabitant of the land! Your time is come! Your doom is on the way! A day of tumult; no joyful shouting upon the mountains.^r ⁸Soon I will vent My fury on you and spend My indignation upon you, judging you according to your con-

duct and repaying you for all your abominations. ⁹My eye shall neither spare nor pity you, but I will repay you according to your doings, while your abominations are in your midst, and you shall know that I, the LORD, do the smiting. ¹⁰Here is the day; it has come! Your doom appears! Your scepter has blossomed, and your pride has budded.^a ¹¹Violence has grown into a scepter of wickedness. Nothing of them shall survive, none of their noisy crowd, none of their wealth; for them there shall be no wailing. ¹²The end has come, and the time is close. Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn;^t for indignation comes on the whole noisy crowd. ¹³The seller shall not recover what he has sold, although they both live; for the prophecy regarding the whole multitude shall not turn back; none can sustain his life through unrighteousness, for wrath is upon all alike.

¹⁴The trumpet has sounded, and all is ready. It is a call to resist the enemy, but no one volunteers to fight; for My indignation is upon all their teeming multitudes. ¹⁵Outside is the sword; inside are pestilence and famine; he who is in the open field shall die by the sword, and he who is in the city shall be overtaken by famine and pestilence.^u ¹⁶Should any survivors escape, they will flee to the mountains, like doves of the valley, all of them moaning over their guilt, ¹⁷all hands hanging down with prostration and all knees as weak as water.^v ¹⁸They shall gird themselves with sackcloth; shame and shuddering shall cover their faces, and bald spots shall be on every head. ¹⁹Their silver they shall fling into the streets, and their gold shall become to them an object of disgust. Neither silver nor gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's indignation; it will neither satisfy their crav-

1) Signs of neither sorrow nor indignation, but rather gestures of malicious satisfaction on the part of the ungodly.

m) For example, at Mizpah, Gibeon, Ramah, Gibeon, Nob, and Shiloh, beside Jerusalem.

n) Another expression frequently used by Ezekiel.

o) Riblah on the Orontes river, 50 miles south of Hamath.

p) The final fall of Jerusalem took place in 586 B.C. This dirge-like oracle may well have been inspired at almost any time after Jehoiachin was captured in 597.

q) To the Hebrew, guilt carried with it the punishment of guilt.

r) Neither joyous cries of harvest nor pagan shouts of idolatrous worshippers.

s) Apparently addressed to the new rulers in Jerusalem, who try to recoup the city's fortunes.

t) Those who bought and those who sold Jerusalem property when exiles had to leave.

u) Jer. 14:18 voices a like warning.

v) Completely enervated and paralyzed in strength [cf. 21:7].

ings nor fill their stomachs, for it has been their stumbling block to sin.^w ²⁰They made of it beautiful ornaments with which to adorn their idols, and out of it they made detestable and loathsome images; therefore, I will make it for them an unclean thing. ²¹I will hand it over as plunder to strangers, to the most goddess on earth for booty, to defile it. ²²I will turn away My face from them, and they will profane My jewel;^x robbers shall enter it, profane it, ²³and make it a desolation. Prepare a chain, because the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence. ²⁴I will also bring in the vilest of the Gentiles to take possession of their houses; for I will put an end to the pride of the mighty, and their sanctuaries shall be profaned. ²⁵Anguish shall overtake them; they will seek peace, but there shall be none. ²⁶Woe upon woe and disaster upon disaster shall come. Then they will seek a vision from a prophet; but the priest shall be devoid of instruction, and the aged shall have no counsel. ²⁷The king shall mourn; the prince shall be wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people shall be paralyzed with fear,^y for according to their deserts I will reward them; by their own judgments I will judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

591 B.C.

8 IN THE SIXTH YEAR, IN THE SIXTH month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house with the elders of Judah sitting before me, the hand of the LORD God came down upon me there.^z ²I looked, and there was a form like that of a man;^a from His loins downward His appearance was like fire and from His loins upward His appearance brilliant like that of a gleaming metal. ³He reached out what was formed as a hand and caught

me by a lock of my head. Then the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the north gate of the inner court, where stood the idol of resentment that provokes to resentment. ⁴And there was the glory of the God of Israel, like the vision I had previously seen in the plain.^b

⁶Then He said to me, Son of man, lift up your eyes now to the north. So I looked northward, and there north of the altar gate at the entrance stood the idol He resented. ⁶He said to me, Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations which the house of Israel are practicing here, driving Me away from My sanctuary? And you shall see still greater abominations than these.

⁷So He brought me to the entrance of the court. And when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. ⁸He said to me, Son of man, dig now into the wall! When I had digged into the wall, look, there was a door. ⁹He said to me, Go in, and see the wicked abominations they are practicing there. ¹⁰So I went in and looked; there, portrayed upon the wall all around, were all kinds of creeping creatures and loathsome beasts and all the idols of the house of Israel.^c ¹¹Facing them stood seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah^d the son of Shaphan standing among them, each with his censer in his hand, from which rose the fragrance of a cloud of incense.^e ¹²Then He said to me: Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his image room? For they say, "The LORD can not see us"; and, "The LORD has forsaken His land!" ¹³He also said to me, You will see them commit still greater offenses.

w) Ezekiel, more than any other O.T. prophet, had the N.T. evaluation of money. In his vision of the new temple that would be built [ch. 48], gold and silver are not mentioned.

x) The temple.

y) Ezekiel lowers the claim of government officials; he never mentions a king as the prospective head of the new Israel. In his closing visions of the new state [chs. 40-48], at the head of the government he predicts a prince.

z) The prophet is transported in vision from Babylon to Jerusalem. The elders are the leading men of the exiled community at Tel Abib.

a) Not the appearance of an angel, but of the LORD Himself, glowing with divine splendor. b) 3:23. c) Showing that Israel's national religion had completely broken down.

d) Evidently a well-known leader of his time, an idolater mentioned only here. The other idolater of the same name [ch.11:1] was a son of Azur.

e) A heathen rite, commonly used by the Babylonians.

¹⁴So He brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the LORD's house, and there women sat weeping for Tammuz.^f ¹⁵He said to me, Do you see them? Son of man, you will see still greater abominations than these.

¹⁶He then brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD; and there at the entrance to the LORD's temple, between the vestibule and the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east; they worshiped the sun toward the east. ¹⁷Then He said to me, Do you see this, Son of man? Is it a small matter for the house of Judah to practice such abominations as they are here committing, filling the land with lawlessness and adding to My vexation? They are thrusting the branch to the nose.^g ¹⁸Therefore I will recompense them in fury. My eye will not spare, nor will I show pity; though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not listen to them.

9 HE THEN SHOUTED LOUDLY IN MY hearing, Come near, you executioners of the city;^h each of you with his weapon of destruction in his hand! ²And look! Six men came from the direction of the upper gate,ⁱ each with his slaughter-weapon in his hand, and among them one man, clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn^j at his side. They came in and stood beside the bronze altar.

³The glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherubim on which it rested, to the threshold of the house. Then He called to the man clothed in linen, who carried the inkhorn at his side ⁴and said to him, Go through the

city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark^k on the foreheads of the men who moan and groan over all the offenses that are practiced in the midst of it. ⁵And to the others I heard Him say, Follow him through the city, and smite without mercy or pity; ⁶slay old men, young men and maidens, children and women alike; but do not touch anyone on whom is the mark. Begin at My sanctuary.^l So they began with the old men who were in front of the temple. ⁷He said to them, Defile the temple and fill its courts with the slain. Go out! So they went out to slay in the city. ⁸As they went ahead slaying and I was left behind, I fell face down and cried out, "Ah, LORD God, wilt Thou destroy all that is left of Israel in the outpouring of Thy indignation upon Jerusalem?" ⁹Then He told me: The guilt of the house of Israel and of Judah is excessive;^m the land is full of bloodshed and the city full of injustice;^m "for," they say, "the LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does no longer see it." ¹⁰As for Me, My eye shall not spare or pity; I will bring their doings down upon their own heads.

¹¹Then the man clothed in linen, who carried the inkhorn at his side, brought back his report, "I have done as Thou hast commanded me."

10 THEN I LOOKED,ⁿ AND SAW HOW, in the expanse over the heads of the cherubim, there appeared above them something like a sapphire throne.^o ²He said to the man clothed in linen, Go in among the whirling wheels beneath the cherubim; fill both your hands with blazing coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over

f) Tammuz, referred to elsewhere in Dan. 11:37, was a deity of the Babylonians and king of the nether world. He was the husband of his sister Ishtar, a goddess, and the god and patron of pastures and flocks. They are represented as dying annually and returning to life with each successive spring. g) Their ill-smelling obscenity.

h) The first act in the execution of the LORD's threat in 8:18. The faithful are marked and spared; the guilty are put to death!

i) Seven angels, including "the man clothed in linen" [cf. Rev. 8:2 ff.].

j) The "inkhorn" was a writing outfit consisting of pens of sharpened cane and ink, in separate cases.

k) The form of the mark was the Hebrew letter *Tau* which resembles in form a cross, to which some early Christians attached a mystical interpretation. l) So Amos 1:2.

m) Even child murder [16:20, 21].

n) Instead of describing in detail the physical destruction of the city, Ezekiel describes, symbolically, the spiritual. He reminds us of his original vision in ch. 1.

o) The throne was empty, but the attending cherubim seem to be waiting for the LORD to mount and to leave. The cherubim were the winged guardians of the chariot.

the city — and I saw him go there. ³Now as the man went in, the cherubim were standing on the right side of the temple, and a cloud filled the inner court; ⁴for when the glory of the LORD went up from the cherubim to the threshold of the temple, the house was filled with the cloud; the court, too, was filled with the radiance of the glory of the LORD. ⁵And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God the Almighty^p when He speaks.

⁶Thus it happened, when He had ordered the man clothed in linen, Take fire from among the whirling wheels between the cherubim, that he went in and stood beside a wheel.^q ⁷There a cherub reached out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, took some of it, and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. ⁸The cherubim seemed to have the form of human hands under their wings.

⁹As I looked, I saw that beside the cherubim there were four wheels, one wheel beside each cherub, and the color of the wheels was like a Tarshish beryl stone. ¹⁰All four had the same appearance, as if a wheel were within a wheel. ¹¹When they moved, they went in the direction of any of the four sides without turning as they went; for in whatever direction the front wheel moved, the others followed without turning as they went.

¹²The bodies of them, their backs, their hands, and their wings, together with the wheels, were full of eyes all around, (even) the wheels that they four had.^r ¹³The wheels were in my hearing called whirl-wheels. ¹⁴Each had four faces. The first face was the face of the cherub;^s the second the face of a man; the third the face of a

lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

¹⁵The cherubim mounted up; they were the same living beings I had seen by the river Chebar.^t ¹⁶When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels did not leave their side. ¹⁷When they stood still, these stood still, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them; for the spirit of the living beings was in them.

¹⁸Then the glory of the LORD moved from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.^u ¹⁹The cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight, and they went forth with the wheels beside them. They stood still at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.^v

²⁰These were the living beings that I had seen underneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar, and I recognized them as cherubim. ²¹Each had four faces, and each had four wings, and underneath their wings each had the semblance of human hands. ²²As for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces I had seen by the river Chebar; they were of the same appearance; they were the same. Each went straight ahead.

11 THE SPIRIT LIFTED ME UP^w AND brought me to the east gate of the LORD's house and, facing east, there at the entrance of the gateway were twenty-five men, among whom were Jaazaniah^x the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people. ²He said to me, Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give evil advice in

p) The name *Shaddai*, "Almighty," occurs nowhere else in Ezekiel.

q) The Hebrew word for wheel here and in vs. 2 is *galgal*, meaning a wheel of intricate wheel-work; not an ordinary wheel, as *ophan* in 1:15.

r) In 1:18, only the fellows (a segment of the rim into which a spoke fits) of the wheels were described as full of eyes. s) Here regarded as the leader.

t) Vs. 15 anticipates vs. 19 and 20, repeated, perhaps, in order to emphasize the identity of the cherubim with the living beings of ch. 1.

u) Ready to depart and be carried from the city by the cherubim.

v) This is Ezekiel's majestic description of the LORD's migration to Babylon, 700 miles away!

w) Factions sprang up in Jerusalem during the prolonged siege, who insisted on various alternatives in policy. x) Not Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan [8:11]. Pelatiah is not mentioned elsewhere.

this city, ³saying, "Should we not begin to build new houses? This [city] is the pot, and we are the flesh."^y ⁴Therefore prophesy against them, son of man, prophesy!

⁵Then the Spirit of the LORD came down upon me and said to me: Speak! Thus says the LORD: So you think, O house of Israel. I know the thoughts that come up in your hearts. ⁶You have slain many in this city and filled its streets with the slain. ⁷Therefore thus says the LORD God: It is your slain whom you have laid in your midst who are the flesh, and the city is the caldron; but as for you, I will pull you out of the midst of it. ⁸You are afraid of the sword; and upon you, I will bring the sword, says the LORD God. ⁹I will thrust you out of the midst of it and hand you over to the power of strangers to execute judgments upon you. ¹⁰By the sword you shall fall, and to the utmost borders of Israel I will execute judgments. You shall know that I am the LORD. ¹¹This city shall be no caldron for you, and you will not be the flesh inside of it; as far as the borders of Israel I will punish you, ¹²to teach you that I am the LORD, for you have not walked in My statutes nor obeyed My judgments, but you have conformed to the practices of the nations around you.

¹³While I was prophesying, Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died; whereupon I fell face down and cried with a loud voice, "Ah LORD God! wilt Thou make a complete ending of the remnant of Israel?"

¹⁴Then the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁵Son of man, your relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel—all of them—are they of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem are saying, "They are far removed from the LORD; to us belongs this land."^z

¹⁶Therefore say, Thus says the LORD God: Though I have removed them far away among the nations and though I have scattered them among the countries,^a yet have I been a sanctuary to them for a little season while in the lands to which they have gone. ¹⁷And say, Thus says the LORD: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give back to you the land of Israel. ¹⁸And when they return, they shall remove from it all traces of its detestable and offensive impurities. ¹⁹I will give them one heart^b and put a new spirit in them; I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh ²⁰so that they may follow My statutes and keep My ordinances and obey them; then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.^c ²¹But as for those whose heart is set upon their loathsome and abominable impurities, I will repay their deeds upon their own heads, says the LORD God.

²²Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. ²³And the glory of the LORD rose from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain east of the city.^d ²⁴And the Spirit lifted me up and, in vision, brought me by the Spirit of God into Chaldea,^e to them of the captivity. Then the vision that I had seen passed from me. ²⁵And I told the exiles all that the LORD had shown me.^f

12 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, you live in the midst of a rebellious house, among a people who have eyes to see but see not; they have ears to hear but hear not; ³for they are a rebellious house. Therefore, son of man, prepare your

y) They assumed that the really worthwhile citizens were still left in Jerusalem and that only the refuse had been carried to Babylon; but cf. II Kings 24:15. They failed to see that the siege would end in complete destruction. The city is the pot; we are the flesh!

z) To the local remnant in Jerusalem, to be exiled from the soil meant exile from Jehovah.

a) Though deprived of temple privileges, they had not wholly forfeited His protection.

b) Restoration would involve a return to firm belief in one God [Deut. 4:35-40].

c) In Ezekiel's time the Semites generally believed that a god was bound to his people by natural laws; but the Hebrews had been taught that the bond is spiritual. The heart to them was the seat of the emotions, and the spirit the mainspring of conscious life.

d) The Mount of Olives.

e) Chaldea was originally the name of only the southern portion of Babylonia, but later became the name of the whole.

f) The same Spirit, which had transported him in ecstasy to Jerusalem, carried him back to Babylon and the exiles.

necessary equipment for exile, and let the people see you go into exile in plain daylight.^g Like an exile before their eyes go from your own place to another; it may be that they will understand though they are a rebellious house. ⁴By daylight let them see you carrying your belongings for exile, and then in the evening let them see you loaded down with your baggage like those who go into exile. ⁵Let them see you digging through the city wall,^h going out through it; ⁶and let them observe you carrying your baggageⁱ on your shoulders in the dark; and screen your face, so that you do not see the ground. For I am making you a symbol to the house of Israel.

⁷So I did as I was ordered. I brought out my belongings for exile in the daytime. In the evening I dug a hole through the wall with my hands^j and brought my baggage out in the dark, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight.

⁸Next morning the word of the LORD came to me: ⁹Son of man, has not the house of Israel, that rebellious house, said to you, "What are you doing?" ¹⁰Tell them, Thus says the LORD God: This oracle concerns the prince^k in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel that live there. ¹¹Say to them, I am a symbol for you; as I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall go into exile, into captivity. ¹²And the prince among them shall carry his belongings on his shoulder and steal away in the dark, having dug a hole in the wall and going out through it; he shall cover his face, for his eyes shall not see the ground again. ¹³I will spread My net about him; he shall be caught in My snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, but he shall not see Babylon, and there he shall die. ¹⁴And all his attendants, his retinue, and his guard,

I will scatter to the winds; and them, too, I will pursue with my unsheathed sword. ¹⁵Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have dispersed them among the nations and scattered them in different countries. ¹⁶Yet I will leave a few survivors^l to escape the sword, the famine and the pestilence so that they may recount all their abominations among the nations where they go, and may know that I am the LORD.

¹⁷This word, also, from the LORD came to me: ¹⁸Son of man, eat your bread with anxiety, and drink your water with fear and trembling; ¹⁹and say concerning the people of the land,^m Thus says the LORD God concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with quaking, and drink their water with dismay; for their land shall be stripped of all it contains, because of the lawlessness and violence of those who have dwelt in it. ²⁰The cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

²¹Again the word of the LORD came to me: ²²Son of man, what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, "The days go by, and no vision is verified"?ⁿ ²³Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD God: I will end the repetition of this proverb, and they will repeat it no longer in Israel; for the days are drawing near, and the fulfillment of every vision shall soon come to pass. ²⁴No longer shall there be empty vision and flattering divination within the house of Israel. ²⁵For I the LORD will speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no longer be deferred; for in your own days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, says the LORD God.

²⁶The word of the LORD came to

g) He repeats with emphasis in vss. 3-7 the publicity of the king's escape.

h) Great walls of sun-dried mud were readily punctured by digging.

i) Such as sandals, knapsack, a drinking cup, bread, olives, etc.

j) His own hand did the arduous work, probably with a tool.

k) The "prince" pointed to Zedekiah, Judah's last king. The Babylonians never esteemed the rulers of Jerusalem as worthy of the title "king."

l) To vindicate My honor and My ways and let the world know that the fall of the Jewish state was due to Israel's sin and not the LORD's inability to protect His own.

m) Those left behind in the land of Israel.

n) The people were impatiently complaining that the prophets predict but disaster, and no disaster came. True prophets could not often be optimistic; yet, even their threats were in a sense implicit promises [cf. II Pet. 3:4-9].

me: ²⁷Son of man, see, the house of Israel keeps saying, "The vision he sees relates to the distant future; he is prophesying of times far off." ²⁸Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD God: None of My words shall any longer be postponed; but when I speak a word, it shall be performed, says the LORD God.

13 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy. Say to them that prophesy out of their own heart, Hear the word of the LORD. ³Thus says the LORD God: Woe to the foolish^o prophets who prophesy out of their own mind concerning things they never saw, ⁴O Israel, your prophets are like foxes among ruins; ⁵they have not stood in the breaches or built a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the LORD. ⁶They see deceitful visions and false divinations, saying, "The LORD says," when the LORD has not sent them; yet they expect to see their message fulfilled. ⁷Have you not seen false visions and reported lying divinations, when you said, "The LORD says," when I have not spoken?

⁸Therefore thus says the LORD God: Because you have uttered empty words and have seen false visions, take note, I am against you, says the LORD God. ⁹My hand shall be against prophets who see vain visions and who announce lying divinations; they shall not be in the congregation of My people, nor shall they be enrolled in the record of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. You shall know that I am the LORD God. ¹⁰Because, yes, because^p they have seduced My people, saying, "Peace!" when there is no peace. When people have built a flimsy wall, these [prophets] daub it over with whitewash.^q ¹¹Say to those who daub it

with whitewash that it shall fall. A deluge of rain is coming and great hailstones will fall; a violent gale shall crack it. ¹²And lo, the wall will fall, and you will be asked, "Where is the coating you daubed it with?" ¹³Therefore thus says the LORD God: I will cause a tempestuous wind to break out in My indignation, and there shall come a flooding deluge of rain in My anger and great hailstones to destroy it. ¹⁴I will shatter the wall you daubed with whitewash and bring it down to the ground; its foundation shall be laid bare; it shall fall, and you will be crushed under it. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. ¹⁵Thus will I spend My wrath upon the wall and upon those who daubed it with whitewash. I will say to you: Gone is the wall, and gone are those who daubed it, ¹⁶the false prophets of Israel who prophesied about Jerusalem, seeing visions of peace for her when there is no peace, says the LORD God.

¹⁷And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy from their own minds.^r Prophesy against them ¹⁸and say, Thus says the LORD God: Woe to the women who tie magic charms upon all wrists and wrap veils around the heads of persons great and small to catch souls! Will you hunt down the lives of My people to make a living for yourselves?^s ¹⁹You are profaning My name among My people for handfuls of barley and for crumbs of bread, thus putting to death those who should not die and saving alive persons who should not live, by lying to My people who listen to your lies.^t

²⁰Wherefore thus says the LORD God: See! I am against your magic stripes with which you hunt souls like birds; I will tear them from your arms and set free the souls of those for whom you hunt. ²¹I will tear off your veils and rescue My people out of your hands, that they may no more be

o) Godless prophets were personally deceived, and they deceived others, being possessed of human wisdom only and preaching what the people wanted. p) "Because" is repeated for emphasis.

q) Adding nothing to its solidity. r) Women too were guilty of false prophesying.

s) Witchcraft was "hunting souls"; to gain a living by it for themselves.

t) Soothsayers and magicians were many [Jer. 14:15] and through bogus revelations many were deceived. The barley and the crumbs of bread [vs. 19] were prized as omens to reveal whether an offering was accepted and whether a sick patient was to recover.

hunted as prey; and you shall know that I am the LORD. ²²Because you have disheartened the righteous with your lies, although I have not discouraged them, and you have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not turn from his wicked way and live; ²³therefore you shall no more see illusions nor practice divination. ²⁴I will rescue My people out of your hands, and you shall know that I am the LORD.

14 THEN CERTAIN OF THE ELDERS of Israel came^u and sat in front of me. ²And the word of the LORD came to me: ³Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and have set temptations to sin before themselves; should I at all be inquired of by such men? ⁴You talk with them and say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Everyone of the house of Israel who harbors idols in his heart and is bent upon the sin which trips him up, when he comes to a prophet, he will get an answer from Me according to the multitude of his idols, ⁵so that I may grip the house of Israel in their own thoughts,^v those who are estranged from Me through their idols.^x

⁶Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: Repent and turn from your idols; and turn your face from all your abominations, ⁷for everyone of the house of Israel and any alien resident in Israel who abandons Me, setting up idols in his heart and placing temptations to sin before himself, yet coming to the prophet to consult Me through him, I the LORD will answer him Myself. ⁸I will set My face against that man; I will make him a sign and a byword and cut him off from the midst of My people; and you shall know that I am the LORD. ⁹If that prophet is beguiled to speak a message, it is I, the LORD, who has

beguiled that prophet;^y I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from the midst of My people Israel. ¹⁰They shall both be punished alike — the prophet's punishment shall be like the punishment of the inquirer; ¹¹so that the house of Israel may no more go astray from Me nor defile themselves any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be My people and that I may be their God,^z says the LORD God.

¹²The word of the LORD came to me: ¹³Son of man, when a land sins against Me, sinning treacherously, and I stretch out My hand against it, break its staff of bread, send famine upon it, and cut off from it both man and beast, ¹⁴even though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would by their righteousness deliver only their own lives, says the LORD God.

¹⁵Were I to cause wild beasts to overrun the land and they should ravage it and leave it desolate so that no man would pass through it because of the beasts, ¹⁶though these three men^a were in it, as I live, says the LORD God, they would save no one, neither sons nor daughters, but only themselves; the land would be left desolate. ¹⁷Or if I bring the sword upon that land and say, Sword, go through the land and cut off from it man and beast, ¹⁸though these three men were in it, as I live, says the LORD God, they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; they would save but themselves alone. ¹⁹Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out My wrath on it with bloodshed, cutting off from it man and beast, ²⁰even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, says the LORD God, they would save neither son nor daughter; they, by their righteousness, would save but themselves.

u) Ezekiel saw evidences of false prophecy among the exiles in Babylon and knew that wicked divination was rife in Jerusalem.

v) The elders, as the leaders of the colony in exile, probably came often to visit the prophet. w) "Take them in their own heart," literally, because of their idolatrous prejudices. Sin carries its own retribution.

x) The prophets saw sin as related to God [cf. Amos 3:6; Isa. 45:7; I Kings 22:20-23]. The Arabs still attribute all that happens, good and bad alike, to God.

y) As He did to mislead King Ahab [I Kings 22:19-23].

z) God's purpose in punishment on earth is always warning, in quest of peace and love.

a) Noah had saved his family, Daniel his companions, and Job his friends. But their righteousness could not have made up for the wickedness of Ezekiel's contemporaries in Jerusalem.

²¹For thus says the LORD God: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem My four deadly judgments, sword, famine, harmful beasts, and pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast! ²²Yet, if there are left in it any survivors, either sons or daughters who succeed in escaping, when they get out to you and you see their ways and doings, you will be convinced by all the wickedness which they have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. ²³You will be comforted and know that I did, not without just cause, all that I brought about in it, says the LORD God.

15 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, in what way does the wood of the vine^b excel that of any other tree of the forest? ³Is wood taken from it used to construct anything? Is even a peg cut from it and used to hang a vessel on? ⁴Even when cast into the fire as fuel, only the two ends are burned and the middle is charred. Is it then useful for [making] anything? ⁵Even when it was whole, nothing was made from it; how much less when the fire has consumed and charred it shall it yet be meet for any work!

⁶Therefore thus says the LORD God: As the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to feed the fire, so will I give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ⁷I will set My face against them, and though they may have escaped from the fire, the fire will yet consume them; and they shall know that I am the LORD when I set My face against them. ⁸I will make the land a desolation, because they have acted unfaithfully,^c says the LORD God.

16 ^dTHE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations.

³Say, Thus speaks the LORD God to Jerusalem: By origin and by birth you belong to the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. ⁴When you were born, your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor were you rubbed with salt^e or swaddled with bands. ⁵No eye had compassion or took pity on you to attend to any of those needs; but you were thrown out upon the open field with no appreciation for your life on the day you were born.

⁶But as I passed by you and saw you weltering in your blood, I said to you in your blood: Live! ⁷Yes, I said, live and grow up like a plant in the field. You grew tall and strong, an ornament of ornaments; your breasts were formed, and your hair grew; yet you remained naked and nude.

⁸When I passed by you again, I observed that you were of age for courting; so I spread out the skirts of My robe over you and covered your nakedness. I plighted My troth to you and entered into a covenant with you, says the LORD God, and you became Mine! ⁹Then I bathed you with water; yes, I thoroughly washed away your blood and anointed you with oil. ¹⁰I clothed you with an embroidered dress, shod you with porpoise leather, wrapped you in fine linen, and covered you with silk. ¹¹I also adorned you with rich ornaments, putting bracelets on your arms and a chain around your neck. ¹²I put a ring in your nostril,^f earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown upon your head. ¹³Thus you were decked with gold and silver and clothed with fine linen, silk, and embroidered robes; and you ate fine flour with honey and oil. By these you grew to be a woman of surpassing beauty, fit to be a queen. ¹⁴Your fame spread abroad among all the nations because of your beauty, which was perfect through the

b) A wild vine is good for nothing but wood; and as wood any vine is even poor fuel. The parable is a fitting prelude to ch. 16. c) Through their idolatry!

d) This long chapter has one theme — the Hebrew people from their beginning to their downfall [586 B.C.]. Certain statements are shocking to western tastes; but the Orientals in their poetry speak of physical details very frankly. There is a poetic rhythm in the chapter.

e) The custom of rubbing a newborn child with salt is still practiced in the East, to signify dedication to God.

f) Some married women in the Sudan and in other parts of the Near East today wear such an identification, a medium-sized ring in the right nostril.

splendor that I had bestowed upon you, says the LORD God.

¹⁵But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot on your reputation;^g you lavished your harlotries on everyone who passed by. ¹⁶You took of your costly garments of diverse colors in order to decorate and make more attractive your high places on which you played the harlot. The like has never been, or ever shall be. ¹⁷You parted with your lovely jewels and splendid ornaments of gold and silver which I had given you, making for yourself images of men, and with those you played the harlot. ¹⁸You took your own beautifully embroidered garments to dress them, setting before them oil and incense, which I had furnished you.^h ¹⁹My food that I gave you, fine flour, oil, and honey which I gave you to eat, you set before them as a soothing fragrance, says the LORD God. ²⁰You took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to Me, and offered them as sacrifices to be consumed. Was harlotry so exacting and so important a matter ²¹that you had to slaughter My children and offer them as burnt offerings to your idols?ⁱ ²²And amid all your loathsomeness and harlotry, you did not remember the days of your youth when you were naked and nude and lay wallowing in your blood.

²³And now to crown your wickedness — woe betide you! says the LORD God — ²⁴you have built vaulted chambers for yourself in every square ²⁵and at the head of every prominent street,^j prostituting your beauty and offering your body to any passer-by and multiplying your harlotry. ²⁶You repeatedly went whoring to the sons of Egypt,^k your lustful neighbors, to provoke Me to anger. ²⁷So I stretched out My hand against you, diminished your allowance of food, and handed you over to the preferences of your haters, the daugh-

ters of the Philistines, who grew ashamed of your lewd conduct. ²⁸With the Assyrians, too, you played the harlot because you were insatiable; you committed harlotry with them, and still you remained unsatisfied. ²⁹You multiplied your harlotry also with the Chaldeans in trade and exchange, and even so you were not sated.

³⁰How you are consumed by passion, says the LORD God, that you were doing all these things, the doings of a brazen-faced harlot, ³¹having built your vaulted chambers on every street corner and erected lofty chambers in all the squares. Yet you were not like the harlot who received hire; you scorned hire! ³²You have been an adulterous wife, who welcomes strangers instead of her husband. ³³Men are accustomed to give gifts to all harlots; but you gave away your precious gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every direction for your embraces. ³⁴You were in contrast to other women; in your whoredom you gave hire, while no hire was given you!^l Therefore you were different.

³⁵Wherefore, you harlot, hear the word of the LORD! ³⁶Thus says the LORD God: Because of your throwing away your virtue, your exposure of your nakedness to your lovers, because of your abhorrent idolatry, and because of the bloodshed of your children whom you sacrificed to your gods, ³⁷therefore, behold! I will gather all your paramours, whose embraces you enjoyed, those whom you loved as well as those whom you loathed, and I will assemble them against you from every side. I will expose your nakedness for them to gaze upon, ³⁸and I will judge you as women are punished who break wedlock and who shed blood.^m I will bring upon you bloody wrath and jealousy. ³⁹I will give you into the hand of your lovers. They shall destroy your vaulted shrines and demolish your

g) Israel's entrance into Canaan under Joshua subjected them to the constant temptation of visiting the Canaanite sanctuaries. h) All these God-given luxuries they thus squandered.

i) The sacrifice of children was practiced under Ahaz and Manasseh, kings of Judah; and in the desperate days before the capture of Jerusalem, a revival of this deep-seated superstition seems to have taken place [cf. 20:31; 23:37-39].

j) As in Athens, with "more gods than men"; or at Petra, in Mt. Seir, where evidences remain of "vaulted chambers" near the high places.

k) Seeking military assistance against threatening foes.

l) According to Hosea 8:9, Ephraim, too, hired Assyrian lovers.

m) Death was the penalty for fornication and for child murder [Gen. 9:6; Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22].

high places; they shall strip you of your clothing and take your fair jewels, leaving you naked and bare. ⁴⁰And they shall bring forces against you, too, who will stone you and slaughter you with their swords. ⁴¹They shall burn your houses and execute judgments upon you in the sight of many women.ⁿ I will put a stop to your harlotry, and you shall cease paying hire. ⁴²So will I appease My fury on you,^o and My jealousy shall pass from you; I will be pacified and no longer angry. ⁴³Because you did not remember the days of your youth, I am incensed with wrath to resent your doings; I will bring your behavior down on your own head, says the LORD God. Have you not added this shameful unchastity to all your abominations?

⁴⁴Take note! Every one who quotes proverbs will use this proverb about you, "As the mother, so the daughter."^p ⁴⁵You are the daughter of a mother who scorned her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. ⁴⁶Your elder sister was Samaria, who, with her daughters,^q was located north of you; and your younger sister was Sodom who, with her daughters, lived south of you. ⁴⁷But you were not content merely to follow in their ways or to copy their abominations; that was too slight a thing for you, for you acted more corruptly in all your ways than they. ⁴⁸As I live, says the LORD God, your sister Sodom and her daughters have never gone the lengths in evil which you and your daughters have gone. ⁴⁹See! This was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: pride, fullness of bread, and careless ease were in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.^r ⁵⁰They were haughty and committed abominations before Me; I swept them away when I observed it.

⁵¹Samaria has not committed half your sins; you have committed more abominations than they; compared with your abominations, your sisters seemed innocent. ⁵²You must bear the shame of having your sister judged more favorably than yourself. In comparison with you and your abominations, she is adjudged less guilty than you; yes, be also confounded; you must bear your ignominy in justifying your sister.

⁵³But I will restore their fortunes,^s the fortune of Sodom and her daughters and the fortune of Samaria and her daughters; and I will restore your fortune along with theirs, ⁵⁴so that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of the little you have done in comforting them.^t ⁵⁵Your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, will return to their former estate; Samaria and her daughters will return to their former estate; and you, too, and your daughters will return to your former estate. ⁵⁶As the name of your sister Sodom never passed your lips in the day of your pride, ⁵⁷before your own wickedness was uncovered, so now you have become an object of reproach to the daughters of Syria and all who are around them, and to the daughters of the Philistines — those all around who detest you. ⁵⁸Thus you will bear the consequences of your lewdness and abomination, says the word of the LORD.

⁵⁹For thus says the LORD God: I will deal with you as you have done in despising the oath and breaking the covenant; ⁶⁰yet I will remember My covenant with you, which I made in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.^u ⁶¹Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when I take your sisters, both your elder and your younger sisters, and give them to you as your daughters, though not on account of your covenant with Me. ⁶²But I will establish My covenant with you;^v and you will know that I

n) These will look on your punishment and take warning.

o) As in ch. 5:13, the LORD's emotions are portrayed very humanly. He is represented as finding relief when He has given full vent to them.

p) The Arab version is: "Look at the mother, and choose the daughter." q) Nearby villages.

r) This is Ezekiel's great text on sociology! s) Literally, "I will turn their captivity!"

t) Or spoken in irony?

u) This idea of an "everlasting covenant" is shared by Jeremiah [31:31], involving faithfulness on God's part. The conception of God and of His law dwelling in the hearts of the faithful marks the climax of the religion of the O.T. v) A compact of grace.

am the LORD, ⁶³so that you may remember and be confounded and never open your mouth again because of your disgrace, when I forgive^w you for all you have done. The LORD God has spoken.

17 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ^x"Son of man, propound a riddle,^y and utter a parable to the house of Israel. ³Say, Thus says the LORD God: A great eagle^z with mighty wings and a wide spread of pinions, full of plumage of various colors, came to Lebanon and snatched off the crest of a cedar, ⁴cropping off its topmost twig and carrying it to a land of traders, laying it down in a city of merchants. ⁵Then he took of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil, beside abundant waters, so that like a willow ⁶it sprouted and became a low spreading vine with branches turned toward him and its roots under it. And so it became a vine; it sent out its boughs and put out foliage.

⁷But there was another great eagle with exceedingly widespread wings and heavy plumage; and see, this vine bent its roots to him^a and sent out its tendrils for him to water, away from the bed where it was planted; ⁸though it was planted in good soil where water was plentiful for it to yield foliage, bear fruit, and become a goodly vine. ⁹Thus says the LORD God: Ask! Will it prosper? Will they not pluck up its roots and strip off its fruit that its leaves may wither? Neither a strong arm nor many hands are required to uproot it. ¹⁰It is well planted, but will it thrive? When the blasting east wind strikes it, it shall wither; it shall wither in the furrows where it sprouted.

¹¹Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ¹²Say now to the re-

bellious house, Do you not know what these things signify? Tell them, See, the king of Babylon^b came to Jerusalem, took its king^c and its princes, and carried them home with him to Babylon. ¹³He also took one^d of the seed royal and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath. The chiefs of the land he removed, ¹⁴to keep the realm in subjection without an uprising, continuing to exist under treaty obligations. ¹⁵But he rebelled against him, sending messengers to Egypt^e to grant him horses and a strong army. Will he prosper? Can one who so behaves escape? ¹⁶Can he break his covenant promise and go free? As I live, says the LORD God, in Babylon shall he die, in the place where the king dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke. ¹⁷And Pharaoh with his mighty army and unnumbered resources will not sustain him in the day of battle when they cast up mounds and build siege walls to cut off escape. ¹⁸Because he scorned the oath and broke the covenant, because he pledged his word and yet did all these things, he shall not escape. ¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD God: As I live, My oath which he despised and My covenant which he broke, I will turn down upon his own head. ²⁰I will spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, and there I will conduct court with him for the treason which he has worked against Me. ²¹All the choicest of his troops shall fall by the sword; any fugitives shall be scattered in every direction the wind blows; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it.

²²Thus says the LORD God: I, too, will take a tender twig from the top of

w) Ezekiel's first mention of forgiveness.

x) In chapter 16, the prophet set forth Israel's history down to Jerusalem's fall; he now describes in a parable the political cause of her destruction — her attempt to secure Egypt's help and to throw off her allegiance to Babylon.

y) The Hebrew word rendered "riddle" conveys the idea of an ethical problem, and the word translated "parable" denotes, as in Prov. 10:1-3, a "sentence," based upon "ethical wisdom."

z) Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt [588-570 B.C.]. a) Made overtures to Egypt.

b) Nebuchadrezzar. c) Jehoiachin. II Kings 24:8, 11-15.

d) Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadrezzar had appointed as vassal in the place of Jehoiachin, already an exile.

e) Jeremiah warned Judah against dependence on Egypt [Jer. 37:7; II Kings 24:17; 25:1-7].

a high cedar^f and put it in the ground; one of its top twigs I will plant on a lofty mountain height. ²³On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, and it shall grow branches and bear fruit and become a noble cedar, in the shadow of whose branches the birds of every feather will nestle and find rest. ²⁴All the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD; and that it is I who brings low the lofty tree and exalts the humble tree, who causes the green tree to wither and the dry tree to flourish. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

18 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²What do you mean by quoting this proverb in the land of Israel, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are blunted"? ³As I live, says the LORD God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Observe! All souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine; it is the person that sins who shall die.

⁵If a man is righteous and does what is lawful and fair, ⁶if he does not eat on the mountains nor lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, if he does not seduce his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in the period of her uncleanness, ⁷if he oppresses no one but restores to a debtor his pledge, if he commits no robbery but shares his food with the hungry and clothes the naked with a robe, ⁸if he does not lend money on usury¹ or take any increase; if he withholds his hand from crime, practices strict justice between man and man, ⁹follows My statutes, and is careful to observe My ordinances to deal truly — such a man does what is right; he shall surely live, says the LORD God.

¹⁰But, if he begets a son who is a robber and a murderer, who keeps none of these requirements ¹¹but eats upon the mountains, defiles his neighbor's wife, ¹²oppresses the poor and needy, steals, does not restore a pledge, lifts up his eyes to idols, commits abominations, ¹³lends on interest and takes increase — shall such a man live? He shall not live. He has committed all these evils; he shall surely die, and his blood shall be upon himself.

¹⁴But note well: If a man begets a son, who, seeing all the sins his father has committed, has reverence and renounces his father's behavior — ¹⁵he does not eat upon the mountains or does not lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not seduce his neighbor's wife, ¹⁶does not wrong anyone, exacts no pledge, commits no robbery, shares his food with the hungry and covers the naked with a robe, ¹⁷withholds his hand from wronging the poor, takes no usury or increase, observes My ordinances and walks according to My statutes — he shall not die for his father's iniquities, but shall surely live. ¹⁸His father shall die for his own iniquity, having exploited his neighbor, having robbed his brother, and having done what was evil among his people.¹

¹⁹Yet you say, "Why should not the son suffer for his father's iniquity?" If the son does what is lawful and fair and has been careful to observe all My statutes, he shall surely live. ²⁰The soul that sins shall die.^k The son shall not be loaded with his father's iniquities nor a father with the iniquity of his son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be put to his own account, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be put to his own account.

²¹But if the wicked man turns away

f) In vs. 22-24 we have Ezekiel's first prediction of restoration through a Messiah, a Prince of the future, a descendant of the royal line of David; later, in 34:23 and 37:24, he unfolds his expectations.

h) Jeremiah also quotes this proverb [31:29-30]. "Unripe grapes, if eaten, cause blunted teeth." Ezekiel declares that this proverb does not morally apply. He solves objections by pointing to new life through union with God — a new heart and a new spirit [31:31-32].

i) The Hebrew word for "interest" was a portion "bitten off" the loan in advance. When a "charity loan" was made, it was a heinous sin to keep a portion of it.

j) The prophet, by three examples, shows that wickedness need be no more hereditary than righteousness: a righteous man [vs. 5-9]; a righteous man's son who does not follow his father's good example [vs. 10-13]; a son, who does not follow his father's wicked example [vs. 14-17].

k) Cf. Exod. 20:5 and Rom. 5:12 ff.

from all the sins which he has committed and keeps all My statutes and does what is lawful and fair, he shall surely live and not die. ²²None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; in the righteousness which he has practiced he shall live.¹ ²³Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the LORD God, and not rather that the sinner should turn from his wicked way and live?^m ²⁴But when a righteous man turns from doing right and commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, shall he live? None of the righteous deeds which he has done shall be remembered because of the unfaithfulness and the sins which he has committed; in them he shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, "The way of the LORD is not fair." Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way not fair? Are not your ways unfair? ²⁶When a righteous man turns away from doing right and commits iniquity and dies because of it, in the iniquity which he has done he shall die. ²⁷Just so, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has done and does what is lawful and right, he shall save his life. ²⁸On reflecting, he gives up all his transgressions; he shall live, he shall not die. ²⁹But the house of Israel still says that the way of the LORD is not fair. O house of Israel, are not My ways fair? Is it not rather that your ways are unfair?

³⁰Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge each one of you according to his behavior, says the LORD God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest your iniquity bring you to ruin. ³¹Throw away from you all your transgressions which you have committed, and renew your heart and your spirit;ⁿ

for why should you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, says the LORD God; so turn and live.

19 AND AS FOR YOU, TAKE UP a dirge over the princes^o of Israel ²and say: What a lioness your mother was among lions! She couched between young lions, rearing her whelps. ³One of her whelps she brought up—a young lion that learned to catch prey — devoured men. ⁴The nations cried out against him; he was caught in their pit^p and brought with hooks to the land of Egypt.

⁵When she^q saw that she was baffled, that her hope was gone, she took another of her whelps, and of him she also made a young lion. ⁶He prowled around among the lions of strength, became strong himself, and learned to catch prey, even devouring men. ⁷He ravaged their palaces and laid waste their cities. The land and its people became appalled by him at the sound of his roaring. ⁸Then the nations turned against him; from realms all around they spread a net over him, and he was captured in their pit. ⁹With hooks they put him in a cage, brought him to the king of Babylon, and put him in a stronghold so that his voice should no more be heard on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁰Your mother was like a vine,^r fruitful and full of branches, planted near plentiful waters. ¹¹She had one strong branch which became a royal scepter; it towered aloft among the forest foliage and was ever visible because of its height and its massive boughs. ¹²But she was plucked up in fury and cast down to the ground, the east wind withering all her fruit; and her strong branch was broken off and consumed

l) As in ch. 33:16, penitence, demonstrated by change of conduct, cancels past sin and secures life.

m) The time had come when the prophet had to go behind the covenant to the unchanging nature of God, which was the basis of the covenant, the mercy which endures forever!

n) The prophet recognized that man's yielding and God's grace both have a place in the process of conversion.

o) The elegy is about Prince Jehoahaz, who reigned three months over Judah and was carried to Egypt; also about Prince Jehoiachin, who reigned three months and was taken to Babylon. It is written in lamentation rhythm, each line falling into two unequal parts, one long and the other short, like the poetry of Lamentations.

p) The ancient Orientals trapped wild animals in deep pits, so covered that they were not detected. q) "She" seems to refer to Judah and specially to Jerusalem [the lioness].

r) Verses 10-14 are an allegory of the vine and her branches; in it Zedekiah, the last "prince" of Judah, is referred to.

in the fire. ¹³Now she is transplanted in the wilderness in a dry and thirsty land. ¹⁴Fire has spread from the branch, devouring her shoots and fruit, so that there remains in her no strong scion, no scepter for a ruler. This is a dirge; a dirge it has become.

20 IN THE SEVENTH YEAR, IN THE fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain of Israel's elders came to inquire of the LORD, and they sat before me. ²Then the word of the LORD came to me; ³Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel. Tell them, Thus says the LORD God: Is it to inquire of Me that you have come? As I live, says the LORD God, I will not be inquired of by you. ⁴Will you judge them? ⁵Then arraign them, son of man, and tell them of the abominations of their fathers. ⁶Say to them, Thus says the LORD God: On the day when I chose Israel, ¹I swore with uplifted hand to the descendants of the household of Jacob, making Myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to them, saying, I am the LORD your God. ⁶On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land which I had selected for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, ^uthe gem of all countries. ⁷I told them: Every one of you shall throw away the detestable things you love; do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

⁸But they rebelled against Me and would not listen to Me; they did not every one cast away the detestable things which they loved, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. ^vSo I resolved that I would pour out My wrath upon them and vent My fury against them while they were still in Egypt. ⁹But I was ever careful to maintain the honor of My name, ^wthat it should not be profaned in the eyes of the

nations among whom they sojourned, in whose sight I had revealed Myself to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰So from the land of Egypt I brought them and led them into the desert. ¹¹I gave them My statutes and taught them My judgments, by obedience to which man shall live. ¹²I gave them also My Sabbaths as a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD, who consecrates them. ¹³But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the desert; they did not walk according to My statutes, and they scorned My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he shall live; and My Sabbaths ^xthey grossly profaned. Then I resolved I would pour out My indignation upon them in the desert to annihilate them. ¹⁴But in dealing with them, I had regard for My honor, that it might not be sullied before the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out. ¹⁵However, I did swear to them in the desert, with My hand uplifted, that I would not bring them to the land which I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land which is the gem of all lands, ¹⁶because they had scorned My ordinances, did not walk in My statutes, and had profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. ¹⁷Nevertheless, My eye spared them, and I did not destroy them or make a complete end of them in the desert. ¹⁸Then I said to their children in the desert, Do not walk by the rules of your fathers nor observe their ordinances, nor pollute yourselves with their idols. ¹⁹I the LORD am your God; walk in My statutes, and be careful to observe My ordinances. ²⁰Hallow My Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. ²¹But those children rebelled against Me;

s) Here only is Ezekiel called on to judge his countrymen.

t) This is the single mention in Ezekiel of God's choice of Israel.

u) These words, "a land flowing with milk and honey," occur also in vs. 15, and in Jer. 11:5, 32:22, and nowhere else in the O.T. outside the Pentateuch. Goats, camels, and cows supplied the milk, and Palestine's flowers gave the bees their honey.

v) There is but one other mention in the O.T. [Josh. 24:14] that Israel practiced idolatry in Egypt. w) The Lord could vindicate His moral character by punishing His people for their rebellion and preserve His honor in the eyes of the nations [cf. Num. 14:13-18].

x) Two instances of Sabbath-breaking are recorded in the Pentateuch [Exod. 16:26-30; Num. 15:32-36]. In this chapter Ezekiel places great emphasis on keeping the Sabbath [vs. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 24]. Its importance as a religious institution would be increased in the exile. To profane the Lord's Sabbaths meant oblivion of the covenant promise [cf. Exod. 24:3; Amos 8:5].

they did not walk in My statutes and were not careful to observe My ordinances, by obeying which a person shall live. They profaned My Sabbaths, and I resolved that I would pour My indignation on them and apply My anger against them in the desert.

²²But I withdrew My hand^y and acted on behalf of My name, that it might not be profaned before the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. ²³Yet I swore to them in the desert that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them among foreign lands,^z ²⁴because they had not obeyed My ordinances, but had scorned My statutes and profaned My Sabbaths and set their eyes on their fathers' idols.

²⁵Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they should not live,^a ²⁶and I defiled them through their own gifts, as they passed all their first-born children through the fire that I might confound them, and that they might know that I am the LORD.

²⁷Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel. Say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Your fathers further blasphemed Me, dealing unfaithfully with Me. ²⁸When I had brought them into the land which I had sworn to give them, they looked for any high hill or any lofty tree,^b and there they offered their sacrifices; there they presented their offensive oblations; and there they set their soothing odors and poured out their libations. ²⁹I said to them: What means this high place to which you go up? So it is still called High Place to this day. ³⁰Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: Will you still defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers and run wantonly after their

detestable things? ³¹You offer your gifts, causing your sons to pass through the fire, and you defile yourselves with all your idols to this day! Shall I then be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, says the LORD God, I will not be inquired of by you. ³²Your whim of adopting heathen practices and becoming pagan like other nations, worshiping blocks of wood and stone, will never be realized.

³³As I live, says the LORD God, I will rule over you with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with indignation poured out. ³⁴I will lead you out from the peoples and gather you from among the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with indignation poured out. ³⁵I will bring you into the desert of peoples^c and will plead with you there face to face; ³⁶as I pleaded with your fathers in the desert of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, says the LORD God. ³⁷I will make you pass under the rod^d and bring you into the bond of the covenant.^e ³⁸I will purge from among you the rebels and the transgressors of My law. I will bring them out of the land where they stay, but they shall not enter the land of Israel; and you will know that I am the LORD.

³⁹As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the LORD God: Go, serve everyone his idols, now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but My holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols. ⁴⁰For on My holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, says the LORD God,^f all the house of Israel, all of them,^g shall serve Me in the land; there I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your

y) Already outstretched to smite.

z) The exile resulted from sins of long standing, culminating in recent acts of disloyalty; their disposition was one of rebellion.

a) His reference here is probably to God's special claim on every first-born, in view of the pagan child-sacrifices, which Israelites were tempted to imitate, a dastardly malpractice of God's benevolent claim.

b) High places, so often rebuked in the O.T. None of outstanding dimensions have been found in Palestine, due probably to the reformation of King Josiah. A great high place was found in 1900 at Petra, fifty miles almost directly south of the Dead Sea, in Mt. Seir.

c) Referring probably to the great desert between Palestine and Babylonia.

d) As a shepherd counts his sheep when bringing them home at nightfall, making them pass under his staff. e) The yoke of God's mercy and of man's duty.

f) Ezekiel uses the twofold name, LORD GOD, 217 times; and the name, LORD, alone, 218 times. g) Ezekiel emphasizes that all Israel, including the tribes of the northern kingdom, shall return [cf. 11:15, 36:10].

gifts, with all your sacred offerings.⁴¹

⁴¹As a pleasant fragrance will I accept you, when I bring you out from among the peoples and gather you out of the countries wherein you have been scattered; and through you I will be sanctified¹ in the sight of the nations. ⁴²You will recognize that I am the LORD when I bring you back into the land of Israel, the land I swore to give your fathers. ⁴³There you shall remember your ways and all your actions by which you have polluted yourselves, and you will loathe yourselves for all the evils you have practiced. ⁴⁴You shall know that I am the LORD when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel, says the LORD God.

⁴⁵The word of the LORD came to me:^j ⁴⁶Son of man, set your face toward the south;^k speak against the south, prophesying also against the shrubbery of the southland,⁴⁷ saying, Hear the word of the LORD, Thus says the LORD God: See! I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green shrub and every dry tree in you; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be scorched by it. ⁴⁸All flesh shall see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched. ⁴⁹Then I said, "Ah, LORD God!" But of me they are saying, "Is he not an inventor of allegories?"

21 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, turn your face toward Jerusalem, denounce her sanctuaries, and prophesy against the land of Israel. ³Say to the land of Israel, Thus says the LORD: See, I am against you; I will draw My sword^l

from its sheath and will cut off from you the righteous and the wicked. ⁴And because I cut off from you the good and the bad alike, My sword shall be unsheathed against all that lives from south to north; ⁵and everything living shall know that I the LORD have drawn My sword out of its sheath to return it no more. ⁶Sigh therefore, you son of man; sigh with a broken heart and with bitter grief in their presence. ⁷When they ask you, "Why do you sigh?" say, "Because of the tidings at the coming of which every heart shall melt and every hand be limp; every spirit shall faint and every knee become weak as water." See, it comes, and it shall take place, says the LORD God.

⁸Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁹Son of man, prophesy, say, Thus says the LORD:^m A sword, a sword is sharpened and whetted; ¹⁰it is sharpened for slaughter and whetted to flash like lightning. Shall we then make mirth? You have despised the rod, my son, with everything of wood. ¹¹But the sword is polished to be handled; His sword is sharpened and brightened to be given into the hand of the killer.ⁿ ¹²Shriek and lament, son of man, for [judgment] has fallen upon My people and on all the princes of Israel; they have all been handed over to the sword; so, strike your thigh.^o ¹³For there is a trial ahead for you. Who would despise the rod? says the LORD God.

¹⁴Prophesy therefore, son of man! Strike your hands together, and let the sword come down twice, yes, thrice, the sword of the slain, the sword of great slaughter that hems them in. ¹⁵I have set the sword of slaughter against all their gates, so their hearts may melt and many go down; it flashes like light-

h) Offerings become sacred through sacrifice.

i) Recognized by the Gentiles and justified through the LORD's willingness to restore the exiles.

j) These verses [45-49] are in the Hebrew text the introduction of chap. 21 and are attached to it.

k) Three different words in the Hebrew of vs. 45 are employed and translated "south": the first two referring to the southern part of Judah and the region of Edom to the southeast; and the third to Negeb, or southland, to the desert stretch south of Judah, extending toward Egypt. The trees of these parts were never great forests.

l) The figure of Jehovah drawing His sword was in keeping with the conception of Jehovah as "a Man of war" [Exod. 15:3]. His sword is to be the sword of His servant, the king of Babylon [vss. 18 ff.].

m) The song which follows [vss. 9-17] expresses the agitation of the prophet at the thought of the coming judgment and destruction of Jerusalem.

n) Compare the Song of Lamech [Gen. 4:23-24].

o) "Striking the thigh" is still an Oriental gesture of despair, often used upon receiving heart-rending news [cf. Jer. 31:19].

ning and is sharpened for slaughter. ¹⁶Turn, O sword, to the right or to the left, whichever way your edge is directed. ¹⁷I, too, will strike My hands together and give vent to My indignation. I, the LORD, have spoken.

¹⁸The word of the LORD came to me again, saying: ¹⁹Son of man, trace^p two ways by which the sword of the king of Babylon may come, both ways coming out of the same country. And place a signpost at the fork of the road to the city. ²⁰Point out the way for the sword to come to Rabbah^q of the Ammonites, and to Judah, to fortified Jerusalem. ²¹For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the ways, at the fork of the two roads, practicing divination. He shakes the arrows;^r he consults the teraphim;^s he inspects the liver.^t ²²Into his right hand falls the lot marked "for Jerusalem," calling for slaughter and the shout of battle, the planting of battering rams against the gates, the casting up of mounds, and the building of forts. ²³But to them^u it will seem like a false divination, because solemn oaths^v have been made to defend the city; but their iniquity is soon to be revealed. So they shall be taken.

²⁴Therefore, thus says the LORD God: Because you keep Me mindful of your guilt through your transgressions, which are flagrant and uncovered, and your sins, which are manifest in your deeds, and through them you are kept in remembrance, therefore you shall be apprehended. ²⁵And as for you,^w the prince of Israel, you wicked knave, your hour will come on the final day of reckoning. ²⁶Thus says the LORD God: Remove the turban, and take off

the crown; change is in process.^x Let the low be exalted and the lofty abased. ²⁷Ruin, ruin I will make it; only ruin will remain; there shall not be a trace left of it until He comes,^y whose right it is; to Him will I give it.

²⁸And you, Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus says the LORD God concerning the Ammonites^z and concerning their reproach: say, A sword, a sword is drawn for slaughter, whetted to flash like lightning and to devour — ²⁹while they see for you false visions and while they divine for you lies — to lay you on the necks of those who are mortally wounded, the wicked whose day is coming at the time of final reckoning. ³⁰Sheathe your sword, therefore, for I will judge you where you were created, in your native land. ³¹I will pour out My indignation upon you; I will blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and I will deliver you into the hand of brutal men, skilful to destroy. ³²You shall be fuel for the fire; your blood shall flow in the midst of the land, and you shall be no more remembered; for I, the LORD, have spoken.

22 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, would you judge, are you willing to judge the city of blood?^a Then declare openly to her all her abominable deeds. ³Say, Thus says the LORD God: O city that sheds blood in the midst of her so that her doom will come, which has made idols and has defiled herself, ⁴you are guilty because of the blood you have shed, and you are defiled because of the idols you have made; you have brought your day near, and you have reached the limit

p) Literally, "place for yourself," as if the prophet drew a map on the ground with the point of his sword.

q) The capital of Ammon, known as Amman today, about 25 mi. n.e. of the Dead Sea.

r) Arrows, with names on them, were used, as sometimes today, to guide decisions. Shaking arrows in a quiver, known as "bellomancy," was a lottery; the first one falling out gave the decision!

s) Images of household gods, regarded as bringers of good luck [Gen. 31:19, 34].

t) Inspection of the liver is nowhere else mentioned in the Bible. The Greeks and the Babylonians employed it, the liver being regarded as the seat of life. u) To those of Jerusalem.

v) Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, had been placed under oath by the king of Babylon [17:13-19].

w) Referring to Zedekiah, who had appealed to Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt for help to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar. x) Literally, "this is not this."

y) A strong hint of a coming one, the Messiah, as in Gen. 49:10, where "Shiloh" is predicted.

z) Though Ammon had been passed by in order that Jerusalem might first be punished, their turn has now come; they too had listened to their false prophets, who inspired them to hope, seizing portions of Israel's territory after Jerusalem's fall [cf. Ezek. 25:4, 10].

a) The two great sins of Jerusalem were cruel bloodshed and gross idolatry. This chapter falls naturally into three divisions: [1] The city's crimes [vss. 1-16]; [2] The LORD's smelting fires [vss. 17-22]; and [3] The fall of the city [vss. 23-31].

of your years. Therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a ridicule to all lands. ⁶Both those near you and those far from you will mock you, you infamous one, abounding in rioting.

⁶Observe! The princes^b of Israel among you are every one bent on shedding blood. ⁷Father and mother are treated with contempt by their children; the foreigner suffers extortion among you; the orphan and the widow are oppressed. ⁸My holy things you have despised, and My Sabbaths you have profaned.^c ⁹There are those among you who accuse falsely to shed blood, and those who eat upon the high places,^d those who commit lewdness in your midst. ¹⁰Among you there are those who uncover their father's nakedness and those who humble women unclean from their impurity. ¹¹One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another humbles his own sister, the father's daughter.^e ¹²Among you men take bribes to shed blood. You exact usury and interest and make gain of your neighbors through extortion; and you have forgotten Me,^f says the LORD God.

¹³See! I strike My hands together in anger at the extortion which you practice and at the blood that has been shed in your midst. ¹⁴Can your heart hold out with courage, and can your hands remain strong when I come to deal with you? I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. ¹⁵I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you over the countries, and I will purge you of the moral foulness within you. ¹⁶You shall be personally profaned before the nations,^g and you shall know that I am the LORD.

¹⁷The word of the LORD came to me, saying: ¹⁸Son of man, the house of Israel has become dregs to Me; all of them are but brass, tin, iron, and lead in the furnace, dross like that of silver.^h

¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD God: Because you have all become dross, see, I will assemble you in the midst of Jerusalem. ²⁰As men collect silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into a furnace, and fire is blown upon it in order to melt it, so I will gather you in My anger and in My indignation, and I will throw you in and melt you. ²¹I will gather you and blow upon you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it. ²²As silver is melted in a furnace, so shall you be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I the LORD have poured out My indignation upon you.

²³The word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²⁴Son of man, say to her, You are a land not cleansed or rained upon in the day of My indignation.ⁱ

²⁵There is a conspiracy among her princes; like roaring lions they are tearing their prey; they devour men's lives, seizing treasures and wealth and multiplying the number of widows in her midst. ²⁶Her priests violate My law and profane My holy things, making no distinction between sacred and secular, teaching no difference between unclean and clean, and disregarding My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. ²⁷Her princes in her midst are like wolves that rend the prey, shedding blood and destroying lives to obtain personal benefit. ²⁸Her prophets daub with whitewash their empty visions and their divinations for them, saying, "Thus says the LORD God," when the LORD has not spoken.

²⁹As for the people of the land, they too have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy and cruelly extorted the foreigners without redress. ³⁰I have looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and hold the breach before Me in defense of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I did not find him. ³¹Therefore I pour out My indignation upon them; with

b) Zedekiah and his predecessors, including Manasseh [II Kings 24:4].

c) Both were sins of the priesthood in particular [cf. vs. 26]. d) Cf. Ezek. 18:6.

e) Alluding to marriage with a step-daughter.

f) Social morality depends upon remembrance of God.

g) Saying that he was unable to protect his own.

h) Israel is the raw material in the furnace of Jerusalem. Pure silver was obtained through heating ore in a crucible of bone-ash, which absorbed the baser elements until only pure silver remained. i) Nature must share the guilt of Israel.

the fire of My indignation I have consumed them; their own ways have I repaid upon their own heads,¹ says the LORD God.

23 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me, saying: ²Son of man, there were two women, daughters of one mother,^k ³who, when they were young, played the harlot in Egypt. There their bosoms were pressed, and there their virgin nipples were stroked.¹ ⁴Their names were Oholah, the elder, and Oholibah, her sister.^m They became Mine, and they bore sons and daughters; Oholah signifies Samaria, and Oholibah Jerusalem.

⁵Oholah played the harlot while she was My wife; and she doted on her lovers, the Assyrians, ⁶her neighbors, courtiers clothed in purple; captains and commanders, all of them attractive young men, horsemen mounted on horses. ⁷On all of them, the choicest men of Assyria, she bestowed her harlotries; and she defiled herself, worshipping the idols of those on whom she doted. ⁸She never gave up her harlotry since her Egyptian period when, in her girlhood, men lay with her and pressed her girlish bosom and lavished their lust upon her. ⁹So I delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyriansⁿ on whom she doted. ¹⁰They uncovered her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters, and her they slew with the sword; and she became notorious among women when final judgment was executed on her.

¹¹Although her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she carried on more corruptly in her lusting and her harlotries and became more wanton than her sister. ¹²She doted on the Assyrians, governors and high officers, cavaliers clad in pur-

ple, riding on horses, all of them attractive young men. ¹³I saw she was defiling herself, both going the same way, ¹⁴but she went still further in her harlotries. She saw portraits of men upon the wall, figures like those of the Chaldeans,^o painted in vermillion, ¹⁵with girdles about their loins and tasselled turbans upon their heads, princes to look upon, all of them looking like Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity. ¹⁶When she saw them, she longed for them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷The Babylonians came to her into the bed of amours, and they defiled her with their lust, and when she had been polluted by them, she turned from them in disgust. ¹⁸And because she flaunted her harlotries and exposed her nakedness, I also became disgusted with her, as I had become disgusted with her sister. ¹⁹Yet she increased her harlotries, remembering the days of her girlhood when she played the harlot in the land of Egypt.^p ²⁰She longed for her paramours, who were lustful as donkeys and impetuous as stallions. ²¹You repeated the lewdness of your youth when the Egyptians handled your breasts and pressed your girlish bosom.

²²Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the LORD God: Take notice! I will raise up against you your paramours from whom you turned in disgust. I am about to bring them against you from every side — ²³the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, the men of Pekod, Shoa, and Koa,^q together with all the Assyrians, desirable young men, all of them governors and rulers, counselors and men of renown, all of them riding on horses. ²⁴They shall come against you with chariots and wagons and a host of infantry; they shall array themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet. I will commit to them the

j) Zephaniah corroborates Ezekiel [3:3-5]; Jerusalem had become morally and religiously paralyzed. The Lord could find no "Saviour of society" [cf. Isa. 63:5].

k) Oholah, "her tent," is Samaria; Oholibah, "My tent is in her," is Jerusalem. Samaria sought alliance with the Assyrians, Jerusalem with the Babylonians. The prophet considers the period of schism under Jeroboam [c. 940 B.C.] down to the fall of Samaria (720 B.C.) and on to the fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.). They both played the harlot in religion through their foreign alliances.

l) In Egypt they did not wholly give up their Hebrew faith.

m) The Arabs today frequently give names of similar rhythm to their children; e.g., Ali named his two sons Hasan and Husein! n) Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser IV, and Sargon of Assyria.

o) Carved bas-reliefs, and colored.

p) The gross lasciviousness of the Egyptians was especially abhorrent to godly Hebrews.

q) All different peoples belonging to the Babylonian empire at that time, on the south, on the east of the Tigris, and in the more northern parts.

judging, and they will judge you according to their customs.^r ²⁵I will set My jealousy against you, and they will deal with you in fury, cutting off your noses and your ears;^s your survivors shall fall by the sword. They will take away your sons and daughters, and what remains of you shall be burned up. ²⁶They shall strip you of your clothes and take away your fine jewels. ²⁷Thus will I put an end to your lewdness and cause your harlotry, brought from the land of Egypt, to cease, so that you shall not lift up your eyes to Egypt or have your mind on them any more.

²⁸For thus says the LORD God:^t Note! I am delivering you into the hand of those you hate, into the hand of those with whom you became disgusted. ²⁹They will treat you hatefully; they will rob you of all your earnings and leave you naked and nude. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your whoredom. ³⁰This will be done to you because you played the harlot with the nations and polluted yourself with their idols. ³¹You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand.^u

³²Thus says the LORD God: You shall drink of your sister's cup, which is deep, large, and brimful; you shall be laughed at and held in derision, for it contains much; ³³you will be filled up on drunkenness and sorrow, a cup of horror and terror, the cup of your sister Samaria. ³⁴You shall drink it, drain it to the dregs, chew on it, and tear your breasts; for I the LORD your God have spoken. ³⁵Therefore, thus says the LORD God: Because you have forgotten Me and have cast Me behind your back, you must suffer for your lewdness and your harlotry.

³⁶The LORD^v said to me: Son of

man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations, ³⁷for they have committed adultery, and blood clings to their hands; with their idols they have committed adultery, offering up to idols for food the sons they had borne to Me. ³⁸Moreover, this they have done to Me: they have made My sanctuary unclean, in the same day, and they have profaned My Sabbaths. ³⁹For when they had done slaughtering their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into My sanctuary, so that they profaned it;^w they did so in My house. ⁴⁰They even sent for men to come from afar, dispatching special messengers to bring them;^x and they came, those for whom you bathed yourself, painted your eyes,^y and adorned yourself with ornaments. ⁴¹And together you sat on a stately divan, with a table spread before you on which you had placed My incense and My oil. ⁴²Sounds of a careless crowd were heard; men of the commonest sort, including drunkards, were brought from the desert, who had placed bracelets on their hands and gorgeous crowns upon their heads. ⁴³I said: Will they at their fading age commit adultery and play the harlot with men like them? ⁴⁴Yet they went in to them as men of lust go in to harlots, to Oholah and Oholibah, those shameful women. ⁴⁵But righteous men shall condemn them to the punishment due to adulterous women, to women who shed blood; for they are wantons, and blood clings to their hands.

⁴⁶For thus says the LORD God: Bring up an assembly against them, and hand them over to be maltreated and robbed. ⁴⁷This host will stone them and dispatch them with their swords;^z they will slay their sons and their daughters and burn their houses. ⁴⁸Thus will I make lewdness to cease in the land;

r) The Gentiles will be trusted to judge them, and Israel will be treated savagely, the natural result of their faithlessness to God.

s) Among the ancient Egyptians an adulteress was punished by having her nose cut off.

t) This is the prophet's introduction to the second of the LORD's four threats of punishment [vss. 22, 28, 32, 35], each one being spoken by Adonai Yahweh.

u) In this threat the prophet sums up the three threats which have gone before.

v) This exact form, Yahweh by itself, "the LORD" is found here only in Ezekiel.

w) Their mere presence was a desecration.

x) Jeremiah speaks of messengers from different nations coming to Jerusalem to organize a revolt against Babylon [27:3].

y) With a black pigment, usually made from powdered antimony and painted around the eyes to increase brilliancy. z) Cf. Ezek. 16:40 and Deut. 21:21.

all women shall take warning^a and not commit lewdness as you have done. ⁴⁹Thus your lewdness shall be turned back upon you; you shall suffer the penalty for your sinful idolatry, and you shall acknowledge that I am the LORD God.

Early 588 B.C.

24 IN THE NINTH YEAR, IN THE tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ²Son of man, write down the date of this day, for on this day the king of Babylon has besieged Jerusalem.^b ³Propound also an allegory to the rebellious house. Say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Set on the caldron; set it on, pour water into it, ⁴and put into it all the best pieces of meat, the thigh and the shoulder, filling it up with the choicest bones. ⁵Besides, take the best of the flock, pile wood under them, and boil them all together, seething well the bones.

⁶For this is the word of the LORD God: Woe to the city of bloodshed, a pot whose rust is in her and whose rust never leaves her! Take it out piece by piece, without a lot falling on them. ⁷For she has shed blood in every quarter of the city and poured it out on the bare rocks instead of on the ground where dust might cover it. ⁸To arouse wrath and to apply retribution, I have smeared her blood on the bare rock, so that it could not be covered.^c

⁹Therefore thus says the LORD God: Woe to the bloody city! I will pile the city's firewood still bigger. ¹⁰Heap on the logs, kindle the fire to boil the meat well; pour off the broth, and let the bones be burned up. ¹¹Then place the empty caldron on the coals to make it hot, so that the pot itself may glow and all its impurities be burned up, that the rust of it be consumed. ¹²To no avail have I wearied Myself; its thick filth will not leave it. To the fire its impuri-

ties! ¹³Therefore, you filthy one, because I sought to cleanse you but you refused to be cleansed, you will not be purified till I have spent My indignation upon you. ¹⁴I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it. I will neither relent nor show pity; I will punish you according to your doings, and I will judge you, says the LORD God.

¹⁵The word of the LORD also came to me: ¹⁶Son of man, I am about to take from you by a stroke the desire of your eyes,^d yet you shall not lament or weep or shed tears; ¹⁷you may quietly sigh, but make no mourning for the dead.^e Bind on your turban, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips nor eat the bread of mourners. ¹⁸So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at eventide my wife died. Next morning I did as I was ordered.

¹⁹The people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these things mean to us; why you are acting thus?" ²⁰Then I said to them, "The word of the LORD came to me: ²¹Say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: Look! I am about to desecrate My sanctuary, the pride of your strength, the delight of your eyes, and the desire of your heart; and your sons and daughters, whom you leave behind, shall fall by the sword. ²²Then you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your lip^f nor eat the bread of mourners. ²³Your turbans shall remain wrapped about your head,^g and your sandals shall be on your feet; you shall not lament or weep, but you shall pine away in your sins and moan and groan together. ²⁴Thus shall Ezekiel be a sign for you; for according to all that he has done, you shall do.^h When the time comes, then you will know that I am the LORD God."

²⁵As for you, son of man, on the day when I take from Israel their

a) The LORD's judgment is to be a public example.

b) Early in 588 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar began to besiege Jerusalem; his siege lasted about 1½ years. God's judgments on Israel through all the years had produced no visible effect.

c) Blood violently shed, if left uncovered, was said to cry out from the ground [cf. Gen. 4:10].

d) Two momentous incidents are here associated with the fall of Jerusalem — the death of Ezekiel's wife from a stroke and the end of his own silence as a prophet.

e) Ezekiel being a priest as well as a prophet, the law forbade him mourning for the dead [cf. Lev. 10:6; 21:1-5]. f) The upper lip.

g) Orientals let their long hair hang down loose in times of grief, cover the shaven upper lip, and eat "funeral food."

h) Not have their private tragedies interfere with their public responsibilities.

stronghold,¹ their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and their heart's chief desire, and also take their sons and daughters,² on that day a fugitive shall come to you to report it.³ On that same day your mouth shall be opened; you shall again preach and be no longer dumb. So shall you be a sign to them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

25 THE WORD¹ OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. ³Say to the children of Ammon,^k Hear the word of the LORD God: Thus says the LORD God, Because you shouted "Aha!" when My sanctuary was profaned and rejoiced when the land of Israel was made desolate and when the house of Judah went into exile,⁴ therefore, see, I am handing you over to the children of the East for a possession; they shall pitch their tents in your midst and select their camp sites among you, eat your fruit and drink your milk. ⁵I will permit camels to pasture in Rabbah¹ and flocks to have folds in the cities of Ammon, and you shall know that I am the LORD. ⁶For thus says the LORD God: Because you have clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced with all the malice within you against the land of Israel, ⁷therefore I have stretched out My hand against you and will hand you over as a booty to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples and eliminate you from the countries, I will destroy you; and you will know that I am the LORD.

⁸Thus says the LORD God: Because Moab and Seir said, "See, the house of Judah has become like all the Gentiles,"^m ⁹behold, I am laying open Moab's flank, the cities of its frontier,

Judgment Against Neighboring Nations

Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim,ⁿ the glory of the land. ¹⁰I will give Moab along with Ammon as a possession to the Easterners, so that the Ammonites may be remembered no more among the nations. ¹¹I will execute judgments on Moab, and they will know that I am the LORD.^o

¹²Thus says the LORD God: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has assumed great guilt practicing revenge, ¹³therefore, so says the LORD God: I will stretch out My hand against Edom,^p destroying man and beast, and I will make it desolate from Teman to Dedan;^q they shall fall by the sword. ¹⁴I will execute My retribution on Edom by the hand of My people Israel; and they shall deal with Edom according to My anger and according to My indignation; and they shall know My repayment, says the LORD God.

¹⁵Thus says the LORD God: Because the Philistines acted revengefully, wreaking malicious revenge upon them, seeking to destroy [Israel] by a never-ending enmity, ¹⁶therefore thus says the LORD God: See, I am stretching out My hand against the Philistines; I will cut off those Cherethites^r and destroy the remainder of the seacoast. ¹⁷I will execute on them sore retribution by acts of furious chastisement, and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I carry out My punishment upon them.

26 SO IT WAS IN THE ELEVENTH year, on the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came to me: ²Son of man, because Tyre^s has said about Jerusalem, "Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it stands open toward me. Now that she is ruined, I shall get abundance,"

i) Jerusalem.

j) In the list Babylon, the chief aggressor, is not included, she being the LORD's instrument of justice to punish Israel.

k) Bible writers nearly always speak, as Ezekiel does here, not of "Ammon," but of the "children of Ammon," even when referring to the land.

l) The chief city of Ammon and its only city mentioned in the Bible.

m) Judah had long enjoyed pre-eminence among the nations.

n) These towns were north of the Arnon river, northeast of the Dead Sea.

o) Moab and Ammon were also subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar soon after Jerusalem's fall.

p) Edom's hatred of Judah was bitter; Jacob and Esau were twin brothers.

q) Teman, modern Shobek; Dedan, s.e. of Akabah. Shobek is a walled city on a high hill, supplied with water through a shaft sunk from its center some 200 feet straight down to a spring.

r) The Cherethites were Philistines and once part of David's bodyguard.

s) Tyre was the Venice of antiquity, the most famous port of Phoenicia and of the east coast of the Mediterranean. She enjoyed security from attack, being almost impregnable.

³therefore thus says the LORD God: Surely I am against you, Tyre, and I will bring up as many nations against you as the sea brings up waves. ⁴They shall destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers. I will scrape away her very dust and will make her a bare rock.⁵ ⁵She shall be a place fit for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken, says the LORD God, and she shall become a pilgrimage to the nations. ⁶Her daughters^u on the mainland shall be conquered by the sword, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

⁷For thus says the LORD God: See! I am about to bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadrezzar^v king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, and cavalry, beside a host of infantry. ⁸Your daughters on the mainland he shall put to the sword. He will build forts against you, throw up against you a mound, and build a shield-formed roof against you.^w ⁹His battering rams he shall pound against your walls, and with his crowbars he shall break down your towers. ¹⁰His countless horses will cover you with the dust they raise. At the noise of the horsemen^x and of the wheels of the chariots, your walls will quake as he enters your gates as one enters a breached city. ¹¹With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets; your people he will slay with the sword, and your strong pillars shall topple to the ground. ¹²They will plunder your wealth and make a prey of your merchandise; they will tear down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses, casting your stones, your timbers, and your garden soil into the sea. ¹³I will cause the sound of your songs to cease, and the music of your harps shall be

heard no more. ¹⁴I will make you a bare rock, a place for the spreading of nets. You shall never be rebuilt;^y for I the LORD have spoken it, says the LORD God.

¹⁵Thus says the LORD God to Tyre: Shall not the coastlands^z shake at the sound of your fall when the wounded groan and murder is rampant among you? ¹⁶Then all the princes of the sea shall descend from their thrones, lay aside their robes, take off their embroidered garments, and clothe themselves with trembling, crouching upon the ground, continuously trembling, and be astonished at you. ¹⁷They will raise a lamentation over you and say to you, "How you have vanished from the seas, O city of renown; you that once were so mighty on the sea, you and your inhabitants, who struck terror into everyone around!" ¹⁸How the coastlands will tremble on the day you fall; yes, the isles in the sea will be dismayed because you are gone!"

¹⁹For thus says the LORD God: When I make you a desolate city, like cities that are depopulated, when I bring up the deep over you and the mighty waters cover you, ²⁰then I will thrust you down with those who descend into the pit,^a to the people of ancient times. I will make you dwell in the nether world amid primeval wastes, with those who go down to the pit, so that you^b will remain uninhabited and no more arise in the land of the living. ²¹I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more; though you will be sought, you shall nevermore be found, says the LORD God.

27 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me:^c ²You, Son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre; ³say concern-

t) The island on which Tyre was situated was high and rocky, some 140 acres in size and half a mile from the mainland. u) Suburbs and nearby villages.

v) The name is correctly spelled with an "r." In Babylonian it is spelled *Nabu-kudurri-usur*, that is "May Nebo protect my boundary." In Dan 2:37 Nebuchadrezzar is called "king of kings."

w) A large screen was often built by the enemy in taking a city, under which the walls of a city could be undermined. x) Horses would be strange in Tyre.

y) Tyre had suffered similar devastations when Esarhaddon in 673 B.C., and Assurbanipal of Assyria had besieged the city in 668 B.C. Josephus reports that Nebuchadrezzar besieged Tyre 13 years.

z) The coastlands were the inhabited centers on the shores of the eastern Mediterranean, including islands, with which the merchants of Tyre were accustomed to trade.

a) By the ancients the pit was conceived of as a vast subterranean cave, with a narrow opening like that of a well. It is here regarded as the home of departed nations as well as of individuals [cf. 32:17-32]. b) Tyre.

c) Tyre is pictured as a gallant ship, sailing proudly on the high seas, when it is overtaken by a storm and wrecked.

ing Tyre, which is situated at the entrances^d of the sea, the market city of the people of many coasts, thus says the LORD God: Tyre, you have said, "I am perfect in beauty."⁴ Your domain was in the heart of the seas; your builders made you perfect in beauty.⁵ They fashioned all your planks^e from fir trees of Senir;^f they took a cedar from Lebanon to make you a mast; ⁶of oaks from Bashan they carved your oars; from the pines of Cyprus they made your deck and inlaid it with ivory. ⁷Linen with embroidered work from Egypt served for your sail; your ensign and awning were blue and purple, and came from the coastlands of Elishah.^g ⁸Bold seamen of Sidon and Arvad^h were your oarsmen; your skilled men, O Tyre, were your pilots. ⁹The ancients of Gebalⁱ and their wise men repaired your leaks and caulked your seams; all the ships of the sea with their mariners came to handle your wares. ¹⁰Warriors from Persia, Lud, and Put^j served in your army as soldiers. They hung on you their shields and helmets, displaying the glory of your equipment. ¹¹The men of Arvad and Helech manned your walls round about, and the men of Gammad^k were in your towers; they hung their shields on your walls all around and made your beauty perfect.

¹²Tarshish^l traded with you because of your great wealth of every kind — silver, iron, tin, and lead. These they exchanged for your wares. ¹³Javan,^m Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged for your goods, slaves

and vessels of bronze. ¹⁴They of the house of Togarmahⁿ traded for your wares, horses, war horses, and mules. ¹⁵The men of Dedan^o traded with you; many islands were your customers; ivory tusks and ebony they brought you in payment. ¹⁶Syria trafficked with you because of your many products; she bartered with you garnets, purple dyes, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and rubies in exchange for your merchandise. ¹⁷Judah and the land of Israel traded with you, exchanging for your wares wheat from Minnith,^p early figs, honey, oil, and balm. ¹⁸Damascus traded with you because of your abundant supplies and your immense wealth of every kind. Wine of Helbon^q and white wool, ¹⁹wine also from Uzal^r they exchanged for your wrought iron, cinnamon, and sugar cane. ²⁰Dedan^s sold you saddle trappings for riding. ²¹Arabians and all the princes of Kedar^t were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they bartered with you. ²²The merchants of Sheba^u and Raamah^v traded with you, supplying you with the choicest spices and also with jewels and gold. ²³Haran,^w Canneh, Eden, Assyria, and all the Medes traded with you. ²⁴They sold you choice fabrics, mantles of blue and embroidered work and carpets of colored goods bound with cords and made secure; in all these ways they trafficked with you. ²⁵Tarshish ships carried your merchandise, swelling your caravan and together making you an imposing fleet on the high seas. ²⁶By many waters your oarsmen conveyed

d) Tyre's two harbors, one on the north toward Sidon, the other on the south toward Egypt.

e) To build their ships. f) Senir was the Amorite name for Hermon.

g) Elishah is sometimes identified with Italy. h) Arvad was 25 miles north of Tyre.

i) Gebel was halfway between Beirut and Tripoli.

j) Lud was Lydia in Asia Minor; Put was probably Punt on the African coast of the Red Sea.

k) Gammad may possibly be identified with Gomer, the Armenian name of Cappadocia; Arvad was in the neighborhood of Hamath; Helech was in Cilicia near Tarsus.

l) Tarshish, usually identified with Tartessus in Spain, was the center of a mining district.

m) Javan is Ionia of Asia Minor; Tubal and Meshech, also, in the eastern portion.

n) Togarmah was Armenia.

o) Rhodes was probably meant in the original, as the Greek translation reads.

p) An Ammonite town [Judg. 11:33].

q) Helbon is a village still inhabited on the eastern slopes of Anti-Lebanon, 9 miles south of Damascus. r) Uzal was a small oasis in Arabia.

s) Dedan was a district on the northeast of the Red Sea.

t) The inhabitants of Kedar were a nomad race in the Arabian desert, renowned for their archers and flocks.

u) Sheba was in South Arabia, 1200 miles south of Jerusalem, famous for its gold, frankincense, and precious stones. v) Raamah was probably on the Persian Gulf.

w) Haran, named, it seems, for Abraham's brother [Gen. 11:31], was an ancient city in n.w. Mesopotamia, 60 miles east of Carchemish on the Euphrates; the name probably means "way" or "caravan." Canneh and Eden were centers of trade in the same general region; likewise Asshur, on the Tigris River.

you;^{*} but a wind from the east has wrecked you on the high seas! ²⁷Your wealth and your wares, your goods, your mariners and your sailors, your caulkers, your experts in bargaining, all your men of war, and the entire crew on board with you, shall sink into the depths of the sea on your day of ruin. ²⁸At the wailing cries of your pilots, the pasture lands shake. ²⁹All the oarsmen and sailors and the pilots of the sea come down from their ships, stand on shore, ³⁰and raise their voices in bitter agony over you, casting dust on their heads, wallowing in ashes, ³¹making themselves bald for your sake, girding themselves with sackcloth, and weeping over you in bitter-hearted lamentation. ³²In their wailing they raise a dirge for you and lament over you, "Who is destroyed like Tyre in the midst of the sea!" ³³When your wares went out by sea, you satisfied many peoples with your abundant wealth and your attractive wares, making kings rich. ³⁴Now you are wrecked by the seas; in the depths of the waters your merchandise and all your crew have sunk with you. ³⁵All the dwellers of the coastlands are appalled at you; their kings are aghast with horror, their faces are convulsed. ³⁶The merchants among the nations hiss at you. You have become a horror. You have forever ceased to be.

28 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the LORD God: Because you are puffed up with pride, and have said, "I am a god," and I sit in the seat of the gods in the heart of the sea," yet you are only human and no god, though you boast yourself to be like a god, ³yes, wiser than Daniel, no secret thing being hidden from you! ⁴By your shrewdness and your skill you have won for yourself great wealth and have gathered gold and silver into your treasures.

⁵By your sharpness in trade you have increased your wealth and because of your great riches you have become proud in heart. ⁶Therefore thus says the LORD God: Because you count yourself wise as a god, ⁷behold, I am bringing aliens against you, the most ruthless of nations; they shall draw their sword against your subtle wisdom and defile your brightness. ⁸They shall thrust you down into the pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas. ⁹Will you venture to claim, "I am a god," when you face those who slay you when you are but human, and no god, in the hand of those wounding you? ¹⁰You shall die the death of the uncircumcised^z at the hand of foreigners; for I have spoken it, says the LORD God.

¹¹This word of the LORD came to me: ¹²Son of man, intone a dirge over the king^a of Tyre. Say to him, Thus says the LORD God: You complete the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³You lived in Eden,^b the garden of God; you were adorned with every kind of precious stone, the ruby, topaz, and emerald, the beryl, onyx, and jasper, the sapphire, garnet, chrysolite, and gold, all in a wealthy setting of fine gold; they were prepared on the day when you were created. ¹⁴You were the anointed cherub with overshadowing [wings]. I placed you so that you were on the sacred hill of God, and you walked amidst flaming stones.^c ¹⁵You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created till you were discovered doing wrong. ¹⁶Through the abundance of your trade your inner self was filled with violence, and you sinned; so I am casting you out as a profane thing from the hill of God, and I will destroy you, O overshadowing cherub, from the midst of the flaming stones. ¹⁷You became puffed up with pride because of your beauty, and your wisdom became corrupted by reason of your splendor. I have cast you to the

x) The second half of vs. 25 resumes the poem from vs. 9 and continues the description of Tyre as a great ship. y) Ithobaal II of Tyre and Alexander the Great regarded themselves as divinities; so later did most of the Roman emperors.

z) The Phoenicians practiced circumcision and looked upon the uncircumcised as barbarians. a) The title, "king," is not found in Phoenician inscriptions, but Herodotus and Josephus both mention kings of Tyre in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C.

b) The prophet shows acquaintance with the account of Eden in Gen. 2 and 3; cf. also Isa. 14:4-21. c) Due to the brilliance of your gems.

ground and exposed you for kings to gaze at you. ¹⁸Through your many iniquities and the intrigues of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought forth fire from your midst to burn you up, and I reduced you to ashes upon the ground in the sight of all who saw you. ¹⁹All who know you among the nations are appalled at your fate; for you have become a horror; you shall be no more forever.

²⁰The word of the LORD came to me: ²¹Son of man, turn your face toward Sidon;^d prophesy against her. ²²Say, Thus says the LORD God: See! I am against you, Sidon, and I will reveal My glory in the midst of you. They shall know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her and reveal My holiness to her;^e ²³for I will send her pestilence and bloodshed in her streets; the wounded shall fall in her midst by the sword, coming down on her from every side. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. ²⁴Then the house of Israel shall no more be subjected to pricking thorns and painful briars among their neighbors who treat them with contempt. Then they will know that I am the LORD God.

²⁵Thus says the LORD God: When I have gathered the house of Israel from the nations among whom they are scattered and have revealed My holiness through them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they shall dwell in their land, which I gave My servant Jacob; ²⁶they shall live securely in it and build houses and plant vineyards. In safety and security they shall dwell in it after I have executed judgments on all their neighbors, who have treated them with contempt; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

29 IN THE TENTH YEAR, IN THE tenth month, on the twelfth day

of the month,^f the word of the LORD came to me: ²Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh,^g king of Egypt. Prophesy against him and against all Egypt; ³speak, and say, Thus says the LORD God: Look! I am against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt. You are a big crocodile lying in the midst of the streams, that says, "The Nile is my own; I made it for myself." ⁴I will put hooks in your jaws and will make the fish^h of your streams to stick to your scales; then I will pull you out of your streams with all the fish of your streams that stick to your scales. ⁵I will throw you into the desert, you and all the little fish of your streams; and I will leave you on the open desert; you shall be neither picked up nor buried,ⁱ but given as food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of heaven. ⁶Then all the dwellers of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD; for they have been a staff of reeds to the house of Israel, ⁷breaking when they grasped you by the hand and tearing their shoulders; and when they leaned on you, you broke and caused the loins of all to stagger. ⁸Therefore thus says the LORD God: See! I will bring a sword upon you and will cut off from you man and beast. ⁹The land of Egypt shall become a desolation and a waste, and they shall know that I am the LORD; for you boasted, "The Nile is mine; I made it." ¹⁰Therefore, behold, I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste, a desolation from Migdol^j to Syene, as far as the borders of Ethiopia. ¹¹No foot of man or beast shall cross it; for forty years^k it shall remain uninhabited. ¹²I will make the land of Egypt a desolation among desolated lands,^l and for forty years her cities shall remain a desolation among cities that are already wasted. I will scatter the Egypt-

d) Sidon was the first-born of Canaan [Gen. 10:15]. The city he founded was larger than Tyre and located 20 miles north of it on the coast. After Tyre's siege, Sidon became the leading city of Phoenicia. This brief oracle of warning fittingly concludes Ezekiel's prophecies against Phoenicia.

e) God will be sanctified through just chastisements of those who harass Israel; "holiness" in the O.T. implies uniqueness and separation in moral character and justice.

f) Egypt had always been an unreliable ally of Israel, and Hebrew religion detested the gross idolatry of Egypt. g) Hophra was then Egypt's king [588-569 B.C.].

h) The "fish" are the officers of Pharaoh's court, who are destined to share his fate.

i) To forfeit the rights of burial was the last indignity.

j) Migdol, "tower," located probably on the n.e. side of the Delta, near Pelusium. Syene was the modern Aswan near the Nile's First Cataract on the south.

k) Persia's occupation and domination over Egypt lasted well-nigh 40 years [525-487 B.C.]

l) The fertile Nile valley like the deserts, Arabian on the east and Libyan on the west.

tians among the nations and disperse them over the countries.

¹³For thus says the LORD God: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the people among whom they were scattered; ¹⁴I will turn the captivity of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros,^m into the land of their birth, and there they shall abide, an insignificant kingdom. ¹⁵It shall be the weakest of all kingdoms and shall no more rise above other nations; and I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. ¹⁶It shall never again be the confidence of the house of Israel, who will recall their sin when they turn to look at them. And they shall know that I am the LORD God.

¹⁷It was so in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came to me, saying:ⁿ ¹⁸Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, made his army render heavy service in fighting Tyre. Every soldier's head was peeled bald, and every shoulder was blistered; yet neither he nor his army gained any returns^o from the long campaign which he directed against Tyre. ¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD God: See, I am giving the land of Egypt to Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, and he shall carry away her wealth, despoil, and plunder her; it shall be the wages for his army. ²⁰I am giving the land as his recompense for which he labored, because they worked for Me, says the LORD God.

²¹In that day I will cause a horn^p to bud for the house of Israel, and to you I will give open lips in their midst, and they will know that I am the LORD.

30 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME again to me: ²Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus says the LORD

God: Wail! Alas for the day! ³For the day is near.^q The day of the LORD is near, a day of clouds; it is the hour for the nations. ⁴A sword shall descend on Egypt, and there shall be anguish in Ethiopia, when Egypt's slain shall fall, her wealth be carried away, and her foundations demolished. ⁵Ethiopia, Put, and Lud,^r all the Arabians, the Libyans, and the people of the land in league with them, shall fall by the sword. ⁶Thus says the LORD: Those who sustain Egypt shall fall; her vaunted strength shall come down; from Migdol to Syene^s those within her shall fall by the sword, says the LORD God. ⁷She shall be desolate in the midst of desolate lands, her cities among cities already wasted. ⁸They shall know that I am the LORD when I kindle a fire in Egypt and all her helpers are crushed. ⁹On that day messengers shall go forth from Me in ships to terrify the unsuspecting Ethiopians, and anguish shall seize them on the day of Egypt's doom; for, observe, it is coming.

¹⁰Thus says the LORD God: I will bring Egypt's masses to an end by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon. ¹¹He and his people with him, the most violent of nations, shall be brought in to destroy the land; they shall draw their swords against Egypt and shall fill the land with the slain. ¹²I will make Nile streams dry ground and sell the land into the hand of villains. I will make the land and all that is in it a desolation by the hand of aliens; I, the LORD, have spoken it.

¹³Thus says the LORD God: I will also annihilate the idols and make the images disappear from Memphis.^t There shall no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt, and I will make fear reign in Egypt. ¹⁴I will make Pathros^u a ruin. I will kindle a fire in Zoan^v

m) Pathros was upper Egypt; the mother section of the whole land, between Oxyrhynchus and Syene.

n) These verses bear the latest date in the book and were probably composed about 571 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar set out to invade Egypt 567 B.C.

o) Soldiers were paid from the spoils of captured cities. Nebuchadrezzar could pay his troops out of the booty taken from Egypt.

p) The word "horn" implies power and prosperity. In Ps. 132:17 it is used to describe the revival of the Davidic dynasty. The vision of a Coming One may be back of it, a Messianic hope.

q) A day of judgment, as in Amos, Joel, Obadiah, and Nahum. r) See 25:16; 27:10.

s) See 29:10.

t) Noph is Memphis, the principal city of lower Egypt at that time, ten miles south of modern Cairo. u) Pathros was the name originally of Upper Egypt [cf. 29:14].

v) Zoan is the modern San, in the eastern Delta.

and execute judgment on No.^w ¹⁵I will pour out My fury on Sin,^x the stronghold of Egypt, and I will cut off the crowds of Thebes. ¹⁶I will kindle a fire in Egypt, and Sin shall tremble in anguish; Thebes shall be split up and Memphis reduced to ruins. ¹⁷The young men of On and of Pibeseth^y shall fall by the sword, and the [women] shall go into captivity. ¹⁸At Tehaphnehes^z the day will become dark when I break there the yoke of Egypt and when the pride of her power ceases. She shall be covered by a cloud, and her daughters shall go into captivity. ¹⁹Thus will I execute My judgments on Egypt, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

²⁰In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month,^a the word of the LORD came to me: ²¹Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and see, it has not been bound up, nor have healing medicines been applied that it might become strong again to wield the sword. ²²Therefore, thus says the LORD God: See! I am against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and I will break his arms, both the sound one and the broken one, and I will make the sword fall out of his hand. ²³I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands. ²⁴I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and will put My sword in his hand; but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, making him groan before him^b like a man mortally wounded. ²⁵I will hold up the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall slump. They shall know that I am the LORD when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he swings it over the land of Egypt. ²⁶I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them

throughout the countries. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

31 IN THE ELEVENTH YEAR, IN THE third month, on the first day of the month,^c the word of the LORD came to me: ²Son of man, say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and to his teeming crowd: Whom are you like in your greatness? ³Behold! Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon with graceful branches and forest shade, lofty in height with its head among the clouds, ⁴waters nourishing it, deep waters supplying its roots, sending out channels and streamlets of refreshment to all the trees around. ⁵So it towered aloft above all the trees of the field. Its boughs multiplied, and its branches lengthened through the wealth of water at its roots. ⁶Among its boughs all the birds of the air made their nests, and under its branches all the beasts of the field bore their young, while in its shadows many nations dwelt. ⁷It was beautiful in its size and the length of its branches, for its roots reached abundant water; ⁸the cedars in the garden of God could not conceal it; no cypress had branches like it; no plane tree had boughs to compare with it; no tree in God's garden equalled it in beauty. ⁹Because of its boughs and the beauty of its foliage, all of Eden's trees that were in the garden of God, envied it. ¹⁰Therefore, thus says the LORD God: Because it towered high, carrying its head in the clouds and priding itself on its height, ¹¹I gave it into the hand of a mighty one among the nations, who dealt with it as its wickedness deserved; I, Myself, have cast it off.^d ¹²Strangers, the most ruthless of peoples, cut it down and left it lying upon the mountains, its branches forsaken in the valleys, and all the people of the earth left its shade and let it lie.

w) No is modern Thebes, the seat of Ammon worship, 400 miles south of Cairo, and the capital of Upper Egypt. x) Sin was one of the chief fortresses of the Delta.

y) On and Pibeseth are in Lower Egypt; On, center of "cat" worship, is modern Heliopolis, 7 miles n.e. of Cairo. A cat cemetery is still extant.

z) Tehaphnehes is probably the modern Tel Defenneh, 3 miles west of El Kantara on the Suez Canal.

a) This independent section [vss. 20-26] is dated three months later than 29:1 and only four months before the fall of Jerusalem; it refers to a defeat of Pharaoh Hophra.

b) Pharaoh before Nebuchadnezzar. c) Two months before Jerusalem's fall.

d) The allegorical figure of the cedar and the literal description of the Pharaoh, run into each other in these verses [vss. 11-17].

¹³Upon its fallen trunk all the birds of the heavens gathered, and among its branches and thick boughs all the beasts of the field rested; ¹⁴so that no trees beside the waters may exalt themselves because of their height or lift their heads into the clouds, and no water-fed tree may show off its height; for all are delivered to death, to the nether parts of earth, and with the children of men, with those who go down to the pit.

¹⁵Thus says the LORD God: On the day when he^e went down to the realm of the dead, I made the deep mourn for him and restrained its floods; the great waters were held back, and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him; and all the trees of the field fainted because of him. ¹⁶I made the nations quake at the sound of his fall when I cast him down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit; and all the trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, all that thrive on water, were comforted in the underworld. ¹⁷Those slain by the sword also went down with him into the realm of the dead, his helpers, who had lived under his shadow among the nations. ¹⁸To whom, then, are you really like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? You, with them,^f shall be brought down to the underworld with the trees of Eden and die there among the uncircumcised,^g slain by the sword. Such shall be the fate of Pharaoh and of all his teeming masses, says the LORD God.

32 IN THE TWELFTH YEAR, IN THE twelfth month, on the first day of the month,^h the word of the LORD came to me: ²Son of man, intone a dirge over Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Say to him: You compared yourself to a young lion among the nations, whereas you are a crocodile in the seas, making water bubble, troubling the waters with your feet, and befouling their streams. ³Thus says the LORD God: I will spread out My net over you with a

host of many peoples; I will haul you up in My net; ⁴and I will leave you upon the land, and hurl you out on the open field. I will make the birds of the air settle on you and will glut the animals of all the earth with you. ⁵I will strew your flesh upon the hills and fill the valleys with your bones, ⁶drenching with your gushing blood the whole earth to the tops of the mountains, so that the ravines will be filled with you. ⁷And when I have extinguished you, I will veil the heavens and darken the stars, covering the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall cease giving her light. ⁸All the beaming lights of heaven I will darken over you, bringing darkness on your land, says the LORD God.

⁹I will cause dismay in the hearts of many peoples when I announce your downfall to the nations, to countries which you never knew. ¹⁰I will make many peoples astonished at you; their kings will shudder with terror when I brandish My sword before them. They shall tremble every moment, each for his own life, on the day of your downfall. ¹¹For thus says the LORD God: The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. ¹²By the sword of the mighty, the most terrible of the nations, I will make your host fall; they shall humble the pomp of Egypt, and all its multitudes shall perish. ¹³I will destroy all your cattle from beside many waters which no foot of man shall roil any more, nor shall the hoofs of beasts trouble them. ¹⁴Then I will make their waters clear and cause their rivers to flow like oil, says the LORD God. ¹⁵When I have made the land of Egypt a ruin and a waste, when I have stripped the land of all its fulness, and when I have smitten all who dwell in it, then they shall know that I am the LORD. ¹⁶This is the dirge which shall be chanted by the daughters of all the nations, lamenting for Egypt and her teeming masses, says the LORD God.

¹⁷Also in the twelfth year, on the

e) The pronoun is masculine and refers to Pharaoh. [The Hebrew language has no neuter form]. In these vss. 15-18, both cedar and Pharaoh are described in semi-allegorical language.
f) The doom of Pharaoh is to be shared by his allies; Ezekiel often uses the "prophetic perfect"! g) The Egyptians practiced circumcision and considered those uncircumcised as outside the pale of civilization [cf. Josh. 5:8, 9]. To be buried among the uncircumcised was to them the last indignity. h) Dated some 19 months after 586 B.C., the date of Jerusalem's fall.

fifteenth day of the month,¹ the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸Son of man, wail over the masses of Egypt, and send them down, her and the daughters of famous nations to the nether world, with those who have gone down to the pit. ¹⁹Whom do you surpass in loveliness? Go down, and be laid with the uncircumcised; ²⁰they shall fall among those who were slain by the sword. Lie down, you and all your vast multitude. ²¹The mighty warriors of Sheol will welcome you and your helpers.¹ They have all gone down and lie still with the uncircumcised in the midst of those who have been slain by the sword. ²²Assyria^k is there and all her multitude; their graves are around her, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, ²³whose graves are made in the sides of the pit, her company around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who caused terror in the land of the living. ²⁴There is Elam,¹ with all her multitude around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, and gone down to the underworld uncircumcised, who in the land of the living had caused terror; they have borne their shame with them that go down to the pit. ²⁵Among the slain they have made for her a bed and for the many in numberless graves around her, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, for the terror they caused in the land of the living; hence they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit and are placed among the slain.

²⁶Meshech and Tubal^m are there, with all their crowds, their graves surrounding them, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, because they struck terror in the land of the living. ²⁷But the fallen of the uncircumcised

do not lie with the mighty men who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads, and their wickedness upon their bones, because their terror was mighty in the land of the living. ²⁸So you too shall lie broken among the uncircumcised, with those who were slain by the sword.

²⁹There also is Edom, whose king and princes, in spite of all their might, are laid with those who were slain by the sword;ⁿ they shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the pit.

³⁰The princes of the north, including the Sidonians, all of them, who have gone down in shame with the slain, in spite of the terror because of their might, they shall be in the pit among the uncircumcised, slain by the sword, and they shall bear their disgrace.

³¹When Pharaoh sees them, he will be consoled that all his multitude, Pharaoh and all his army, who were slain by the sword, are with him in Sheol,^o says the LORD God. ³²For I spread My terror in the land of the living among all the victims of the sword, uncircumcised, Pharaoh and his multitude, says the LORD God.

33 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me:^p ²Son of man, speak to your countrymen. Say to them: When I bring the sword upon a land and the people of that land take one of their number and make him their watchman, ³if he sees the sword coming on the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, ⁴then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet but does not take warning, if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be on his own head. ⁵He heard the sound of the

i) Though the month is here not specified, the twelfth may be assumed from vs. 1; hence vss. 17-32 may be dated about two weeks after vss. 1-16. j) Cf. Isa. 14:9.

k) Assyria had been conquered by Babylon in 612 B.C.

l) After Assyria, Elam was the next most formidable warrior state. Originally they were sons of Shem, but they got mixed and spoke a different language from all other Semites. They inhabited the region east of the Tigris and joined the Assyrian army against Jerusalem in Isaiah's time [Isa. 22:6].

m) Meshech and Tubal were remnants of the old Hittite population, sons of Japheth, and therefore Arian.

n) The Edomites were circumcised, but they are destined to share Sheol with those who were not.

o) In Isa. 14, and here in vss. 18-32 are the most vivid descriptions in the Bible concerning Sheol. p) Ezekiel turns from divine judgment to divine restoration. The future, he sees, lies with the exiles; they must form a new Israel. For seven years he had preached the coming of judgment and the certainty of doom; now, in chaps. 33-39, he proclaims the forgiveness of sin. In these chapters there is but one date [33:21], 586 B.C., the date of Jerusalem's fall.

trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself; had he taken warning, he would have saved his life. ⁶But if the watchman sees the sword approaching and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that man is taken in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

⁷So you, son of man, I appoint you a watchman to the house of Israel; when you hear the word from My mouth, warn them from Me. ⁸When I say to the wicked, Sinner, you shall surely die; but you say nothing to warn that sinner to turn from his way, that sinner shall die in his sins; but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the sinner to turn from his way and he does not turn from it, he shall die in his iniquity, but you have saved your soul.

¹⁰Therefore, son of man, say to the house of Israel: ^aYou have said, "Our sins are heavy upon us," and under them you are wasting away and are crying, "How then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them: As I live, says the LORD God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but rather in this, that he turns from his way and lives. Turn you, oh, turn you, from your evil ways; for why should you die, ^chouse of Israel? ¹²And you, son of man, say to the children of your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not save him when he transgresses; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, it shall not be his downfall ^bin the day that he turns from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live by his righteousness in the day he does the sinning. ¹³Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and commits sin, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered; but in the sin he commits he shall die. ¹⁴Again, when I say to the wicked, you shall surely die; yet

if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and fair — ¹⁶he restores the pledge and gives back what he had robbed, follows the statutes of life and does no wrong — he shall surely live; he shall not die. ¹⁶None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered ^dagainst him; he has done what is lawful and fair; he shall surely live.

¹⁷Yet, the children of your people say, "The way of the LORD is not consistent"; rather, it is their way which is not consistent. ¹⁸When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does wrong, he shall die for it; ¹⁹and when the wicked turns away from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live by it. ²⁰Yet you say, "The way of the LORD is not consistent." O house of Israel, I will judge each one of you according to his ways.

²¹It happened in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month that a fugitive from Jerusalem came to me and announced, "The city is smitten!" ²²Now the hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the fugitive arrived, and in the morning about the time when the fugitive came, my mouth was opened and I could speak; I was no longer dumb.

²³Then the word of the LORD came to me: ²⁴Son of man, those who inhabit these wastes of the land of Israel are saying, "Abraham was but one man, yet he received possession of the land; now we are many, to us therefore the land should be given as a possession." ^u²⁵Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD God: You eat [flesh] with the blood in it; you lift up your eyes to your idols, and you shed blood; should you then possess the land? ^v²⁶You depend on your sword; you commit abominations, each one of you defiling his neighbor's wife; should you then possess the land? ²⁷Tell them this, too, Thus says the LORD God: As

q) Ezekiel speaks in these verses as a pastor, not as a speculative theologian.

r) A man's past may not necessarily determine his possible future. A man is morally free to repent [cf. 18:21-29]. The apostles carried this doctrine even higher [cf. Rom. 7:6; I John 3:9].

s) Wickedness leads to stumbling [cf. Prov. 4:19]; repentance will arrest the fall.

t) How such forgiveness becomes possible, through Christ, and how the old sinful personality ceases to be, is taught clearly in the N.T.

u) It is character, not numbers, that counts with God. v) With the better elements of the people carried into exile, there was no future for those left behind. The land had become desolate.

I live, those among the wastes shall be taken by the sword; those in the open country I will give to the beasts for nourishment; those in strongholds and in the caves shall die of pestilence. ²⁸I will make the land a desolation and a waste; the pomp of its strength shall come to an end, and the mountains of Israel shall become so deserted that none will pass through them. ²⁹They will know that I am the LORD, when, because of all the abominations they have committed, I have made the land a desolation and an astonishment.

³⁰As for you, son of man, your fellow countrymen are talking about you by the walls and the doors of houses. They say to one another, each to his brother, "Please come, and hear what is the word from the LORD." ³¹They will come to you as My people used to come, and they will sit before you as My congregation; they will listen to your words but they will not obey them; for with their lips they make a show of love, but their hearts are set on their own selfish gain.* ³²See! You are to them like a lovely song, sung with a beautiful voice and played well on an instrument; they hear your words, but they will not obey them. ³³But when the hour comes — and it is coming — will they recognize that a prophet has been among them?^y

34 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds^z of Israel. Prophesy; say to them, Thus says the LORD God to the shepherds: Ah! You shepherds of Israel, who have been tending yourselves; should not shepherds tend the sheep? ³You eat the fat and dress yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. ⁴The weak you have not strength-

ened; nor have you healed the sick or bound up the wounded; nor have you brought back the straying or sought after the lost; only with force and with rigor have you ruled over them. ⁵They were scattered because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶My sheep wandered all over the mountains and on every high hill. Yes, My flock was scattered on the whole face of the earth, with no one to seek or search for them.

⁷Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸As I live,^a says the LORD God, because My sheep^b have become a prey and My flock have become food for all the wild beasts for want of a shepherd, because the shepherds did not care for My flock but fed themselves, not having fed My sheep; ⁹therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD. ¹⁰Thus says the LORD God:^c Observe! I am against the shepherds; I will require My sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more. I will rescue My flock from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them any longer. ¹¹For thus says the LORD God: Lo! I, even I, will search for My flock and seek them out. ¹²As a shepherd seeks out his sheep when he is among those who are scattered, so will I seek out My sheep and rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered in the day of cloud and darkness.^d ¹³I will bring them out from among the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses and in all the habitable portions of the country. ¹⁴In good pastures will I feed them; upon the

w) As a rule, the Gentiles will learn from His judgments that the LORD is God; but through Israel's tragic discipline, the Jews too may learn this vital fact.

x) They show enthusiasm, but their inclinations are not Godward [cf. Isa. 29:13].

y) A prophet's true function is to interpret history in the light of God's purpose to redeem His people.

z) The shepherds are their native kings, rulers, and priests [Moses, Isa. 63:11, 12; David, Ps. 78:70-72; Cyrus, Isa. 44:28].

a) "As I live, says the LORD God" finds a corresponding equivalent in "I assure you" in the N.T. as spoken by Jesus.

b) The phrase "My sheep," is repeated often in these verses: four times in verse 8 alone.

c) Repetition is for emphasis.

d) The LORD here shows what a good shepherd would do [cf. Luke 19:10]. The kings of Israel were responsible for the morals of the nation, and the prophets shared the responsibility. Jeremiah had warned Israel that a better brand of pastors was needed [23:1-8].

mountain heights of Israel shall be their fold; there they will lie down in a good fold, and in rich pastures they shall graze on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁶I Myself will feed My flock, ^{16a}and I will cause them to lie down, says the LORD God.^e I will seek the lost and bring back the strayed; I will bind up the wounded; I will strengthen the sick; and the fat and the strong I will guard, tending them all with judgment.^f

¹⁷As for you, my flock, thus says the LORD God: See! I judge between lambs and kids, between rams and he-goats.^g

¹⁸Is it not enough for you to graze in the good pasture, that you must trample down with your feet the rest of the pasture; and to drink of the clear waters yourselves, that you must befoul the rest with your feet? ¹⁹Must My flock graze on what you have trampled upon and drink what you have befouled with your feet?

²⁰Therefore, thus says the LORD God to them: Behold! I Myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you push with your side and shoulder and thrust at all the weak with your horns till you have driven them out, ²²I will save^b My sheep, so that they may no longer be your prey, and I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³I will appoint over them one shepherd,¹ even My servant David; he shall feed them and be a shepherd to them; ²⁴I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David shall be a prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken it. ²⁵I will make with them a covenant of peace¹ and will banish the wild animals from the land, so that they may live securely in

the plains and sleep in the woods. ²⁶I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, sending rains to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.^k ²⁷The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the land shall yield her produce; they shall be secure in their land! They shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke¹ and have rescued them from the hands of those who enslaved them. ²⁸They shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the wild beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. ²⁹I will provide them with vegetation renowned for its growth. No more will they be subjected to famine, and no longer shall they bear the reproach of the nations. ³⁰Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, says the LORD God. ³¹You are My flock, the sheep of My pasture, and I am your God,^m says the LORD God.

35 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, set your face against Mount Seirⁿ and prophesy against it. ³Say to it, Thus says the LORD God: Look! I am against you, Mount Seir; I will stretch out My hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. ⁴Your cities^o I will destroy, and you shall become a desolation. You shall know that I am the LORD, ⁵for you have perpetuated enmity toward the children of Israel and have handed them over to the violence of the sword at the time of their calamity, the time of their final

e) To gather and restore Israel is repeatedly emphasized in Ezekiel's later chapters [36:24; 37:22; 38:8; 39:27]. That the Lord Himself will act as the Shepherd of His people leads directly to the N.T. f) The divine Shepherd tempers His treatment of His flock with mercy and discernment. g) The he-goats are the strong, leading men of the community, who ignore the rights of common people.

h) To Ezekiel salvation meant largely restoration of Israel; Jesus saves from sin [Matt. 1:21], for the new life.

i) The "one shepherd" implies a single flock, such as David and Solomon had before the schism between Israel and Judah. j) Ensured by the extermination of hurtful beasts.

k) Not only the former rains which fall in Oct. and Nov., but also the winter rains [Dec. to Mar.] and the latter rains of April.

l) The oriental yoke consists of four crosspieces around the neck of an ox.

m) The ideal relation between the Lord and His people will be re-established in the blessed future. n) Mt. Seir, a mountainous region stretching south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah, 100 miles on the east of the Arabah, was the home of the Edomites, the sons of Esau.

o) Only a few small villages remain today in Edom, the chief of which from north to south are Bozrah, Shobek, Elgi, Maan, Ezion-geber, and Petra, once the capital, but empty now of all settled inhabitants.

doom. ⁶Therefore, as I live, says the LORD God, because you are guilty of blood, blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, blood will pursue you. ⁷Thus I will make Mount Seir a waste and a ruin. I will cut off from it him who arrives and him who leaves. ⁸I will cover its mountains with the slain; those slain by the sword shall fall, in your hills, in your valleys and in your creek-beds. ⁹I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall remain uninhabited.^p You shall know that I am the LORD.

¹⁰Because you have said, "These two nations and these two lands^q shall become mine, and we will take possession of them," — although the LORD was there — ¹¹therefore, as I live, says the LORD God, I will do to you according to your anger and your envy which you have shown in your hatred for them. I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. ¹²And you shall know that I, the LORD, have heard all your revilings which you have uttered against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are a desolation! They are given us to devour!" ¹³You spoke boastfully with your big words against Me; I heard them all. ¹⁴Thus says the LORD God: The whole world will rejoice when I make you desolate. ¹⁵As you rejoiced over the heritage of the house of Israel because it was ruined, so will I deal with you; you shall become desolate, Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. So shall they know that I am the LORD.

36 AND YOU, SON OF MAN,^r PROPHESY to the mountains of Israel. Say, You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. ²Thus says the LORD God: Because the enemy^s has exulted over you, saying, "Aha! The ancient heights have become ours," ³therefore prophesy, Thus says the

LORD God: Because, yes, because^t you were crushed and were trampled on every side to become the possession of the remaining nations, and you became the talk and slanderous gossip of the people; ⁴therefore, you mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD God: Thus says the LORD God to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the deserted cities, which have become a spoil and a mockery to the nations remaining all around, ⁵thus says the LORD God: Surely I will speak in the heat of My zeal against the remainder of the surrounding nations, especially against all Edom, who allotted My land to themselves with the utmost joy and with utter contempt, so that they might hold it as booty. ⁶Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, Thus says the LORD God: Behold, I will speak in my wrathful jealousy, because you have suffered the reproach of the nations. ⁷Therefore, thus says the LORD God: I swear with My uplifted hand^u that the nations which are around you shall themselves bear their reproach.

⁸But you, mountains of Israel, shall put forth your branches and yield your fruit for My people Israel; for they shall soon be coming home.^v ⁹For see, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown; ¹⁰I will multiply you into a large population, the whole house of Israel, all of it;^w your cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. ¹¹I will multiply in the land both man and beast; they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will populate you as of old, and I will do even better to you than during your early days.^x Then you shall know that I am the LORD. ¹²Yes, I will allow men to travel over you;^y My people Israel shall possess

p) The Edomites of Mt. Seir probably hoped, in Israel's humiliation, to seize some of their territory. q) Mt. Seir and Canaan.

r) Ch. 36 follows ch. 35 naturally; as Edom is weakened, Israel will prosper.

s) In particular, the Edomites. t) "Because" is repeated for emphasis, as in 13:10.

u) An established custom when making covenants.

v) Israel's return from Babylon was imminent. Jeremiah had named 70 years as the length of their captivity [Jer. 29:10]; Jerusalem was without a temple 70 years [586-516 B.C.].

w) Including both Judah and northern Israel [cf. 11:15; 20:40]; the unity of the whole nation is emphasized by Ezekiel.

x) The land is implicitly depicted here as bereaved by their historic losses.

y) Over the land, doing business.

you; you shall be their inheritance, and no longer shall you make them childless.¹³ Thus says the LORD God: Because men taunt you, declaring that you are a land which devours its population,^z ¹⁴you shall no longer diminish the number of men and no longer bereave your nation [of children], says the LORD God. ¹⁵I will no longer make you hear the sneer of the nations, and you shall no more bear the reproach of peoples, and no longer shall you make your people stumble,^a says the LORD God.

¹⁶The word of the LORD came to me:^b ¹⁷Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their doings, their worship being to Me as the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity.^c ¹⁸So I poured out My fury on them because of the blood which they had shed in the land and for the defilement, which they had brought upon it through their idols.^d ¹⁹I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed over the countries; for according to their ways and their doings, I judged them. ²⁰When they came to the nations whither they went, they profaned My holy name, for men said of them, "These are the people of the LORD, yet they had to leave His land!" ²¹But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations whither they went.

²²Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: It is not for your sakes, house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name,^e which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. ²³I will vindicate My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned

among them; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, says the LORD God, when, through you, I vindicate My holiness^f before their eyes. ²⁴For I will lead you from among the nations, gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be cleansed from all your impurities; from all your idols I will purify you. ²⁶A new heart,^g too, I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall observe My ordinances and do them. ²⁸You shall live in the land which I gave your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God; ²⁹I will also save you from all your impurities. I will command the grain, to make it abundant, allowing no famine to overtake you. ³⁰I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, that you may no more be reproached by the nations for famine.^h ³¹Then you will remember your evil ways and your doings which were not good, and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight because of your iniquities and your abominations.ⁱ ³²It is not for your sake that I do this, says the LORD God. Be that known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!

³³Thus says the LORD God: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places to be rebuilt. ³⁴The acreage that was left desolate shall once more be cultivated in the sight of all those who pass by. ³⁵They shall say, "This soil that was

z) The land of Israel has always had thin soil and is subject to droughts, blasting mildew, and locusts [cf. Jer. 14]. The land itself is being addressed. a) Offering their children to idols.

b) Vss. 16-38 are read by the Jews as the prophetic lesson in the worship of Sabbaths, in the synagogues. He who has power to punish has power also to restore. c) A figure for idolatry.

d) Though Israel must be punished, yet they must also be restored and sanctified, that the Lord's name may be held in honor.

e) Israel's exile was, to the nations, a reflection upon Israel's God, detracting from His power and majesty. Vss. 22-32 are among the most spiritual in the O.T.; implicitly they point to a promised Messiah. f) "Holiness" in the O.T. means uniqueness, separation from all other gods.

g) A "new heart" implies a new nature or attitude spiritually, inspired by the Lord's active energy [cf. Isa. 42:1; 59:21].

h) Ezekiel, here and in 34:27, makes the noteworthy fertility of the soil and fruit trees one of the tokens of the coming age.

i) Repeated from 20:43. In the doctrine of the "new birth," Jesus explained how obedience to His ordinances becomes possible.

barren is become like the garden of Eden; the waste, desolate, and devastated cities are again fortified and inhabited." ³⁶Then the nations that are left around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the broken-down places and replanted the desolate wastes. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

³⁷Thus says the LORD God: This, too, I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them — to make their population as numerous as a flock, ³⁸as large flocks for sacrifices, as the flocks at Jerusalem during the appointed feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with crowds of men,^j and they will know that I am the LORD.

37 THE HAND OF THE LORD CAME upon me, and by His Spirit the LORD brought me out and set me down in a valley which was full of bones.^k ²He led me all around them; and observe, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and see, they were very dry.^l ³He said to me: Son of man, can these bones live? I answered, "LORD God, Thou knowest." ⁴Then He said to me: Prophecy over these bones. Say to them, You dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the LORD God to these bones: Notice! I will put breath into you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews upon you, clothe you with flesh, cover you with skin, put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

⁷So I prophesied as I was ordered; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, a rattling;^m and see, the bones were uniting, bone to its [fitting] bone. ⁸And as I looked on, see, sinews came upon them, and flesh, and then skin covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then He said to me: Prophecy to the

wind;ⁿ prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus says the LORD God: Come from the four winds, O Spirit, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. ¹⁰So I prophesied as He had ordered me, and breath came into them; they lived and stood on their feet, an unusually large army.

¹¹Then He said to me: Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.^o Yet they continue to say, "Our bones are dried up, our hope is lost, and we are completely done for!" ¹²Therefore prophesy. Say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Take note! I will open your graves, raise you from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. ¹³You shall know that I am the LORD when I have opened your graves, My people, and brought you up out of your graves. ¹⁴I will put My Spirit within you, and you shall live. I will settle you in your own land, and you shall know that I, the LORD, have said it and have done it, says the LORD.^p

¹⁵The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁶Son of man, take a stick and write on it, "For Judah and adhering Israelites."^q Then take another stick and write on it, "For Joseph and the house of Israel." ¹⁷Join them together into one stick that they may become one stick in your hand. ¹⁸When your people say to you, "Will you not show us what you mean by these?" ¹⁹say to them, Thus says the LORD God: See, I am about to take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel associated with him; and I will join with it the stick of Judah, making them a single stick so that they are united in My hand. ²⁰Then holding the sticks on which you have written in your hand before their eyes, ²¹say to them, Thus says the LORD God: Observe! I am taking

j) According to Josephus, there were about 120,000 priests attached to the temple worship in the first century A.D. Ezekiel was a priest as well as a prophet.

k) This vision is a marvel of brevity and vividness. The prophet pictures the nation as dead, but the new Israel as its resurrection, a resurrection of the nation; yet a nation composed of individuals. (Cf. Isa. 26:19; Hos. 6:2; 13:14). In vs. 12 they are represented as brought out of their graves. l) A veritable valley of death!

m) Like the trembling of nature in an earthquake; the vision of a revival service rather than that of a cemetery.

n) The Hebrew word *ruach* means either "wind" or "breath" or "spirit," according to context.

o) Of the entire nation, not of the Judean exiles only.

p) Such faith was reborn in Israel's exile. The vision of "Dry Bones" meant more to Ezekiel than restoration to Canaan — the sanctifying of their whole national life.

q) "Judah" standing for the southern kingdom of Israel; "Joseph" for Ephraim and the northern.

the children of Israel from among the nations whither they are gone and will gather them from every quarter and bring them into their own land; ²²and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel. One king^r shall be king over them all. They shall no longer be two nations and no longer divided into two kingdoms. ²³Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, their foul practices, and all their other transgressions; for I will save them from all their sinful apostasies and will purify them; so shall they be My people, and I will be their God. ²⁴My servant David shall be king over them. They shall all have one shepherd and shall follow My ordinances, obey My statutes, and practice them. ²⁵They shall dwell in the land which I gave Jacob My servant, the land in which their fathers lived. They shall home in it, they and their children and their children's children forever, and David My servant shall be their prince forever. ²⁶I will make with them a covenant of peace; it shall be for them an everlasting covenant.^a I will bless them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for all time. ²⁷My dwelling place shall be with them;^t I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ²⁸When My sanctuary remains established among them, then the nations shall know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel.

38 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME to me: ²Son of man, set your face toward Gog,^u of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. ³Say, Thus says the LORD God: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of

Meshech and Tubal. ⁴I will turn you around and put hooks in your jaws and lead you out with your whole army, your horses and horsemen, all clad in full armor, a great host, equipped with buckler and shield, and wielding swords. ⁵With them are Persia, Ethiopia, and Put,^v all of them supplied with shields and helmets; ⁶Gomer^w and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah and all their troops from the north and many others with you. ⁷Prepare and hold yourself in readiness, you and all your host mustered around you, and be a guide for them. ⁸After many days you will be called up for service; and in the end of the years you will march against the land that has recovered from war and is occupied by people, now living in security, all of them, brought together from the nations in the mountains of Israel, which had become a perpetual wilderness. ⁹You will advance, coming on like a storm and covering the land like a cloud, you and all your hordes and many people with you.

¹⁰Thus says the LORD God: It shall be in that day^x that ideas shall come to mind, and you shall concoct an evil device. ¹¹You will say, "I will march against the land of villages, and I will fall upon the quiet people who dwell securely without walls to defend them, without bars or gates, ¹²and I will seize booty and carry it away as plunder, assailing the waste places now inhabited and the people who were gathered from the nations, who have become possessed of cattle and goods and who dwell at the center of the earth."^y ¹³Sheba and Dedan^z and the merchants of Tarshish, the traders and all the mighty ones,^a will say to you, "Have you come to seize spoil? Have you as-

r) Only here and in vs. 24 does Ezekiel use the word "king" as the ideal ruler of Israel's coming age; even in vs. 25 he uses the word "prince." Christ is the realization of the prophet's prediction.

s) When as a united nation they are restored and their sanctuary is established as the center of their national life, radiating holiness throughout the nation.

t) The LORD's presence in the sanctuary brings Him and heaven down to earth. In the O.T. man is not thought of as dwelling in the heavenlies with God; God comes down to dwell with man.

u) Gog seems to descend into Palestine from the far north as the representative of heathen barbarians. In Rev. 20:7-9 Gog and Magog are depicted as destined to break in hostility to the Church. They are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. Could it be Russia?

v) Persians, Ethiopians, and East Africans.

w) The Cimmerians, who originally dwelt north of the Black Sea.

x) This prophetic phrase occurs nowhere else in the book of Ezekiel. The "day" is that of Gog's invasion. y) Literally, "the navel of the earth" [cf. 5:5].

z) Both Sheba and Dedan were great trading centers in Arabia.

a) Literally, "all their young lions."

sembled your forces to take prey, to carry away silver and gold, to drive away cattle, and to seize goods?"

¹⁴Therefore, son of man, prophesy. Say to Gog, Thus says the LORD God: On that day, when My people Israel are dwelling in security, you will bestir yourself ¹⁵and come from your place out of the far north, you and the many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great host and a mighty army; ¹⁶and you will come against My people Israel like a cloud covering the land. It shall be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may recognize Me, when through you, Gog, I vindicate My holiness before their eyes.^b

¹⁷Thus says the LORD God: You are those of whom I spoke in former days by My servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days, through whom I threatened to bring you against them.^c ¹⁸And on that day, the day when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, says the LORD God, My anger shall come up into My nostrils. ¹⁹For in My jealousy and in the fire of My indignation, I have spoken: Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; ²⁰the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, all creatures that creep upon the ground, and all people that live on the face of the earth, shall quake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down; cliffs shall fall, and walls shall tumble to the ground.^d ²¹I will then summon the sword against him^e on all My mountains, says the LORD God; every man's sword shall be against his brother. ²²With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him, and I will pour upon him, upon his hordes, and upon all the nations in his train, floods of rain accompanied by hailstones, fire, and brimstone. ²³Thus I will manifest My greatness and My

holiness and make Myself known in the eyes of many nations; they will know that I am the LORD.^f

39 SON OF MAN, PROPHECY AGAINST Gog. Say, Thus says the LORD God: Look! I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ²I will turn you around and drive you on to leave the extreme north, so as to bring you to the mountains of Israel: ³then I will strike your bow from your left hand and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand. ⁴You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your hordes and your many allies, and I will give you to the birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. ⁵You shall fall in the open field; for I have said it, says the LORD God. ⁶I will send fire on Magog^g and on those who dwell securely in the coastlands; and they shall know that I am the LORD. ⁷I will make known My holy name in the midst of My people Israel, and I will no longer allow My holy name to be profaned. So shall the nations^h know that I am the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ⁸Behold, it comes! It shall be done, says the LORD; this is the day I predicted.

⁹Then shall those who live in the cities of Israel go out and make fires of their weapons, the shields and bucklers, bows and arrows, the handpikes and the spears. For seven years they shall make fires of them; ¹⁰they shall not gather wood from the fields or cut it in the forests, but they shall make fuel of the weapons; thus they shall despoil those who despoiled them and plunder those who plundered them, says the LORD God.

¹¹On that day I will give Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of the travelers, east of the sea. It will block the road for all who travel that way; for there Gog and his whole army will

b) Gog comes up of his own accord; at the same time the LORD says, "I will bring you up against My land." Thus the divine purpose overrules Gog's base motives and uses them.

c) Note Isa. 17:12; Jer. 4:6 ff.; Joel 2:2; Zeph. 1:14, 15; 3:8.

d) Zech. 12:2 ff. describes similar apocalyptic accompaniments; both animate and inanimate nature are involved. e) Gog [vs. 14; ch. 39:1].

f) The LORD reveals Himself in destruction and in blessing [cf. 37:28].

g) Magog here seems to be the name of a people; the prophet probably intended to include those also of the nations that made up Gog's great army.

h) The destruction of Gog and Magog will be a revelation to the Gentiles of the LORD's holiness, as well as to Israel.

be buried; it will be called, "the Valley of Gog's Host." ¹²For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, so that the land may be thoroughly cleansed. ¹³All the people of the land will be burying them; it will bring them renown on the day that I show My glory, says the LORD God. ¹⁴They will set apart certain men, definitely commissioned to traverse the whole land searching for those who remained on top of the ground unburied, to bury them and to cleanse the land; they will begin their search at the end of seven months. ¹⁵As they pass through the land and one notices human bones, he shall set up a markerⁱ beside it, till the gravediggers bury it in the Valley of Gog's Host. ¹⁶A city named "Multitude" is there. Thus they shall cleanse the land.

¹⁷And for you, son of man, thus says the LORD God: Speak to the birds of every feather and to all the beasts of the field. Say, Assemble yourselves and come, gather from every quarter to the great sacrificial feast^j that I am preparing for you upon the mountains of Israel, at which you shall eat flesh and drink blood. ¹⁸You shall eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of princes of the earth — of rams, of lambs, of goats, and of bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. ¹⁹You shall eat fat^k until you are glutted and drink blood^k until you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast which I am preparing for you; ²⁰you shall be sated at My table with horses and riders, warriors and soldiers of every sort, says the LORD God.

²¹Thus I will manifest My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see the judgments that I execute and the hand which I have laid on them. ²²From that day onwards the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God. ²³And the nations shall

know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt treacherously toward Me; for which reason I hid My face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries; and they fell, all of them, by the sword. ²⁴According to their uncleanness and transgressions I dealt thus with them and hid My face from them.

²⁵Therefore,^l says the LORD God: I will reverse the captivity of Jacob^m and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; I will be jealous for My holy name. ²⁶They shall forget their shameⁿ and all the treachery they have practiced against Me, when they are settled and undisturbed in their own land, ²⁷when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from the lands of their enemies and through them I have vindicated My holiness in the sight of many nations. ²⁸They shall know that I am the LORD their God^o in that I have caused them to go into exile among the nations and have now gathered them into their own land. I will never leave any of them alone again, ²⁹nor any longer hide My face from them, for on the house of Israel I have poured out My Spirit, says the LORD God.

40 IN THE TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF our exile, in the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city had been smitten, on that very day the hand of the LORD was upon me, ²and in visions of God He brought me into the land of Israel. He set me down on a very high mountain, on the south side of which there was laid out something like a city.^p ³When He brought me to it, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like shining bronze, with a linen tape and a measuring reed in his hand, standing

i) Probably an upturned stone, or cairn.

j) Not merely a sacrifice, but a sacrificial meal; based probably on Isa. 34:6, and influencing the writer in Rev. 19:17-21.

k) The "fat" and "blood" of sacrifices were regarded as most holy, because they were the seat of life, the choicest physical gift of God (cf. 44:15).

l) The prophet concludes with a profound sense of the Lord's Deity.

m) Ezekiel seldom uses the name "Jacob" [20:5], but then as a parallel with Israel, including the whole nation. n) With self-reproach [16:63].

o) This is the major truth taught by Ezekiel through the whole book.

p) Having portrayed in chs. 34-37 his ideal of the coming age, the prophet as a priest shows his deep concern for a place of worship.

in the gateway. ⁴The man^q said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, hear with your ears, and take to heart all that I shall show you; for you were brought here so that I might show it to you; then go and tell the house of Israel all that you see." ⁵Observe, a wall ran all around the outside of the building,^r and in the hand of the man standing there was a measuring reed, 10½ feet long by the longer measure;^s so he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed in breadth, and the height one reed.

⁶Then he brought me to the gateway looking east.^t Going up its steps, he measured the threshold of the gate, one reed broad, and the other threshold, one reed broad. ⁷Each guard room was one reed long and one reed broad; and the space between the guard rooms, 8¾ feet; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate at the inner end, one reed. ⁸He also measured the vestibule of the gateway leading into the building, one reed; then the vestibule, 14 feet; ⁹the jambs^u on either side of the gateway porch being 3½ feet wide, and the porch of the gate was inside. ¹⁰The three guard rooms of the east gate were on each side, all of the same dimensions; and the jambs between them were all of the same size. ¹¹Then he measured the breadth of the gateway, 17½ feet, and the length of the gateway, 22¾ feet. ¹²In front of each guard room there was a platform, 1¾ feet square; the guard rooms themselves being 10½ feet square. ¹³Then he measured the gate from roof to roof of the guard rooms, a breadth of 43¾ feet from door to door. ¹⁴He measured the vestibule, too, which was 35 feet in length; and

around the vestibule was the inner court. ¹⁵From the front of the gateway at the entrance to the inner front was 87½ feet.^v ¹⁶The gateway had latticed windows all around, which were beveled inward toward the jambs between the guard rooms; the vestibule, too, had windows all around, and on the jambs were palm-tree^w decorations.

¹⁷Then he brought me into the outer court; and see, there were chambers and a pavement around the court, thirty chambers fronting on the pavement.^x ¹⁸The lower pavement, which was on a different level from that around the temple, ran along before the gates, as broad as they were long. ¹⁹Then he measured the breadth of the court from the inner front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, 175 feet, on the east side and the north side.

²⁰He also brought me to the north gate of the outer court and measured its length and its breadth. ²¹This gate had three guard rooms on each side, with jambs and vestibule of the same size as that of the first gate; it was 87½ feet in length and 43¾ feet in breadth. ²²And it had windows, a vestibule, and palm trees, of the same size as those of the east gate. It was reached by a stairway of seven steps, and its vestibule was on the inside. ²³Opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court; and he measured from gate to gate, 175 feet.

²⁴Then he led me southward; and look, there was a gate facing south. He measured its jambs and its vestibule and found they were the same size as the others. ²⁵There were windows too about the gate and its vestibule, of the same size as the others. It was 87½

q) The prophet Zechariah, too, had an interpreting angel [Zech. 1:9 ff.; cf. Rev. 21:15].

r) The whole temple area with its courts and chambers.

s) The Hebrew standard of measurement was the cubit, the length from the elbow to the end of the middle finger, which equals 1½ feet. But Ezekiel refers to the longer cubit, a hand-breadth [¾ foot more], so that six such cubits are six times 1¾ feet, or 10½ feet. These longer cubits are applied in these temple measurements. We express our measurements in inches and feet—21 inches to Ezekiel's cubit.

t) The east gate was a most important entrance to the temple area, for the Holy of Holies faced east.

u) From French *jambe*, "leg," corresponding to our "post," but usually large, of column type.

v) The total length of the gateway, from east to west, was 87½ feet; the building was thus twice as long as broad.

w) The palm was especially sacred to the Oriental in the decoration of temples; Solomon's temple was adorned with palms [1 Kings 7:36].

x) Thus creating a colonnade around the court. These chambers were used as storerooms, the four corner rooms being kitchens or "boiling places," used on festival occasions.

feet long and $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet wide. ²⁶It too had a stairway of seven steps; its vestibule was on the inside, and it had palm trees on its jambs, one on each side. ²⁷The inner court had a gateway on its south side, corresponding to the south gate of the outer court. He measured from gate to gate, 175 feet.

²⁸He further brought me to the inner court⁷ by the south gate, and he measured the south gate. It was of the same size as the others ²⁹and its guard rooms, its jambs, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others; and there were windows all around in it and in its vestibule; its length was $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet and its breadth $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet. ³⁰There were vestibules round about, and its vestibule was $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet long and $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad. ³¹The vestibule faced the outer court. It had palm trees on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

³²Then he took me to the inner court² on the east side; and he measured the gate, which was the same size as the others. ³³Its guard rooms, jambs, and vestibule were of the same size as the others. The gate and its vestibule had windows all around; it was $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad. ³⁴Its vestibule faced the outer court and palm trees were on its posts, both sides; and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁵Then he led me to the north gate and measured it ³⁶with its guard rooms, jambs, and vestibule of the same size as the others. It also had windows all around and was $87\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by $43\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad. ³⁷Its vestibule faced the outer court; it had palm trees on its posts, one on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁸There was one chamber with its door opening into the vestibule of the gate, where the victims of the burnt offerings were washed. ³⁹In the vestibule of the gate there were two tables on each side, on which the burnt offerings,

the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings were slaughtered.^a ⁴⁰On the outside of the vestibule at the entrance of the north gate were two tables, and on the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables. ⁴¹Four tables were on the inside, and four tables were on the outside of the gateway, in all eight tables, on which the sacrifices were cut up and made ready. ⁴²There were also four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, $2\frac{3}{8}$ feet long, and $2\frac{3}{8}$ feet broad, and $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet high, on which the instruments, used in the preparation of the sacrifices, could be laid. ⁴³Hooks, 3 inches long, were fastened all around on the inside of the vestibule, on which to hang the flesh of the sacrifices.

⁴⁴Outside the gate to the inner court, there were two chambers in the inner court, one by the north gate, facing south, and the other by the south gate, facing north. ⁴⁵He said to me, "This chamber, facing south, is for the priests who have charge of the house; ⁴⁶the other chamber, facing north, is for the priests, the sons of Zadok, who have charge of the altar; they among the sons of Levi may approach the LORD to minister to Him."^b ⁴⁷Then he measured the court, a perfect square, 175 feet long and 175 feet broad; and the altar was in front of the temple.

⁴⁸He then brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the jambs of the vestibule, which were $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet thick on each side. The breadth of the gate was $24\frac{1}{2}$ feet and the breadth of its sides, each $5\frac{1}{4}$ feet. ⁴⁹The length of the vestibule was 35 feet, and the breadth $19\frac{1}{4}$ feet. Ten steps led up to it, and there were two pillars beside the jambs one on each side.^c

41 HE THEN TOOK ME INTO THE nave of the temple, and he measured the jambs on each side,

y) Solomon's temple had only one court, but one court was not enough [Ezek. 43:7-9]; in this temple there must be one for the use of the laity and an inner one for the priests [Ezek. 44:7 ff; 46:3].

z) The inner court stood on a higher level than the outer one, to express, probably, an ascending scale of holiness and separation.

a) The Hebrew word, translated "slaughtered" here, refers to the care and manipulation of the flesh of these offerings rather than to the actual killing, which took place outside.

b) The distinction in ranks of the priesthood seems to have arisen in the days of Josiah [1 Kings 23:8, 9].

c) In Solomon's temple there were two pillars, Jachin and Boaz [1 Kings 7:21]. Two great pillars still stand at the entrance to the "Great High Place" of Petra in Edom of Mt. Seir.

which were $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick. ²The breadth of the entrance was $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the leaves of each door being $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet. Then he measured the nave, which was 70 feet long and 35 feet broad. ³He then entered the inner room and measured the jambs of the door, which were $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, while the width of the entrance was $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet; and the sidewalls of the entrance were $12\frac{1}{4}$ feet on each side. ⁴Then he measured the [inner] room,^d which was 35 feet long and 35 feet broad at the front of the nave. He said to me, "This is the Holy of Holies."^e

⁵Then he measured the wall of the temple, $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, with side chambers 7 feet broad all around the house. ⁶These side chambers were three stories high, one over another, thirty in each story. They were attached to the wall of the temple on joints that were not inserted in the wall of the house.^f ⁷These side chambers increased in width as they rose upward; so in ascending, one went up from the lowest chamber to the highest by the middle chamber. ⁸I noticed a raised platform surrounding the temple on which the foundations of the chambers also rested, full $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. ⁹The thickness of the wall for the side chambers on the outside was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet, and the part of the platform left free was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet, ¹⁰leaving a 35-foot space between the side rooms and the service rooms on every side. ¹¹The doors of the side chambers opened on a free space, one door to the north and another to the south; and the open space was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet broad all around the temple.

¹²The building^g which faced the temple yard on the west side was $122\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad; the wall of the building was $8\frac{3}{4}$ feet thick round about and its length $157\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

¹³Then he measured the temple, 175 feet long, including the yard with its building and walls, 175 feet long;

¹⁴and the east front of the house with the yard was 175 feet broad. ¹⁵Then he measured the building on the west side of the yard with its walls on either side, 175 feet long. The nave, the inner temple, and the vestibule ¹⁶were roofed over, and all three had latticed windows all around. The inside walls of the temple were paneled with wood from the floor to the windows and from the windows to the roof, ¹⁷including the space over the door leading to the inner room, inside and out. And on all the walls round about and on the nave there were carved likenesses ¹⁸of cherubs and of palm trees,^h a palm tree alternating with every cherub. Each cherub had two faces, ¹⁹a man's face looking to the palm tree on one side, and a lion's face looking to the palm tree on the other side. They were carved all around the temple. ²⁰From the floor to the roof there were carved cherubim and palm trees on all walls.

²¹As for the temple, the doorposts were squared, and in front of the holy place was something resembling ²²an altar of wood;ⁱ it was $5\frac{1}{4}$ feet high and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, its corners, its base, and its sides being all of wood. He said to me, "This is the altar-like table which stands before the LORD."^j ²³Both the nave and the holy place had double doors, ²⁴each door having two swinging leaves. ²⁵On the doors of the nave were carved cherubs and palm trees, such as were carved on the walls; and there was a canopy of wood over the front of the vestibule outside. ²⁶There also were recessed windows with palm trees on either sidewall of the vestibule. Thus were the side chambers of the house, and the thresholds.

42 THEN HE LED ME OUT INTO THE outer court northward to the chambers extending along the side of the temple, facing its yard and the

d) Ezekiel, a priest as well as a prophet, does not enter the most holy place with his guide; the angel alone enters.

e) To express the superlative degree, the Hebrews often repeated the same word, thus "Holy of Holies," "Lord of lords," "Song of songs," "heaven of heavens."

f) These were not an integral portion of the temple building [cf. I Kings 6:6].

g) The purpose of this building is not stated; possibly it was an open summerhouse.

h) Solomon's temple was so decorated [I Kings 6:29], the cherubim symbolizing the guardians of God's dwelling place.

i) This was the only piece of furniture inside the temple; it is called an altar in I Kings 6:20 [in the Septuagint].

structure to the north. ²The length of the building on the north side was 175 feet and its breadth 87½ feet. ³Adjoining the 35 feet which belonged to the inner court and facing the pavement which belonged to the outer court, rose the chambers with galleries¹ three stories high. ⁴Before the chambers was a passageway 17½ feet wide and 175 feet long, their doors opening to the north. ⁵The upper chambers were narrower because the gangways took from them more than from those of the lower and the middle stories, ⁶and the three stories had no pillars like the rooms in the outer court; hence the upper chambers were set back more than those on the ground floor. ⁷There was a wall outside, parallel to the chambers in the outer court, 87½ feet long; ⁸for the chambers in the outer court were 87½ feet, while those opposite the temple were 175 feet long. ⁹From under these chambers, as one approached them from the outer court, was the entrance on the east side.

¹⁰On the south side, in front of the yard and the outer wall of its building, there was another row of chambers, ¹¹with a passage in front of them, similar to the chambers facing north, of the same length and breadth, with like exits, arrangements, and doors, ¹²facing the south. There was a door too at the head of the passage in front of the outer wall as one approached it from the east.

¹³He said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers facing the yard are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings and where they may deposit the most holy offerings, the cereal offerings, the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings; for the place is holy. ¹⁴When the priests enter in, they shall not go out of the holy place into the outer court, without laying off the clothes there in which they have been ministering, for

these are holy; they shall put on other clothes, in which they shall approach the part of the building open to the people."^k

¹⁵When he had finished measuring the interior of the temple, he led me out by the gate facing east and measured the whole building all around. ¹⁶First he measured the east side, 875 feet by the measuring reed. ¹⁷Then he turned and measured the north side, 875 feet by the measuring reed. ¹⁸Then he turned and measured the south side, 875 feet by the measuring reed. ¹⁹Then he turned and measured the west side, 875 feet by the measuring reed. ²⁰On the four sides he measured it. There was a wall about it on all four sides, 875 feet long and 875 feet broad,¹ to separate the sacred from the secular.

43 AFTERWARD HE BROUGHT ME to the gate looking east, ²and behold, the glory of the God^m of Israel came from the east. The sound of His coming was like the sound of many waters, and the earth beamed with His glory. ³The vision which I saw was like the appearance I had seen when He came to destroy the city and like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell face downward. ⁴The glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east; ⁵then the Spirit caught me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

⁶I heard Him speaking to me out of the temple, while the man stood by me. ⁷He said to me: Son of man, this is the place of My throne, the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. The house of Israel shall no more defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry or by the corpses of their wicked kings. ⁸By putting their threshold next to My threshold and their doorposts next to My doorposts with only a wall between

j) There was a gallery on the top story of each block of the chambers facing inward, and the rooms in that story were open in the front without pillars.

k) Holiness was regarded as contagious [cf. Hag. 2:12]. The Hebrew prophets distinguished sharply between the sacred and the common.

l) The heavenly Jerusalem is represented also in Rev. 21:15, 16 as foursquare and surrounded by a wall; but much larger.

m) The prophet had seen the glory of the LORD abandon His former sanctuary [10:19]; now he beholds Him return.

them,ⁿ they sullied My holy name by their abominable practices; so I consumed them in My anger. ⁹Now let them remove their whoredoms and the corpses of their kings far from Me, and I will dwell in the midst of them forever.

¹⁰And you, son of man, picture to the house of Israel the temple, its plan and design, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. ¹¹And if they are ashamed of their doings, explain to them the construction of the temple, its arrangements, its exits and its entrances, its ordinances, all its arrangements, and all its laws; and write them down in their sight that they may observe the whole constitution and its regulations and do them. ¹²This is the law of the temple: the whole area around the top of the mount is sacred ground.^o Such is the law of the temple.

¹³Here are the special measurements of the altar^p by 21-inch yards: the gutter 21 inches deep and 21 inches wide and along on the outside a ridge 9 inches high. ¹⁴And this shall be the height of the altar; from the top of its base to the lower ledge, 3½ feet and the width, 21 inches; and from the lower ledge to the upper ledge, seven feet, and the width, 21 inches; ¹⁵from this upper ledge to the top of the altar hearth, 7 feet and the width, 21 inches. So the altar shall be 7 feet, and from the altar hearth four horns^q shall project. ¹⁶The altar hearth shall be 21 feet square; ¹⁷the block beneath it 24½ feet square, with a channel about each block of 10½ inches broad and its base 21 inches broad all around. The steps of the altar shall face east.^r

¹⁸Then He said to me, Son of man, thus says the LORD God: These are the regulations for the altar, on the day it is erected to offer burnt offerings and

to sprinkle blood against you. ¹⁹You shall give the Levitical priests of the Zadok family, who draw near to minister to Me, says the LORD God, a bullock for a sin offering. ²⁰You shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse the altar and make atonement for it.^s ²¹Take the bullock for the sin offering, and have it burned at the proper place in the temple area outside the sanctuary. ²²Then on the second day you shall offer a he-goat without blemish for a sin offering; thus the altar shall be cleansed as it was cleansed by the bullock. ²³When you have finished the cleansing, you shall offer a bullock without blemish and a ram from the flock without blemish. ²⁴You shall present them before the LORD, and the priests shall sprinkle salt^t on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD. ²⁵For seven days you shall provide daily a he-goat as a sin offering; also a bullock and a ram from the flock without blemish shall be provided. ²⁶For seven days you shall continue to make atonement for the altar, to purify and cleanse it, thus consecrating^u it. ²⁷At the end of these days, from the eighth day onward, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you, says the LORD God.

44 THEN HE BROUGHT ME BACK TO the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east, and it was shut. ²The LORD said to me: This gate shall remain shut; it shall never be opened, and no man shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, entered by it; therefore it shall remain closed.^v ³Only the prince, because he is prince, may

n) Solomon's temple had only a wall between it and his palace [cf. I Kings 7:7, 8].

o) Sacred, because the abode of God's presence.

p) The altar was composed of four square stones, one above another, decreasing in breadth and increasing in thickness: the highest being 39 feet square. q) Horns, symbolizing oxen strength.

r) The altars at the Great High Place, at Petra, face east.

s) The blood of the sin offering, applied to the essential parts of the altar, was to expiate and remove the inherent sinfulness of it; for sin infects even material things.

t) Salt signified covenant keeping. "There is salt between us," says the Arab, after eating with another. Therefore they are friends as long as, supposedly, the food they have shared remains in their system — three days!

u) Literally, "filling its hand," a common Hebrew phrase to denote "installing" or "setting apart," applied here metaphorically to the altar.

v) The LORD would not forsake His sanctuary again [43:6]. The Mohammedans have held this east gate of the Temple Area, the Gate Beautiful, closed for centuries.

sit in it, to eat bread before the LORD, entering always by the vestibule and departing the same way.^w

⁴Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and when I looked, there was the glory of the LORD filling the LORD's temple, and I fell face downward. ⁵The LORD said to me: Son of man, note carefully; see with your eyes, and hear with your ears all that I shall tell you concerning the ordinances of the house of the LORD and all its laws, and mark well those who may be admitted to the sanctuary and who are to be excluded. ⁶Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God: O house of Israel, you have committed more than enough abominations ⁷in admitting aliens, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to enter My sanctuary, profaning it, when you offer to Me My food, the fat and the blood. You have thus broken My covenant with all your abominations. ⁸You have not kept proper charge of My holy things, but you have appointed for yourselves keepers to take charge of My sanctuary.

⁹Therefore, thus says the LORD God: No alien,^x uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter My sanctuary of all the aliens that are among the children of Israel. ¹⁰But the Levites, who went far from Me when Israel went astray—who strayed from Me after their idols—they shall bear their punishment. ¹¹They may minister in My temple as guards by My temple gates and as temple servants in slaughtering the burnt offerings for the people and standing before the people to serve them. ¹²But because the Levites ministered to the people before their gods and thereby became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn with uplifted hand concerning them, says the LORD God,

that they shall bear their punishment. ¹³They shall not come near Me to minister as priests to Me or to touch any of My sacred things, but they shall bear their shame because of the abominations which they have committed. ¹⁴Yet I will make them keepers of My house to do all the work and all the service that is to be done in it.

¹⁵But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me to minister to Me,^y and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood, says the LORD God; ¹⁶they shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near to My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge.

¹⁷It shall be when they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall wear linen garments; they must not wear anything woollen when they are on duty within the gates of the inner court or within the house. ¹⁸They shall have linen turbans on their heads and linen breeches on their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything that causes sweat. ¹⁹On going out into the outer court to join the people, they shall take off the clothes in which they ministered and deposit them in the sacred chambers; they shall put on other clothes, lest by contact with the people they render them and their clothes consecrated. ²⁰They shall neither shave their heads, nor let their hair grow long;^z they shall trim the hair of their heads. ²¹No priest shall drink wine^a when he enters the inner court. ²²Nor shall he marry a widow or a woman who has been divorced, only a virgin of the house of Israel or the widow of a priest.

²³They shall teach My people the difference between the sacred and the secular and show them how to distin-

w) The prince is to enjoy no priestly rights in the temple.

x) The aliens, in many cases, may have been prisoners of war, who were presented by the kings of Judah to the temple as slaves [cf. Zech. 14:21]. On a tablet, found in the ruins of Herod's temple, death is threatened as a penalty for any alien entering within the balustrade of the building.

y) Setting out the showbread, burning incense, dressing lamps, etc. Zadok and Abiathar, in David's time, represented the two leading families of priests [II Sam. 8:17; 20:25].

z) To let the hair grow long marked a person as under a vow, such as a warrior, or a Nazarite.

a) Ezekiel excludes wine from all the sacred offerings.

guish between the unclean and the clean. ²⁴In cases of legal controversy,^b they shall serve as judges, who shall decide all cases according to My laws. They shall observe My rules and regulations at all My festivals, and they shall maintain the sacredness of My Sabbaths. ²⁵No priest shall contaminate himself by touching the body of a dead person,^c except for a father or mother, for a son or a daughter, for a brother or a sister who has no husband; for them they may defile themselves. ²⁶After defilement he shall reckon for himself seven days, and then he shall be clean. ²⁷On the day that he goes into the holy place, into the inner court to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer a sin offering for himself, says the LORD God.

²⁸This shall be their heritage; I am their heritage, and you shall give them no possession in Israel, for I am their possession. ²⁹They shall eat the cereal offerings, the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings; and everything devoted to the LORD in Israel shall be theirs. ³⁰The first of all the first-ripe fruits and all the gifts which you give as an oblation shall go to the priests; the first batch of your bakings, too, you shall give the priests, that a blessing may rest on your homes.^d ³¹But of nothing, whether bird or animal, that dies a natural death or has been torn by wild beasts shall the priests eat.

45 WHEN YOU ALLOT THE LAND as an inheritance, you shall set apart for the LORD a district, lifted up from the whole, as a sacred portion,^e approximately 8-1/3 miles long and 6-2/3 miles broad, which shall be sacred throughout its whole extent. ²Of this whole allotment, 875 feet square shall be for the sanctuary, with 87½

feet for an open space around it. ³And in this sacred allotment you shall measure off a section approximately 8-1/3 miles long by 3-1/3 miles broad, in which shall be the sanctuary, the most holy place. ⁴There shall be the holy portions in the land for the priests, who minister in the sanctuary and approach the LORD in ministering to Him; it will furnish room for their houses as well as a holy place for the sanctuary.^f

⁵Another section, about 8-1/3 miles long and 3-1/3 miles broad, shall be for the Levites who serve in the temple, and it shall be their possession for their houses in which to live.^g

⁶Alongside this portion set apart as the holy district, you shall assign as the possession of the city an area about 8-1/3 miles long and 1-2/3 miles broad, which shall belong to the whole house of Israel. ⁷To the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district and of the assignment to the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to one of the tribal portions and extending from the western to the eastern boundary of the land; ⁸this shall be his property in Israel. For My princes shall no longer oppress My people but shall assign the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

⁹Thus says the LORD God: Enough, you princes^h of Israel! Have done with violence and oppression; practice justice and righteousness; cease evicting My people from their homes, says the LORD God.

¹⁰You shall have honest scales, an honest bushel and an honest gallon.ⁱ ¹¹The dry and the liquid measures shall be of like standard, the bath containing one-tenth of the ten-bushel homer; the homer shall be the standard measure. ¹²The shekel^j shall be twenty

b) In the administration of justice, the officials of the sanctuary were regarded as well possessed of moral knowledge and legal equity.

c) This natural repugnance was due to the bodily corruption which follows death; but among the Babylonians from fear of demons. d) Mal. 3:10 confirms this promise!

e) As a spiritual center in the Palestine of the future. f) Literally, "a sanctuary for a sanctuary."

g) Aid for the domestic life of the priests was thus provided.

h) The title "king" gives place to "prince" [cf. Ezra 1:8]. Some day the Messiah will be their King.

i) The "ephah" was a dry measure about equal to our bushel; and the "bath" a corresponding liquid measure of approximately nine gallons.

j) The silver shekel was the ordinary unit of weight, a little more than half an ounce, the gerah being one twenty-fourth of a shekel, about 4 cents.

gerahs; five shekels shall be five shekels, and ten shekels shall be ten shekels, and your mina shall be fifty shekels.

¹³This is the contribution which you shall make: one sixth of a bushel from every ten bushels of wheat and a sixth of a bushel from every ten bushels of barley; ¹⁴and as a fixed portion of oil, one percent of the standard measure (the cor, like the homer, containing about ten bushels); ¹⁵one sheep from every flock of two hundred, from all the families of Israel, these to provide for the cereal offering, the burnt offering, and the thank offerings, in order that atonement may be made for them,^k says the LORD God. ¹⁶All the people of the land shall give this offering for the prince in Israel, ¹⁷and it shall be the prince's part to furnish the burnt offerings, the cereal offerings, and the libations at the various festivals — the new moons, the Sabbaths, and all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel. He shall provide the sin offering, the cereal offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering, to make atonement for the house of Israel.^l

¹⁸Thus says the LORD God: In the first month, on the first day of the month,^m you shall take a bullock without blemish and purify the sanctuary. ¹⁹The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and apply it to the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the altar ledge and the posts of the gate of the inner court. ²⁰So shall you do, also, in the seventh month, on the first day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance, and you shall thus make atonement for the house. ²¹In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall hold the feast of the Passover, and during the feast of

seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. ²²On that day the prince shall provide for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock as a sin offering, ²³and during the seven days of the feast he shall provide, as a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days, and a he-goat daily for a sin offering. ²⁴For a cereal offering he shall provide a bushel for each bullock, and a bushel for each ram, with 1½ gallons of oilⁿ for each bushel. ²⁵In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and during the days of the feast,^o he shall make the same provision for the sin offering, the burnt offering, the cereal offering, and the oil.^p

46 ¹THUS SAYS THE LORD GOD: THE gate of the inner court that faces east shall be closed on the six working days; but it shall be opened on the Sabbath and on the day of the new moon. ²The prince^q shall enter the vestibule of the gate by the porch which is on the outside, pass through the gate and stand by the post of the gate, while the priests offer his burnt offering and his peace offering, worshipping on the inner threshold of the gate and then going out through the gate, which shall not be closed till evening. ³The people of the land likewise shall worship before the LORD at the entrance^r of the same gate on the Sabbaths and at the new moons. ⁴The burnt offering which the prince shall offer to the LORD on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. ⁵The cereal offering with the ram shall be a bushel and with the lambs as much as each worshiper can afford, with one and

k) For those who brought them.

l) As the ritual act was carried out by the priests, probably the taxes were paid to them.

m) The year was halved, each half beginning with a rite of purification to remove any contamination which might have defiled the sanctuary during the previous six months. The first month was Nisan [March-April]; Tishri that of Sept.-Oct.

n) The cereal offering might consist of crushed grain or meal or cakes. Olive oil was needed to make this flour edible. o) The autumn feast of ingathering.

p) Emphasis was placed on the festivals of April and October. To avoid all tendency to sun-worship, the opening of the east gate of the Temple Area, in spring and autumn for a time, that the rays of the rising sun might penetrate into the heart of the Temple, was discontinued [cf. Ezek. 9:16].

q) The prince, that is the king, is assigned a much humbler position in the temple than what Solomon assumed [1 Kings 8:22].

r) Unlike the prince, the common people are to remain outside the inner eastern gateway. They were allowed only a glimpse through the gateway at the altar and the priests.

a half gallons of oil for each bushel. ⁶On the day of the new moon, he shall offer a bullock without blemish and six lambs and a ram, all of which shall be without blemish. ⁷As a cereal offering he shall provide a bushel for the bullock, a bushel for the ram, and as much as the worshiper can afford for the lambs, with one and a half gallons of oil for each bushel. ⁸When the prince enters, it shall be by way of the vestibule of the gate; and he shall leave by the same way. ⁹But when the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts,^s he who enters by the north gate to worship shall leave by the south gate, and he who enters by the south gate shall leave by the north gate; no one shall return by the same gate by which he entered, but each shall go out straight ahead. ¹⁰The prince shall go in among them; and when they leave, he shall go out with them.^t

¹¹At the feasts and at appointed festivals the cereal offering shall be a bushel for the bullock, a bushel for the ram, and as much as the individual can afford for the lambs, with one and a half gallons of oil for each bushel.

¹²When the prince offers a freewill offering to the LORD, be it a burnt offering or a peace offering, the gate facing the east shall be opened for him, and he shall offer his burnt offering or his peace offering as he does on the Sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and the gate shall be shut after him.

¹³You shall provide a lamb a year old for a daily burnt offering to the LORD, morning by morning you shall provide it; ¹⁴you shall also provide a cereal offering morning by morning, the sixth^u part of a bushel and half a gallon of oil to besprinkle^v the fine flour, as a cereal offering to the LORD; this is the ordinance for the continual burnt offering. This shall be the standing requirement for

the continual burnt offering. ¹⁵Thus the lamb, the cereal offering, and the oil shall be provided, morning by morning, for a continual burnt offering.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD God: When a prince makes a gift to one of his sons, it becomes the son's inheritance; it is his property by right of inheritance. ¹⁷But when the prince makes a gift of part of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall remain in his possession till the year of release, when it shall return to the prince; only his sons may keep a gift from his inheritance. ¹⁸However, the prince shall not wrest from any of his people the property which belongs to them, thrusting them out of their possession; out of his own property shall he endow his sons; so that My people shall not be evicted every man from his possession.

¹⁹He then took me through the entrance beside the gateway, to the sacred chambers for the priests facing north, and there I saw a place at the extreme westward end of them. ²⁰He said to me: "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering and where they shall bake the cereal offering, to prevent the necessity of their bringing them into the outer court and rendering the people dedicated."

²¹He then brought me out into the outer court and led me past the four corners of the court; and look, at each corner of the court there was another small court; ²²in the four corners of the court were courts enclosed, all four courts being of the same size, 70 feet long by 52½ feet broad. ²³Around each of the four courts, on the inside, ran a line of masonry with ranges for boiling built into the masonry, under each of the rows all around. ²⁴He said to me, "These are the kitchens, where the ministering Levites of the temple shall boil the sacrifices for the people."^x

s) Passover, Pentecost or Feast of Weeks, and Feast of Booths, with Thanksgiving.

t) On the Sabbaths and the new moon festivals the prince enters and stands by himself; but on the great feasts he goes in and out with the common people.

u) The amount of the cereal offering is here fixed; but the amount required for the Sabbaths and new moons is left optional.

v) The verb in Hebrew rendered here "besprinkle" is usually translated "moisten"; it occurs nowhere else in the O.T.

w) According to Deut. 15, every seven years debts and slaves were released; also, according to Lev. 25:10, every fifty years — the year of jubilee — a release of the land took place, and it returned to the original owner.

x) There were two sets of kitchens connected with the holy area; one for the priests near the temple proper; and another for the people in the four corners of the outer court.

47 HE THEN TOOK ME BACK^y TO the door of the temple,^z and behold, water was issuing from under the threshold of the temple eastward, for the temple faced east; and the water came down from under the right side of the house on the south side of the altar. ²He then brought me out by way of the north gate^a and led me round on the outside of the outer gate that faces east; and see! the water was trickling out on the south side. ³Passing eastward with the measuring line in his hand, the man measured about a third of a mile and made me cross the stream; and the water was ankle-deep. ⁴Again he measured about a third of a mile and made me pass through the water and it was knee-deep. ⁵Again he measured about a third of a mile and made me cross the water, and it was up to the hips. Again he measured about a third of a mile, and it was a flood which I could not cross, for the water had become a river deep enough to swim in, too deep to be crossed on foot.

⁶He said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man?" Then he led me back along the bank of the stream, ⁷and as I went back, look, on the bank of the stream, along both sides of it, I saw many, many trees. ⁸Then he said to me, "These waters are flowing toward the region of the east, descending into the Arabah,^b and when they enter the saline waters of the Dead Sea, those will become fresh. ⁹For wherever the river goes, every swarming creature shall live; fish in great numbers will be there, for as this water reaches there, it makes those [of the Dead Sea] wholesome; everything will live wherever the river goes. ¹⁰Fisher-

men shall stand on the shores; all the way from Engedi to Eneglaim,^c these will be places to spread their nets; and the varieties of fish shall be many, like the fish of the Great Sea, untold many. ¹¹But its marshes and pools will not become fresh; they shall continue to be given over to salt. ¹²On both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food, the leaves of which shall not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing."^d

¹³Thus says the LORD God: These are the tribal boundaries according to which the land shall be divided among the twelve tribes of Israel for their inheritance. Joseph shall have two portions. ¹⁴It shall be divided equally; for, as I swore with uplifted hand to give this land to your fathers, so shall it fall to you as your inheritance. ¹⁵These, then, are the boundaries of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea, by way of Hethlon,^e where the road turns to go to Hamath^f and on to Zedad,^g ¹⁶to Berothah, Sibram (on the border between Damascus and Hamath); and Hazarenon,^h on the border of Hauran.ⁱ ¹⁷So the boundary shall run from the sea^j to Hazarenon on the northern border of Damascus and Hamath. This is the northern border.

¹⁸On the east side, the boundary shall run from Hazarenon between Hauran and Damascus, along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel, to the eastern sea,^k and as far as to Tamar.^l This shall be the eastern frontier.

¹⁹The southern frontier shall run from Tamar as far as the waters of

y) The new sanctuary has been rebuilt; the LORD has returned to Jerusalem; His glory has filled the house; it is to become the center of Israel's national life and a source of blessing to the whole country. Even the most arid portions of the land will be transformed.

z) In the inner court. a) The east gate was closed.

b) Today the Arabah is called El-Ghor, "the Depression," applied to the deep Jordan Valley, especially the portion between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

c) Engedi is identified with the modern fishing point known as Ain Tidi, and Eneglaim as another fishing station with Ain Hailah, both on the north and northwest shores of the Dead Sea.

d) This verse is echoed in Rev. 22:2.

e) The exact location of Hethlon is not known, but probably it was some 25 miles south of Hamath. f) Hamath was on the Orontes River about 115 miles north of Damascus.

g) Zedad toward Damascus. h) Hazarenon was probably near the chief source of the Jordan.

i) Hauran is the great Basaltic region, south of Damascus, generally known as Bashan.

j) Mediterranean. k) Dead Sea. l) Tamar was about 25 miles s.w. of the Dead Sea.

Meribath-kadesh; thence along the Brook of Egypt^m to the Great Sea.^j This is the southern frontier.

²⁰On the west side, the Great Sea shall be the boundary, from the southern frontier to the point at which the northern boundary begins. This is the western frontier.

²¹Thus you shall divide the land among you according to the tribes of Israel. ²²You shall allotⁿ it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the immigrants who permanently reside among you, who have begotten children among you. Such children shall be regarded as native-born children of Israel and shall be allotted an inheritance along with you among the tribes of Israel. ²³In whatever tribe the immigrant^o homes, there you shall assign him his inheritance, says the LORD God.

48 THESE ARE THE NAMES OF THE tribes:^p Beginning from the northern extremity, from the sea by way of Hethlon and the entrance to Hamath, as far as Hazarenon (which is on the northern border of Damascus near Hamath), extending from east to west, Dan, one portion. ²By the border of Dan, from the east side to the west side, Asher, one portion. ³By the border of Asher, from the east side to the west side, Naphtali, one portion. ⁴By the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west side, Manasseh, one portion. ⁵By the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west side, Ephraim, one portion. ⁶By the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west side, Reuben, one portion. ⁷By the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west side, Judah, one portion.

⁸By the border of Judah, from the east side to the west side, shall be the sacred oblation which you shall set

apart, about 8-1/3 miles in breadth, and in length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west side, with the sanctuary in its center.

⁹The portion which you shall set apart for the LORD shall be about 8-1/3 miles long and 6-2/3 miles wide. ¹⁰Of this sacred allotment the priests shall have a section measuring about 8-1/3 miles in length from east to west, and 3-1/3 miles in breadth from north to south, with the LORD's sanctuary in the midst of it. ¹¹This dedicated section shall be for the priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept My charge and did not go astray, as the Levites did, when the children of Israel went astray. ¹²It shall belong to them as a special portion from the allotment of the land, most sacred, adjoining the frontier of the Levites. ¹³Alongside the allotment of the priests, the Levites shall have a section about 8-1/3 miles in length and 3-1/3 miles in breadth. The whole length shall be about 8-1/3 miles and the breadth 6-2/3 miles. ¹⁴None of this choice portion of the land shall be sold or exchanged or alienated, for it is holy to the LORD.

¹⁵The remaining strip, about 1-2/3 miles in breadth and 8-1/3 miles in length, shall be for common use, for the city, for dwellings and pasture lands, with the city situated in the midst of it. ¹⁶And these shall be the divisions of the city: about 1½ miles on the north side, about 1½ miles on the south side, about 1½ miles on the east side, and about 1½ miles on the west side.^q

¹⁷The city shall have pasture lands, 437½ feet northward, 437½ feet southward, 437½ feet eastward, and 437½ feet westward. ¹⁸The remaining length of an ample 3 miles, along the east and west sides of the sacred portion, shall belong to the city, and its produce shall supply food for the work-

m) Wadi-el-Arish, 50 miles south of Gaza; Kadesh, about 50 miles south of Beersheba.

n) Presumably by lot.

o) This ordinance of Ezekiel goes much further than the statutes of the Pentateuch in its treatment of strangers. Only those circumcised and following divine instructions would be so fraternally treated in Moses' law.

p) The twelve tribes of Israel are all settled on the west side of the Jordan; seven tribes north of the Temple Area, and five south. They are assigned strips of land running from east to west. Levi is not included, but the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, are reckoned as two. Ezekiel assumes that all twelve tribes are united, settled in the land west of the Jordan promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and available to their descendants who obey God.

q) The city itself is square [cf. Rev. 21:16]; being equivalent to about six miles in circumference; the walls of modern Jerusalem measure about 2½ miles in circuit.

ers of the city.^r ¹⁹By the workers in the city from all the tribes of Israel it shall be cultivated. ²⁰The whole allotment, consisting of the sacred assignment and the city property, shall be about 8-1/3 miles square. ²¹What remains shall belong to the prince — the land on either side of the sacred allotment and the city property, extending from the holy allotment of 8-1/3 miles square to the east border,^s and west of the allotment of 8-1/3 miles square as far as the western border^t parallel to the tribal portions. The possession of the Levites ²²and the possession of the city shall be in the midst of what belongs to the prince. The prince's portion shall lie between the frontiers of Judah and of Benjamin.^u

²³As for the remaining tribes: from the east side to the west side, Benjamin, one portion. ²⁴By the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon, one portion. ²⁵By the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar, one portion. ²⁶By the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun, one portion. ²⁷By the border of Zebu-

lun, from the east side to the west side, Gad, one portion. ²⁸By the border of Gad, the south border of Gad's territory shall run from Tamar^v to the waters of Meribath-kadesh,^w and thence along the Brook of Egypt^x to the Great Sea. ²⁹This is the land which you shall divide by lot as a heritage to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, says the LORD God.

³⁰These shall be the gates of the city, each gate bearing the name of one of the tribes of Israel: On the north side's 1½ miles, ³¹three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi. ³²On the east side's 1½ miles, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. ³³On the south side's 1½ miles, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. ³⁴On the west side's 1½ miles, three gates, the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali.

³⁵The circumference of the city shall be about six miles. And the name of the city henceforth shall be, THE LORD IS THERE.^y

r) These two plots of ground were in size about equal to five square miles; the district was the possession of the city. s) To the Jordan. t) The Mediterranean.

u) The prince's portion consisted of two parts on the east and on the west of the whole block dedicated to, and surrounding the temple, Benjamin taking the place of Judah to the south of the Holy City. v) Tamar may be Hazaron-tamar, on the west side of the Dead Sea.

w) Meribath-kadesh is best identified with Ain Kadees.

x) "The Brook of Egypt" is very probably Wadi el-Arish, south of Gaza some 50 miles.

y) YAHWEH SHAMMA. The Seer of Rev. 21:3, heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold, God's dwelling place is among men, and He will dwell with them." The Gospel, beginning with Immanuel GOD WITH US ends with our LORD's promise, "Lo, I am with you always."

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

605 B.C.

1 IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon came and laid siege to Jerusalem. ²The LORD handed Jehoiakim, king of Judah, over to him with a portion of the utensils of God's house, which he took to the land of Shinar,^a to the house of his god, placing the utensils in his god's treasury.

³The king then ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his eunuchs, to bring in for service in his palace some Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility — ⁴boys without any defects, good-looking, versed in various studies, well informed, with intelligent views, fit to take their place in the royal palace — and to teach them the Chaldean literature and language. ⁵The king appointed for them a daily ration from his menu and of the wine which he usually drank. In this way they were to be trained for three years, at the end of which they were personally to wait on the king. ⁶Among them were from the tribe of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ⁷whom the chief of the eunuchs renamed. Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach, and Azariah Abed-nego.^b

⁸Daniel, however, made up his mind not to render himself unclean with the royal menu, or with the wine that the king usually drank; so he begged

permission from the chief of the eunuchs not to make himself unclean. ⁹Then God granted Daniel favor and sympathy from the chief of the eunuchs, ¹⁰and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I am afraid my master, the king, who has appointed your food and drink, will find your faces gloomier than those of the other youths your age; then you would endanger my head with the king." ¹¹Daniel then suggested to the overseer, whom the chief of the eunuchs had put in charge of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹²"Please, give your servants a ten days' test, allowing us to eat vegetables and to drink water. ¹³Then compare our looks with that of the other youths, who have eaten of the king's menu, and act according to your findings." ¹⁴He agreed with them on this score, gave them a ten days' test. ¹⁵and after ten days they looked healthier and were in better condition than the youths who were eating the royal dishes; ¹⁶so the overseer discontinued their royal rations of meat and wine and served them vegetables.

¹⁷As for these four youths, God gave them mastery and understanding in all the literature and science, and Daniel gained insight in every kind of vision and dream. ¹⁸At the close of the period which the king had fixed to bring them in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them into the presence of

a) Babylonia; also called Shinar [Gen. 10:10; 11:2; 14:1, 9]. Babylon, the capital of Babylonia, was considered their god Marduk's residence, to which king and captives were taken and where the golden articles from the temple were put in the treasure chest.

b) The new names were intended to discard remembrance of God and to replace Him by Bel, Marduk and Nebo.

Nebuchadnezzar¹⁹ and when the king interviewed them, none among them all were found equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who therefore entered the king's personal service.²⁰ On all subjects in which grasp and information counted, the king, as he questioned them, found them ten times^c more able than all the magicians and astrologers in his entire realm.²¹ Daniel carried on until the first year of king Cyrus.

603 B.C.

2 IN THE SECOND YEAR OF NEBUCHADREZZAR'S REIGN Nebuchadnezzar* had dreams that disturbed him; he woke up and could not sleep again.² So the king gave orders to summon all the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans^d to explain to the king his dream. They came and stood in the king's presence,³ and the king then told them, "I had a dream and my spirit is troubled to know what the dream was."⁴ The Chaldeans replied to the king in Aramaic: "O king, live forever!^e Tell your servants the dream, and we will show its meaning."⁵ The king answered the Chaldeans, "This word I speak, I mean! If you do not tell me the dream and what it means, you shall be torn limb from limb and your houses will be destroyed.^f But if you will declare to me the dream and show its meaning, you will receive from me gifts, rewards and great honor. So tell me the dream and its message."⁷ Again they answered, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will explain it."⁸ The king replied, "I see plainly that you are trying to gain time; because you see how capital punishment awaits you;⁹ and that if you do not make the dream known to me there is but one sentence awaiting you. You have banded together to speak false and deceitful words to me, hoping that a

change may come.⁶ So tell me the dream and I shall know that you can truthfully explain it."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king what he asks; for no other king, no matter however great and mighty, has ever demanded such a thing of any magician, enchanter or Chaldean."¹¹ The king is asking a hard thing, which none can tell him except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals."¹² Because of their answer, the king became so angry and furious, that he commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed.¹³ So the decree went forth that all the sages of Babylon should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his companions to slay them.

¹⁴Then Daniel made answer with wisdom and tact to Arioch, the captain of the king's patrol, who were gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon; asking meekly of the king's chief executioner, "Why is the king's decree so harsh?" Then Arioch explained the matter to Daniel,¹⁶ and Daniel went in and asked the king to set a date, and he would give the king the explanation.

¹⁷Then Daniel went home and explained the matter to his companions, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah,¹⁸ that they might ask the God of heaven to be merciful concerning this mystery; and that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.¹⁹ Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven, saying:¹ ²⁰"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might!²¹ He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and He sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have under-

c) Incomparably. *) This is the correct spelling, from the Babylonian.

d) Those called Chaldeans were usually diviners, "wise men" and fortune-tellers, who studied the stars and the planets. The Aramaic language continues from this fourth verse through ch. 7:28.

e) The usual mode of greeting Oriental kings.

f) Similar deeds of despotism are gruesomely pictured in the bas-reliefs of the ancient Assyrians.

g) Hoping that circumstances might take a favorable turn, and that the king might have his attention diverted to something else.

h) Which was correct, as Daniel confirmed in testimony for Jehovah God..

i) Again they joined forces as believers in God.

j) Verses 20-23 are Daniel's thanksgiving for the great mercy granted him. We believe that God let Daniel dream the king's dream.

standing; ²²He reveals deep and mysterious things; He knows what is in the darkness, for the light dwells with Him. ²³I thank Thee and praise Thee, O God of my fathers; for Thou hast given me wisdom and strength, and hast made known to me what we asked of Thee; for Thou hast made known to us what the king demanded."

²⁴So Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not slay the sages of Babylon; take me into the presence of the king. I will tell the king his dream and what it means." ²⁵At once, therefore, Arioch brought in Daniel before the king, and said to him, "I have found among the exiles of Judah a man who can make known the message to the king!" ²⁶The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen, and its meaning?" ²⁷Daniel answered the king, "No wise men living, be they enchanters, magicians, or astrologers,^k can tell the king the mystery which the king has asked; ²⁸but there is a God in the heavens, who reveals mysteries, and He is now about to make known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to happen in the days to come.^l Your dream and the visions of your head upon your bed were these: ²⁹You, O king, as you lay in bed, were thinking of the future, speculating as to what should come to pass hereafter, and He who reveals secrets disclosed to you what is going to happen. ³⁰As for myself,^m this secret has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom I possess more than other men, but in order that the meaning may be made known to the king and that you, O king, may understand the thoughts of your own heart.

³¹"You, O king, looked and, behold, there stood before you a mighty image,

huge and of surpassing brilliance, and it was terrible to look upon! ³²The head of the image was of fine gold; its breast and arms of silver; its belly and thighs of bronze; ³³its legs of iron and its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.ⁿ ³⁴You kept looking at it until you saw a stone, hewn without hands from a mountain, strike the image on its feet of iron and clay, breaking them to pieces — ³⁵the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold, so pulverized that they became like chaff of the summer threshing floor, which the wind carries away, and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone^o that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. ³⁶Such was the dream; we will now tell the king what it means.

³⁷"You, O king, are a king of kings,^p to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory;^q ³⁸and wherever the sons of men dwell, He has put the beasts of the field and the birds of the air into your hand and has given you power over all of them; you are the head of gold! ³⁹After you another kingdom shall arise, less forceful than you; then a third kingdom of bronze, which shall also have sway over all the earth.^r ⁴⁰And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron; for as iron breaks everything to pieces and beats all things down, so shall it break in pieces and crush all peoples. ⁴¹Yet, as you saw, the feet and the toes were partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, — it shall be a divided kingdom;^s there shall be in it something of the firmness of iron; for as you saw, the toes were partly of iron and partly of clay. ⁴²So the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly brittle. ⁴³As you saw the iron and clay mixed, so shall they be mixed in marriage,^t but they will not hold

k) The Babylonians were famed for their astrology.

l) Including not only the king's own lifetime, and the closing years of the fourth kingdom [vv. 40-43], but also the Messianic age.

m) Like Joseph [Gen. 40:8] Daniel disclaims the power to interpret dreams by his own wisdom.

n) Not raw clay, but potsherd quality. o) The effects of the Messiah, we believe.

p) An inscription in Aramaic, found at Sakkarah near Cairo, reads, "Xerxes, king of kings."

q) As Daniel ascribes Nebuchadnezzar's dominion to the providence of God, so does Jeremiah, Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 28:14.

r) The second kingdom was that of Persia, including Cyrus; the third that of Macedonia, including Alexander. s) Referring to the Roman Empire, including Caesar Augustus.

t) The decline of the Roman Empire in brief.

together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴But in the days of those kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom,^u which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people, a kingdom which shall break in pieces and completely destroy all these kingdoms — it shall stand sovereign forever! ⁴⁵And just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold of the image, so the great God has made known to the king what shall take place hereafter;^v the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.”

⁴⁶Then king Nebuchadrezzar fell on his face, prostrated himself before Daniel,^w and ordered that a present and soothing odors be offered to him. ⁴⁷The king confessed to Daniel, “Truly your God is the God of gods,^x the LORD of kings and a revealer of secrets; for you have ably revealed the mystery!” ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel, giving him high honors and many large gifts; for he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and appointed him chief governor over all the “wise men” of Babylon.^y ⁴⁹And at Daniel’s request, the king set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the business of the province of Babylon; but Daniel remained a member of the king’s court and sat at the main entrance to his palace.

3 KING NEBUCHADREZZAR^z MADE AN image of gold, ninety feet in height and nine feet in breadth, which he erected on the plain of Dura^a in the province of Babylon. ²Then king Nebuchadrezzar sent and assembled the presidents, the generals, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which he, king Nebuchadrezzar, had set up, and they

stood before the image which Nebuchadrezzar had erected. ³When the presidents, the generals and the governors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces were assembled for the dedication of the image, which king Nebuchadrezzar had set up,^a a herald shouted with a loud voice, “Peoples, nations, and races of every tongue, to you the royal command is proclaimed, ⁵that as soon as you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lyre, the lute, the harp, the bagpipe, and every kind of music, you shall fall down and prostrate yourselves before the image of gold, which king Nebuchadrezzar has set up; ⁶and whoever does not fall down and worship, shall at once be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” ⁷So, as soon as all the people heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, lute, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and races fell down and worshiped the golden image which king Nebuchadrezzar had erected.

⁸But certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges^b against the Jews, ⁹reminding king Nebuchadrezzar, “O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, the pipe, the lute, the harp, the bagpipe, and every other kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image, ¹¹and that anyone, who does not fall down and prostrate himself, shall be cast into a furnace of flaming fire. ¹²Now there are certain Jews whom you have raised to high positions over the business affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These three men, O king, pay no regard to you; they do not respect your gods, nor will they worship the golden image which you have set up.”

¹³Then Nebuchadrezzar was furiously enraged, and ordered Shadrach,

u) Christ's kingdom.

v) As Joseph told Pharaoh [Gen. 41:28].

w) Nebuchadrezzar at the feet of Daniel represents the Gentile powers humbled before Israel's God.

x) Marduk, the supreme god of Babylon, included. Cf. “King of kings and Lord of Lords” in Rev. 19:16. y) A position of great authority.

z) The Septuagint begins this chapter: “In the eighteenth year” of the king [580 B.C.].

a) About six miles below Babylon. b) The Aramaic verb strictly means, “to accuse falsely.”

Meshach, and Abednego to be brought; and when these men were brought before the king, ¹⁴Nebuchadrezzar charged them, saying, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you will not worship my gods, nor prostrate yourselves before the image which I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lute, harp, bagpipe, and other kinds of music, to fall down and worship before the image which I have made, very well; but if you will not prostrate yourselves, you shall at once be cast into a furnace of flaming fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"^c

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadrezzar, we would not make any defense in this matter; ¹⁷for the God whom we serve is able to save us from the fire of the furnace and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸But, whether He does or not, be it known to you, O king, we will not serve your gods, or worship the golden image which you have set up."

¹⁹At this Nebuchadrezzar was filled with extreme fury, and his face was distorted with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He gave orders that the furnace should be heated seven times as hot as usual ²⁰and he ordered certain powerful men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to throw them into the burning, fiery furnace.

²¹These men were then bound in their mantles, their tunics, their turbans and their other clothes and were thrown into the fires of the furnace. ²²Indeed, so sharp was the king's order, and so hot was the furnace, that the flames of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; ²³but these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell down bound into the midst of the flaming furnace.

²⁴Then king Nebuchadrezzar became alarmed, rose hastily and inquired

of his officers, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "We certainly did." ²⁵He replied, "But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; they are unhurt, and the appearance of the fourth is like that of a son of the gods."^d

²⁶Thereupon, king Nebuchadrezzar went toward the mouth of the furnace of flaming fire and called, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come forth and come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire, ²⁷and when the presidents, the generals, the governors, and the king's ministers of state gathered round and saw that the fire had had no effect upon their bodies, that their hair had not been singed, nor their mantles damaged, nor was there any smell of burning about them,^e ²⁸Nebuchadrezzar reflected and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent His angel to deliver His servants who trusted in Him, and frustrated the king's order by giving up their bodies to die rather than serve and worship any god, except their own God! ²⁹Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or tongue, that speaks a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this manner." ³⁰Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the provinces of Babylon.

4 NEBUCHADREZZAR THE KING TO all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. ²It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has wrought toward me. ³How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion endures from generation to generation.

c) A Pharaoh-like challenge to God.

d) The word for "God" is always plural in Daniel, and therefore should probably be so put here; meaning, "son of Deity."

e) Ch. 4 in Hebrew begins after this verse.

f) In a doxology of toleration.

⁴"I, Nebuchadrezzar, was living at ease in my house, and enjoying prosperity in my palace, ⁵when I had a dream that troubled me; fancies upon my bed and visions of my head that upset me. ⁶So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the meaning of the dream. ⁷Then came in the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers; but when I told them the dream, they could not make known to me its message. ⁸At last Daniel came in, whose name is Belteshazzar (according to the name of my god)^h and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and I told him the dream, saying, ⁹Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is any trouble to you; here is the dream which I saw; tell me what it means. ¹⁰The visions of my head which I saw in my bed were these: I looked, and behold a tree stood in the midst of the earth and its height was abnormal! ¹¹The tree had grown strong until its top reached to heaven, and had become visible to the ends of the whole earth; ¹²its leaves were lovely, and its fruit abundant, providing food for all. The beasts of the field and wild animals were sheltered by it; the birds of the air nestled in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.

¹³"But in the visions of my head on my bed, I looked, and see! a holy guardian, a watcher,ⁱ came down from heaven ¹⁴and shouted aloud, 'Hew down the tree and cut off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit; let the animals flee from under it and the birds fly away out of its branches! ¹⁵But leave the stump^j of its roots in the earth amid the herbage of the earth with a band of iron and bronze about it. Let the dews of heaven drench him and let him share the herbage of the earth with the animals of the field;

¹⁶let his human mind be taken from him and let an animal mind be given him, and let seven years pass over him. ¹⁷This sentence is by the decree of the Guardian-Watcher and by the authority of the holy ones; in order that all who live may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, giving it to whomever He wills and setting up over it the lowliest of men.'

¹⁸"This dream I, king Nebuchadrezzar saw; and now, you, Belteshazzar, tell me the meaning of it; since all the wise men of my kingdom are unable to make known to me its message; but you are able, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

¹⁹Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was stunned and stood aghast for a time, his thoughts appalling him. But the king said, "Belteshazzar, let not the dream and its meaning make you hesitate to tell me." Belteshazzar replied, "My master, may the dream be for those who hate you, and its message for your enemies! ²⁰The tree which you saw,^k which grew great and strong, whose height reached to the heavens, and which was visible to the ends of the earth; ²¹whose leaves were lovely and whose fruit was plentiful, providing food for all; the tree under which the field animals found shade and in whose branches the birds built their nests — ²²you, O king, are that tree! You have grown and become strong, so that your power has increased till it reaches to heaven, and your dominion extends to the ends of the earth. ²³And as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Hew down the tree and destroy it; yet save the stump of its roots in the earth, bound about with a band of iron and bronze amid the herbage of the earth, and let him be wet with the dew of the heavens, and let him share with the animals of the field, till seven times pass over him'; ²⁴this is the interpretation, O

h) Belshazzar signified, "Bel, protect his life"; not to be confused with the royal name Belshazzar, meaning, "Bel, protect the king," "Bel" in Babylonian being the equivalent of "Baal" in Hebrew.

i) The term denotes an angel who was ever ready to fulfil the divine requests.

j) Stumps, when ringed by iron bands, were regarded as sure to live a long time; Nebuchadrezzar is to be cut down, but not destroyed.

k) Vv. 20 and 21 are repeated with good effect from vv. 11 and 12.

king: It is a decree of the Most High,¹ which has come upon my master the king, ²⁵that you shall be driven from among men and you will live as the animals of the field, eating grass like an ox and wet with the dew of the heavens, till seven years pass over you and you have learned that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He wills. ²⁶And as it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you from the time you learn that it is the Heavens^m that rule. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let me counsel you to break off your sins by practicing justiceⁿ and showing pity to the oppressed; perhaps your prosperity may be prolonged."

²⁸All this befell king Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of his royal palace in Babylon ³⁰and the king was saying to himself, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built^o by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" ³¹While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you is this sentence: Your kingdom is taken from you ³²and you shall be driven from among men; your dwelling shall be with the field animals; you shall be made to eat grass like an ox and seven years shall pass over you, till you learn that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, giving it to whomever He wills." ³³Instantly the sentence upon king Nebuchadnezzar was executed. He was driven from among men, ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew from heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers and his nails as the claws of a bird.^p

³⁴At the end of the days,^q I Nebu-

chadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to the heavens and my reason returned to me. I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him, who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. ³⁵All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing;^r He does according to His will in the army^s of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say to Him, "What doest Thou?"^t ³⁶My reason returned to me at once and, for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and my splendor also returned to me. My counselors and my rulers came to me for council. I was reestablished in my kingdom and exceptional greatness was added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar praise, extol, and honor the King of heaven; for all His works are truth. All His dealings are just, and those who walk in pride He is able to abase."

538 B.C.

5 KING BELSHAZZAR^v MADE A GREAT feast for a thousand of his rulers and drank wine^w before the thousand. ²Inflamed by the taste of wine, he ordered that the vessels of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar, his grandfather, had taken away from the temple at Jerusalem, be brought, in order that the king and his rulers, his consorts and his concubines might drink out of them. ³So they brought in the golden and silver vessels, which had been taken out of the temple at Jerusalem and the king and his rulers, his consorts and his concubines drank out of them. ⁴As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

⁵Suddenly, that very hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared, which wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's

1) The humiliation of the king was to teach him that his power was not his own, but delegated to him by God, the supreme Ruler of the world.

m) The repeated use of the word "heavens" here expresses a degree of reverence for God.

n) Nebuchadnezzar needed to be told that "righteousness delivers from death" [Prov. 10:2]; and that a primary virtue of a ruler is justice.

o) The "I" is emphatic!

p) The delusion under which he was suffering led him naturally to neglect his person.

q) That is, "the seven times" of vv. 16, 23, 25, 32.

r) "As nothing," without God.

s) The Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew "host of heaven."

t) Cf. Isa. 45:9.

u) This doxology sums up the teaching of the entire chapter.

v) Belshazzar the king was the son of Nabonidus and the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and is often spoken of as "the king's son." Five short reigns intervened between them.

w) To drink wine thus publicly was really against Babylonian etiquette, though the Babylonians had a reputation for debauchery. At feasts women were allowed to be present.

palace, opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the palm of the hand as it wrote. ⁶The glorious brightness of the king's face paled and his thoughts alarmed him; the muscles of his loins loosened and his knees knocked against each other.

⁷The king then called loudly for the enchanters, the Chaldeans and the fortune-tellers to be brought in. To them, as the wise men of Babylon, the king said, "Whoever reads this writing and tells me its meaning shall be clothed with purple, wear a golden chain about his neck and shall rank as the third ruler in the kingdom."^x

⁸But when all the king's wise men came in, they could not read the writing, nor could any one of them explain to the king its meaning. ⁹At this, king Belshazzar was greatly perplexed; and his countenance was changed in him, and his rulers were at their wits' end. ¹⁰Then the queen, because of the cries of the king and his rulers, came into the banqueting hall,^y and the queen said, "O king, live for ever! Let not your fears alarm you; let not your color vanish!" ¹¹There is in your kingdom one man in whom is the spirit of Deity. In your father's days there were found in him light, understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. King Nebuchadrezzar, your grandfather, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers; ¹²he possessed an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and unravel knots. Call in Daniel; he will be able to interpret the writing."

¹³So Daniel was brought in before the king, and the king, addressing Daniel, said: "Are you that Daniel of the exiles of Judah, whom my grandfather the king brought from Judah?" ¹⁴I have heard of you that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that light, understanding and surpassing wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵Already the wise men, the enchanters have been brought in before me, that they might read this

writing and make known to me its meaning; but they could not decipher it. ¹⁶But I have heard of you, that you can give explanations and solve problems. Now, if you can read the writing and make known to me its meaning, you shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold to wear around your neck, and shall be the third ruler^z in the kingdom."

¹⁷Then Daniel answered the king, "Keep your gifts, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and make known to him its meaning. ¹⁸O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadrezzar, your grandfather, the kingdom with its greatness, glory and majesty; ¹⁹and because of the greatness which He gave him, all peoples, nations and languages trembled and feared before him. Whom he would, he slew, and whom he would, he kept alive; whom he would, he promoted, and whom he would, he demoted. ²⁰But when his heart became proud and his spirit became haughty and self-confident, he was thrust from his kingly throne and deprived of his glory; ²¹he was driven away from human society. His mind was made like the instincts of animals and he lived among the wild donkeys,^a eating grass like an ox and his body getting wet with the dew of heaven, till he learned that the Most High God rules over the kingdom of men, setting over it whom He wills. ²²And you, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this; ²³but you have lifted up yourself against the LORD of heaven; having ordered the sacred vessels of His house to be brought in, that you and your rulers, your wives, and your concubines might drink wine from them. You have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which can neither see, nor hear, nor understand, and you have not honored the God in whose hand is your breath, and to whom belong all your ways."^b

x) Nabonidus would stand first in the kingdom; Belshazzar would remain second to his father; and the successful interpreter would be Prime Minister. "Purple" was the royal color.

y) She came in without being summoned by the king. z) As one of the three chief rulers.

a) Wild donkeys are the shyest and most untamable of all animals, suggestive of the king's wildness and savagery.

b) Belshazzar had deliberately ignored his grandfather's fate; he was culpable.

²⁴"It was His palm and His hand which was seen, and it was His writing that was inscribed. ²⁵This is the writing: 'MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN'.^c ²⁶And this is the interpretation of the words: 'MENE' — God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; ²⁷'TEKEL' — you have been weighed in the balances and been found wanting; ²⁸'UPHARSIN' — your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."^d

²⁹Then Belshazzar gave orders, and Daniel was clothed in purple, a chain of gold was placed about his neck and it was published about him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom that very night.

³⁰Belshazzar, the king of Chaldea, was slain. ³¹and Darius, the Mede, received the kingdom, being then about sixty-two years of age.

538 B.C.

6 IT PLEASED DARIUS, THE MEDE, to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty provincial governors to administer the whole kingdom, ²and over them three presidents,^e of whom Daniel was one, so that to them the governors might be responsible and that the king might suffer no loss. ³Above all the other presidents and governors Daniel distinguished himself, because of his surpassing spirit, so superior that the king was planning to set him over the whole kingdom.

⁴Then the presidents and the governors sought some ground of complaint against Daniel in the discharge of his official duties; but they could find no ground of complaint, because he was faithful, and no error or fault was found in him. ⁵So these men said, "We shall find no ground of complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with service to his god."^f

⁶Whereupon these presidents and

governors rushed^g in jointly to the king, and said to him, "O king Darius, live forever! ⁷All the presidents of the kingdom, the chiefs and the governors, the counselors and the rulers have agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce a strict decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.^h ⁸Now, O king, lay down the law, and sign it as a document, which cannot be changed forever, according to the law of the Medes and Persians which can not be changed." ⁹Therefore king Darius signed such a document in keeping with this decree.

¹⁰When Daniel learned that such a decree had been officially signed and issued, he went to his house on the roof of which there were chambers with windows opening toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he kneeled and prayed and gave God thanks as he was accustomed to do. ¹¹Then these accusers came in throngs and found Daniel praying and making humble petition before his God.ⁱ ¹²So they approached the king and reminded him of his decree. They said, "O king! Did you not sign a decree to the effect that any man who prays to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, should be cast into the den of lions?" The king replied, "The thing stands fast according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." ¹³Upon this they protested to the king, "That man Daniel, of the exiles of Judah, neither heeds you, O king, nor regards the decree which you have signed; for thrice a day he continues to pray to his own god."^j ¹⁴When the king heard these words, he was greatly distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. He struggled till sunset to rescue him. ¹⁵But these men together rushed to

c) The first letter in Hebrew of the word of the inscription, is our "and"; hence Upharsin of our English translations is better understood as "and Peres" — four nouns in all.

d) The first word of the four being repeated, because of its solemn significance.

e) The Aramaic word, translated "president," is found only in this chapter [vv. 2-6].

f) They were doubtless prejudiced against an alien holding high position in the government.

g) Tumultuously, as in Ps. 2:1. h) The Persians had a custom of "keeping lions for the chase."

i) Daniel furnishes a valuable illustration of the ritual and piety of early Judaism.

j) Mohammed borrowed the custom from the Jews, adding two and praying five times daily; at first toward Jerusalem, but later after his flight, toward Mecca. Christians in some cases have orientated their cathedrals and churches toward the east.

the king, and said, "Know, O king, that a law of the Medes and Persians, in particular a decree of royal authority, cannot be changed." ¹⁶So the king gave the order and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions, the king voicing the hope, "May your God, whom you worship so faithfully, deliver you."^k

¹⁷Then a great boulder was brought and laid upon the opening of the den and the king sealed it with his own seal and also with the seal of his rulers, to prevent any possible change of plan about Daniel. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace, and spent the night in meditation and fasting, instead of enjoying his usual diversions,¹ and his sleep fled from him. ¹⁹In the morning, as soon as it was light, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰When he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried in a tone of anguish and anxiety, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you worship so regularly, been able to save you from the lions?" ²¹Daniel answered the king, "O king, live forever! ²²My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not hurt me; because He found me innocent, not having done you any injury."

²³Then the king was exceeding glad and ordered that Daniel be lifted out of the den. So Daniel was lifted out, and no kind of hurt was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴The king gave orders, and the men who had accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions; they, their children and their wives and before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them, and crunched all their bones in pieces.^m

²⁵Then king Darius wrote to all nations, races, and peoples of every

tongue that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you! ²⁶I make a decree,ⁿ that in all my dominion men tremble in reverence before the God of Daniel, for He is the living God, enduring forever; His kingdom shall never be destroyed; His dominion shall last to the end: ²⁷He saves and He delivers; He works signs and performs wonders both in heaven and on earth; for it was He who saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

²⁸So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius, and also during the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

7 IN THE FIRST YEAR OF BELSHAZZAR, king of Babylon, Daniel upon his bed saw^o a dream, even visions of his head; whereupon he wrote down the dream, and recounted the visions which he had seen. ²Daniel said, "I saw in my vision by night and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.^p ³Out of the sea rose four large animals, different from one another. ⁴The first was like a lion and had wings like an eagle. As I looked, its wings were plucked off and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it. ⁵And behold, a second animal came up, like a bear,^q having its paw raised, ready to strike, and with three ribs in its mouth between its teeth, and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.' ⁶After this I looked, and see! there was another like a leopard, with four wings like those of a bird on its back; it had four heads, and dominion was given to it! ⁷After that I saw in the visions of the night, and note, there was a fourth animal, dreadful, terrible, and exceedingly powerful, with huge iron teeth; it devoured and tore its victims in pieces, and stamped the remaining por-

k) Throughout the narrative Darius shows brotherly care for Daniel.

l) Musicians, dancing women, concubines, etc.

m) Their punishment here described is in keeping with the Oriental standards of justice [cf. Heb. 11:33] in such extreme instances.

n) V. 25 is, in part, verbatim the language of 3:29.

o) Daniel saw four animals; Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of four metals in an image. In both, the kingdom of this world is superseded by a kingdom of celestial origin; that of Nebuchadnezzar, by "a stone," which becomes a great mountain filling the whole earth [2:34, 35]; that of Daniel "like a son of man," coming with the clouds of heaven, to whom universal and everlasting dominion are given [7:13, 14]. The visions are parallel.

p) Figuratively expressing the troubled world of nations!

q) The bear being regarded as, next to the lion, the most ferocious.

tions of it with its feet.^r It was different from all the animals that were before it. It had ten horns.^s These horns I studied, and while I was contemplating them attentively, behold, up rose another horn, a little one and a marvel, by which three of the ten horns were uprooted. This little horn had the eyes of a man and a mouth ever boasting of great deeds and uttering proud words.^t I watched till thrones were placed^u and a Venerable One^v sat on the throne of justice; His clothing was white as snow and the hair of his head was like pure white wool; His throne was a blaze of flames and its wheels were burning fire.¹⁰ A stream of fire came forth from His presence,^v a thousand thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him;^w the court sat in judgment and the books were opened.

¹¹"I watched till the animal was slain and his body destroyed and handed over to be burned by fire; because of his proud words, which the little horn had spoken. ¹²As for the rest of the animals, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. ¹³Then in my night-vision I saw and behold, One coming with the clouds of heaven^x like a son of man, and He came advancing toward the Ancient of Days, before whom He was presented. ¹⁴And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.^y

¹⁵"As for me, Daniel, my spirit with-

in me was distressed by these things, and the visions of my head perplexed me. ¹⁶I approached one of those standing by and asked him to tell me the truth regarding all this. He answered me, explaining to me the meaning of it all. ¹⁷These huge animals, he said, being four in all, are the four kingdoms, which shall arise out of the earth; ¹⁸but the saints^z of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom^a forever, even forever and ever.¹⁹

¹⁹"Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth animal, so different from all the others, exceedingly terrible, with iron teeth and bronze claws, which devoured and tore in pieces, trampling what remained of a victim under its feet;^b ²⁰and concerning the ten horns which were on its head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, — the horns which had eyes and a mouth speaking great things; the horn that seemed stronger than its fellows. ²¹This horn I saw making war against the saints, and it was prevailing against them^c ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and the court took its seat and dominion was given to the saints of the Most High and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.^d

²³"He said this: 'The fourth animal shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms; it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, breaking it as grain is broken on the threshing floor. ²⁴For out of its ten horns shall arise ten kings and after them shall arise another, who shall be different^e from the former kings, and shall put down three of them. ²⁵He shall speak

r) In wanton destructiveness.

s) "Eyes" implying keen observation and insight; yet speaking proudly; cf. Rev. 13:5.

t) "Thrones" stand for the judicial bench; cf. "throne" for judgment in Ps. 122:5 and Matt. 19:28. u) Deity represented as "advanced in years."

v) The river of fire signified divine energy, irresistible.

w) The Jews confessed their sins and prayed "before" God, rather than "to" Him, by way of reverence. x) This clause "with the clouds of heaven" implied superhuman authority.

y) Cf. Rev. 11:15.

z) "The saints of the Most High," here, and also in vv. 22 and 27 seem to be allied with the "One, like to a son of man" in v. 13, and to receive the same never-ending dominion.

a) The phrase "kingdom of God" is never used by Daniel, but it is implied here, meaning Divine Sovereignty.

b) The description of the fourth animal here, being repeated in the main from vv. 7 and 8.

c) Cf. Rev. 13:7.

d) The time came which God had appointed for the purpose; for vv. 23-28, which follow, seem of Messianic import. e) In that he is most aggressive and presumptuous.

words against the Most High; he shall plan to change the sacred seasons and the law, and they shall be given over to him, for a year, two years, and half a year.^f ²⁶Then the Court of Justice shall sit and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed for all time. ²⁷For the kingdom, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.^g

²⁸"This is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts alarmed me greatly, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart."

8 IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN of king Belshazzar^h a vision appeared to me, Daniel, of a kind with the earlier vision² and this is the vision I saw: I found myself in the Susan stronghold in the Elam province beside the Ulai stream.^h ³As I raised my eyes and looked, behold, there stood on the bank of the stream a ram with two horns, tall horns, but the one higher than the other, and the higher one grew out later.ⁱ ⁴I saw the ram butting westward, northward and southward and no creature could hold out against him, nor could anyone rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and made himself great.

⁵As I was pondering, behold, there came a he-goat advancing from the west over the whole earth without touching the ground, and between his eyes the he-goat grew a prominent horn. ⁶On approaching the horned ram, which I had seen standing on the bank of the stream, he ran at him in the wrath of his power; ⁷I saw him close in on the ram. In brutal rage he butted him and broke both his horns. There was no strength in the ram to hold out against him; he threw him to the ground and trampled him and no

one rescued the ram from his power. ⁸The he-goat then assumed gigantic proportions, but when he grew powerful, the prominent horn was broken and in its place four good-sized horns came up, pointing to the four winds of heaven.^j

⁹From one of them a horn emerged, that began small but grew very large southward, eastward and toward the Glory-land.^k ¹⁰Its greatness reached to the host of heaven; some of the starry host it caused to fall to the ground and it trampled on them. ¹¹Even against the Prince of the starry host it matched itself, whose daily sacrifice was abolished and His sanctuary profaned. ¹²It was granted power in opposition to the daily sacrifice; it cast truth to earth and whatever it did succeeded.

¹³I then heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one inquired of the holy one who had spoken, "How long shall the vision hold good regarding the daily sacrifice, the desolating transgression, the surrender of the sanctuary, and of the host of heaven to be trampled?" ¹⁴He told me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings;^l then the rights of the sanctuary shall be restored."

¹⁵As I, Daniel, was observing the vision and trying to make out its meaning, behold, there was standing before me a human form, ¹⁶and I heard a man's voice over the Ulai that called, "Gabriel, make him understand the vision." ¹⁷He^m then came near to where I stood and as he came I felt panic-stricken; I fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision relates to the final period." ¹⁸But while he was speaking to me I swooned face-down to the ground; then he touched me and made me stand up straight. ¹⁹He said, "I am here to acquaint you with the final events of the indignation time; for the end comes at the appointed time.

²⁰"The ram you saw with the two horns means the kings of Media and

f) 3½ years; the Fathers in the Early Church often refer it to the era of the dominion of Antichrist. It may find parallels in Rev. 12:14; 13:15; 11:2, 3; cf. Dan. 12:7.

g) Son of the king, Nabonidus, who had delegated some authority to him.

h) A canal of running water, connecting the Kerkha and the Karun rivers.

i) Symbolizing the Medo-Persian empire, Persia later and greater.

j) Four kingdoms after Alexander's death. k) Palestine.

l) 1150 days, with omission of 2,300 daily sacrifices. m) The angel Gabriel.

Persia; ²¹the hairy he-goat — the king of Greece, and the prominent horn between his eyes is the first king. ²²That it was broken and that four arose in its place — four kingdoms shall develop from the nation, but not with its strength.ⁿ ²³In the later period of these kingdoms, when the wicked go to extremes, a hard-faced king shall arise, skilled in intrigues.^o ²⁴His power shall be mighty, but not by force of arms; in astonishing ways he shall bring ruin. He shall succeed in what he undertakes. He shall destroy mighty opponents; also the holy people.^p ²⁵By his scheming he shall make the treachery, which he applies, win out; proud of heart, he shall destroy the unsuspecting. He shall rise up against the Prince of princes; however, without use of human hands he shall be broken.^q ²⁶The vision of mornings and evenings, of which mention was made, is true; you, therefore, seal up the vision,^r for it concerns many days."

²⁷Then I, Daniel, was exhausted; for several days I was ill. Afterward I got up and rendered service to the king. I was amazed at the vision and did not fathom its meaning.

521 B.C.

9 IN THE FIRST YEAR OF DARIUS,^s son of Ahasuerus of the Median race, who had been made king over the Chaldean realm, ²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, took notice from the Scriptures of the number of years about which the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah, the prophet — that Jerusalem would lie desolate for seventy years. ³Then I turned my face to the LORD God to pray and to supplicate in fasting and in sack-cloth and ashes. ⁴I interceded with the LORD my God and made confession, saying,

"O LORD, great and awesome God,

who keepest the merciful covenant with those who love Thee and keep Thy commands, ⁵we have sinned; we have done wrong; we have behaved wickedly; we have rebelled and have swerved away from Thy commands and Thy ordinances.^t ⁶We have not heeded Thy servants, the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people in the land. ⁷With Thee, O LORD, is righteousness, but with us shamefacedness as we today experience — the men of Judah, the dwellers of Jerusalem and all Israel near and far in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of the disloyalty they have practiced toward Thee. ⁸With us, LORD, there is the shamed face, with our kings, our princes and our fathers; for we have sinned against Thee; ⁹but with the LORD our God there are mercies and pardons, although we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰We have not listened to the voice of the LORD our God, to live in agreement with the laws He laid before us through His servants, the prophets. ¹¹Indeed, all Israel has transgressed Thy law and has by-passed it, so as not to heed Thy voice; therefore there is poured upon us the curse confirmed with an oath, which is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God; for we have sinned against Him.^u ¹²He has confirmed His words, which He spoke regarding us and regarding our rulers who directed us, by bringing on us such an immense disaster, the like of which has occurred nowhere under heaven except in Jerusalem. ¹³Just as it is written in the law of Moses, all this punishment has come upon us, and we have not mollified the LORD our God by turning from our offenses, and observing Thy truth. ¹⁴The LORD therefore has

n) After Alexander's death in 323 B.C., the Grecian empire dismembered. Wars followed for 22 years. In 301 B.C. Cassander became king of Greece and Macedonia; Lysimachus of Asia Minor; Ptolemy of Egypt, Coele-Syria and Palestine; Seleucus of Upper Asia.

o) Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth king of the Seleucidæ dynasty, reigned from 175 to 163 B.C. and was determined to displace the Hebrew worship by Grecian paganism. p) The Hebrews.

q) God remains the sovereign Judge; He creates and destroys, sets up and pulls down.

r) Daniel must for the present keep it a secret.

s) After the capture of Babylon by the army of Cyrus, Darius exercised interim kingship until Cyrus came back from further conquests.

t) Daniel, not over 14 when carried away from Jerusalem, included himself with those whose sins resulted in the exile. His prayer deserves study and assimilation.

u) Interchange of second and third personal pronouns is rather frequent in man's communication with God, because petition and testimony form part of it, of which Ps. 23 is an outstanding example.

taken care to bring the calamity upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all His doings; but we have not heeded His voice.

¹⁵Now then, O LORD, our God, who didst lead Thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand,^v and hast gained for Thyself the renown Thou hast today, we have sinned; we have behaved wickedly. ¹⁶LORD, in view of all Thy righteousness, please turn away Thy anger and Thy indignation from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy hill; for, due to our sins and the offenses of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people have become a disdain among all those around us. ¹⁷Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant and his supplications and make Thy face to shine upon Thy ruined sanctuary for Thy sake, O LORD. ¹⁸Incline, O my God, Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes and see our desolation, the city which is called by Thy name; for we are not pouring out our petitions before Thee on account of our righteousness but on account of Thy great compassions. ¹⁹O LORD, hear! O LORD, forgive! O God, take notice and take action; for Thine own sake, O God, do not delay; for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name."

²⁰While I was still speaking in my prayer, and confessing my sins and the sins of my people Israel, pouring out my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of my God's holy hill; ²¹while I was still speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the previous vision,^w came close to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²²He came and said to me, "Daniel, this time I have come to enlighten your understanding. ²³At the beginning of your petitions a message went forth and I have come to

bring it to you; for you are greatly appreciated; so, notice the message and get hold of the vision: ²⁴Seventy weeks^x are settled on for your people and for your holy city, to restrain the transgression, to end sins,^y to atone for the guilt and to bring in everlasting righteousness; to confirm the prophetic vision and to consecrate the Holy of Holies. ²⁵Know and understand, then, that from the going forth of the message to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of a Prince, a Messiah, there are seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; in the seven weeks it will be in process of restoring and rebuilding with squares and streets even in times of affliction; ²⁶but after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be slain, although there is nothing against Him. The people of a prince, who comes, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;^z its end shall come overwhelmingly and till the end there shall be warfare; ruins that are determined. ²⁷In a week He shall make the covenant to prevail for many,^a and in the middle of the week He will cause sacrifice and offering to cease. Then on a wing of horrors shall a desolator come to bring ruin until a fully determined end comes down on the desolation."

544 B.C.

10 IN THE THIRD YEAR OF CYRUS,^b king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel — called Belteshazzar; the message is true, pertaining to a lengthy struggle. He paid attention to the message and understood the vision. ²At that time I, Daniel, spent three weeks in mourning; ³I ate no appetizing food; neither meat nor wine entered my mouth and I did not anoint myself at all until the entire three weeks were over.

⁴On the 24th day of the first month,^c as I stood on the bank of the

v) He who led Israel out of Egypt is able and willing to return His repentant people to Palestine.
w) Ch. 8:15.

x) Seventy sevens; so later, v. 25 — seven sevens and sixty-two sevens. If taken literally, seven times seven would equal the jubilee period; but symbols are not meant to be taken literally.

y) Antiochus Epiphanes, ruling Judea 175-164 B.C., robbed the Temple, set up a statue of Zeus in the Holiest, ordered swine for sacrifice there, forbade circumcision, destroyed all sacred Writings of the Jews that could be found and tried to force Grecian paganism on the Jews.

z) This seems to refer to the Romans and the destruction of city and Temple, 70 A.D.

a) None but Christ, mentioned in vs. 25, made the Covenant prevail.

b) Cyrus became king of Persia 547 B.C., and a detachment of his armies, under Darius, took Babylon 539.

c) The month Abib, later called Nisan, with Passover on the 14th and Feast of Unleavened Bread 15-21st day.

great river, the Tigris,^d ⁵I looked up and behold, a man dressed in linen, his loins girded with fine gold of Ophaz; ⁶his body like topaz; his face like lightning; his eyes like flaming torches; his arms and legs like polished bronze and the sound of his voice like the sound of a multitude.^e ⁷I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; but the men with me saw no vision, so that great trembling overcame them; they fled and hid themselves. ⁸I was left by myself and, as I saw this great vision, no strength remained in me; the color left my cheeks and my energy was gone. ⁹Then I heard the sound of his words and on hearing the sound of his words I fell unconscious with my face to the ground. ¹⁰Now note! Then a hand touched me and had me rise tottering to my hands and knees; ¹¹he said to me, "Daniel, highly esteemed man, note well the words I speak to you and stand up straight; for I have been sent to you." And as he was speaking to me, I stood, trembling.

¹²He said to me, "Have no fear, Daniel; because from the first day in which you set your heart to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your prayers were being heard and I have come in response to your prayers. ¹³But the prince of the Persian kingdom opposed me for 21 days. And observe! Michael,^f one of the chief princes, came to my aid, so that I retained the upper hand with the Persian kings. ¹⁴Now I am come to help you understand what shall befall your people in the latter days; for it is once more a vision regarding the future."^g

¹⁵While he was speaking to me along this line I turned my face toward the ground and was speechless; ¹⁶but note! One resembling a human form touched my lips; then I opened my

mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood facing me, "Sir, on account of the vision my agonies have come upon me and I have no strength left. ¹⁷How can I, my Master's servant, converse with Thee, my Master? For I have now neither strength nor breath in me."

¹⁸The man-like being then touched me again and strengthened me, ¹⁹saying, "Have no fear, greatly beloved man! Peace to you; be strong and take courage." During his speaking to me I became strengthened and said, "Speak my Master, for Thou hast strengthened me." ²⁰He asked me, "Do you know why I have come to you? I must return at once to contend against the prince of Persia, and as soon as I have left, observe, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹Nevertheless, I will convey to you what is recorded in the Book of Truth — and none is joining force with me against them except your prince Michael."^h

539 B.C.

11 ⁱIN THE FIRST YEAR OF DARIUS, the Mede, I personally stood up to support and strengthen him. ²Now I shall make the truth known to you: Take notice! Three more kings shall arise in Persia and the fourth shall possess greater wealth than they.^j When through his wealth he has become strong, then he shall move everything against the kingdom of Greece. ³A valiant king shall then arise,^k who shall rule with wide-spread authority and will do as he pleases. ⁴But by the time he has risen, his realm shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, neither among his descendants nor with the authority with which he ruled; for his realm shall be rooted up and apportioned to others than these.

⁵"The Southern king^k shall then grow in power, but one of his leaders

d) Hiddekel, mentioned in Gen. 2:14 as one of the four rivers of Eden.

e) Compare Rev. 1:13-17 regarding Christ.

f) Michael, the archangel, seems Israel's appointed guardian. The prince of Persia is not the king, but the guardian spirit of Persia, a supernatural power back of the Persian gods and idols. See Isa. 24:21; Jer. 46:25; I Cor. 8:5; 10:20.

g) The message intimated in v. 1 and filled out in ch. 11.

h) The speaker leaves the impression that we are in the presence of the Son of God.

i) Possibly, in their order — Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius-Hystaspis and Xerxes.

j) Alexander the Great, whose empire became four kingdoms after his demise.

k) Ptolemy Soter, a Macedonian, ruled Egypt 322-305 B.C. His chief leader was Seleucus, who became the head of the Seleucid dynasty that ruled from Phrygia in Asia Minor to the Indies, a far greater realm than Egypt; but Ptolemy had first appointed him general.

shall surpass him in prowess and shall govern; his rule shall be immense. ⁶After a number of years they shall form an alliance; the daughter of the king of the South shall come to the king of the North to make an agreement;¹ but she shall not retain the effectiveness of her might; neither shall he and his might endure. She shall be surrendered with her retinue, he whom she bore and he who won her. ⁷In those times a branch shall emerge from her roots,^m who shall march with an army and invade the stronghold of the Northern king; he shall be active against him and conquer. ⁸Even their gods with their golden images and their costly articles of silver and gold he shall carry as loot into Egypt. For some years he shall refrain from attacking the Northern king, ⁹who shall invade the realm of the Southern king and shall then return to his own land. ¹⁰His sons, however, shall arm themselves and muster immense forces, which shall certainly come and overwhelm and march through, pushing the attack to the stronghold.

¹¹The Southern king, enraged, shall march forth and battle against the king of the North, who shall raise a great army; but that army shall be surrendered to him.ⁿ ¹²When this host has been captured, he will grow conceited; he will beat them down by myriads; nevertheless, he shall not follow up his success. ¹³The northern king shall once more muster a host greater than the first and after some years he shall march against him with a formidable army amply equipped. ¹⁴In those times many will rebel against the king of the South and violent men of your own people shall elevate themselves to make the vision come true;^o but they shall stumble. ¹⁵The king of the North shall come and throw up a rampart; he shall

take a fortified city and the armed forces of the South shall not hold out against him, not even the shock-troops; strength shall fail them to hold their own.^p ¹⁶The invader shall do as he pleases, with none standing up against him. He shall occupy the Fair Country,^q with all of it in his power. ¹⁷He shall then do his best to overpower the other's entire realm; to this one he shall give his daughter in marriage to come to terms with him, aiming to ruin his kingdom; but the plan shall neither succeed nor benefit him.^r ¹⁸He will then turn his attention to the coastlands and occupy many, but a general shall stop his insolence and throw his insults back on himself. ¹⁹Subsequently he shall busy himself with the strongholds of his own lands; but he shall stumble, fall and disappear.

²⁰"In his place one shall arise who shall make a tribute collector traverse the glory^s of the realm; but in a few days he shall be broken, though neither by spite nor by battle. ²¹In his stead a disreputable person shall come to the fore to whom no royal dignity is attributed. In an unguarded period he shall come and acquire royalty by devious intrigues. ²²Before him overwhelming forces shall be swept away; yes, also a prince of the covenant.^t ²³When a treaty has been made with him, he will practice deceit; thus he will with few people rise to great power. ²⁴Stealthily he will invade the fertile spots in a province and shall do what neither his fathers nor their ancestors did — he will distribute spoil, booty and property among them and he shall for a time plan strategies against fortresses. ²⁵With a great army he will direct his strength and his courage against the king of the South^u and the Southern king shall prepare for war with an unusually vast and

1) Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy, married Antiochus, but was discarded after her father's death, and Laodice, Antiochus' previous wife, taken back. Fearing her rival, Laodice poisoned Antiochus and had Berenice and her infant son murdered. m) Berenice's brother became king of Egypt.

n) Antiochus surrenders to Ptolemy. o) Jews aiming to fulfil this prophecy.

p) At Sidon Antiochus made Ptolemy's general surrender. q) Palestine, as also in v. 20.

r) The betrothal of Antiochus' daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy, not consummated until five years later because Ptolemy was only seven, did not result well.

s) Seleucus Philopater sent his prime minister Heliodorus to seize the temple treasury, but a divine providence frustrated him. Seleucus died suddenly, probably poisoned by Heliodorus.

t) Probably the Jewish high priest Onias, whom Antiochus deposed.

u) Second campaign against Egypt by Antiochus Epiphanes, Egypt's king losing because of treachery. Subsequently they pretend friendship while scheming against each other.

mighty host; but he shall not be able to stand, because they will plot schemes against him. ²⁶Those eating at his table shall ruin him; his army shall drift away, with many fatalities. ²⁷Both of these kings shall have mischief in mind and, seated at a common table, they shall tell lies; but fruitlessly, for the destined final period must be awaited. ²⁸He shall then return to his land, loaded with loot and his mind set against the Holy Covenant,^v working his will as he returns to his country.

²⁹"At the appointed time he will again invade the South, but the last time it shall not be as at first. ³⁰Warships from Cyprus^w shall come against him, which scare him off. On the way back, he shall burn with rage against the Holy Covenant and take action. Once returned, he shall make common cause with those who abandon the Holy Covenant. ³¹He will set in motion armed forces who shall desecrate the sanctuary's citadel,^x cause the sacrifices to cease and set up an abomination that brings desolation. ³²With flat-teries he shall disaffect those who be-leave wickedly toward the Covenant; but the people who know their God shall be steadfast and will accomplish notable feats. ³³The teachers among the people shall cause many to gain insight, but for many days they shall be downed by sword and flame, prison and plunder. ³⁴However, while stumbling, they shall receive some aid and then many shall without conviction cooperate with them.^y ³⁵On the part of some teachers their stumbling shall be for their refinement and purification to make them white, preparatory to the final period which is delayed until the appointed time.

³⁶"The king shall do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, even above the God of gods.^z He shall utter monstrous

boasts, and he shall prosper until the time of indignation is completed; for what is determined shall take place. ³⁷Of the gods of his fathers he shall take no notice, or of the beloved of women;^a neither shall he pay respect to any other god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. ³⁸Instead of them, however, he shall honor the god of fortresses; with gold and silver, with precious stones and jewelry he will honor a god whom his fathers never knew.^b ³⁹With devotees of a strange god he will man the fortified strong-holds; on those who acknowledge him he will bestow great honor; he shall make them rulers over many and will apportion the land to them.

⁴⁰"But ultimately the king of the South shall collide with him. The king of the North shall march against him like a tempest, with chariots and horse-men and a great fleet of ships. ⁴¹He shall invade the land and overwhelm it as he passes through. He shall also invade the Glory Land and many shall be worsted; but Edom, Moab and the prominent Ammonites shall escape his power.^c ⁴²He shall extend his dominion over several countries, and the land of Egypt shall not go free; ⁴³he shall gain control of Egypt's treasures, gold, silver and all of Egypt's valuables. The Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be in his retinue. ⁴⁴But reports from the East and from the North shall alarm him, so that he shall withdraw in great fury to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious Holy Mountain — and come to his end with none to help him.

12 "AT THAT TIME MICHAEL SHALL stand up, the great prince who defends the children of your people.^d It will be such a time of anguish as has never occurred since a nation existed

v) The Jews as people of the Holy Covenant. w) Roman power opposing Antiochus.

x) Antiochus determined to root out the Hebrew religion.

y) Cooperating with the Maccabees against Grecian paganism.

z) What follows here to the end of the chapter applies not alone to Antiochus Epiphanes but to others of his type; it is symbolic of Antichrist, represented by various characters as in I John 2:18; 4:3; II John 7; II Thess. 2:3-12, of which Christ speaks, Matt. 24:5, 23, 24; Mark 13:21, 22.

a) Tammuz, a Babylonian idol for whom Ezekiel saw Jewish women weeping, Ezek. 8:14.

b) No particular god but in general the god of war.

c) In Antiochus' day Moab no longer existed. Antiochus made no African invasions beyond Egypt and he died at Tabae in Persia.

d) The time of ch. 11:40-45; Michael protects the godly, so sorely persecuted.

— until that time; yet your people, every one who is found recorded in the Book, shall be saved. ²Many, who sleep in the earth's dust, shall awake,^e some to everlasting life and others to shame, to everlasting abhorrence. ³Those who are teachers^f shall then shine as the brightness of the firmament and those who turned many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, keep the message a secret; seal the Book until the final period; many shall investigate^g and information shall advance."

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked and, behold, two others were standing, the one on this bank of the stream and the other on that bank. ⁶One asked the man dressed in fine linen who was above the water of the stream, "How long until these marvels shall end?" ⁷Then I heard the man clothed in fine linen,^h who was above the waters of the stream, as he raised his right hand and

his left toward heaven; he swore by Him who lives forever, "A period, periods and a half period, and when the breaking of the power of the holy people ends, then all these things shall be completed."

⁸I heard, but failed to understand, so I said, "My Master, to what outcome does it all run?" ⁹But he said, "Move on, Daniel, for the words are secret and sealed until the final period. ¹⁰Many shall be purified, made white and revived, while the wicked shall behave wickedly and none of the ungodly shall understand; only the learners shall understand. ¹¹From the time when the daily offering is eliminated and the desolating abomination is set up there shall be 1,290 days. ¹²Blessed is the expectant one who attains 1,335 days.ⁱ ¹³But you, go on to the end; you will rest and you will arise for your allotment at the end of time."

e) No unconsciousness is intimated; the body returns to its dust, and our Lord's parable of sheep and goats, Matt. 25:31-46, is strongly foreshadowed.

f) Those who have instructed others Godward receive distinction.

g) Literally, shall run back and forth. h) Almost certainly the Son of God.

i) As in Revelation the numbers are symbolic of time, therefore fragmentary. 1200 days, or 40 months of 30 days, or 3½ years; or time, times and a half time, Rev. 12:6, 14. The added years in 1,335 days may suggest advance in spiritual freedom and expression.

THE BOOK OF

HOSEA

1 THIS IS THE LORD'S MESSAGE THAT I came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.^a

²In the LORD's first message to Hosea, this is what the LORD said to him: Go, take to you a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry; for the land is doubly guilty of harlotry, forsaking the LORD completely. ³So Hosea went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴Call his name Jezreel, the LORD told him, for after a little time now, I will punish the house of Jehu because of the blood of Jezreel, and put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. ⁵On that day I shall break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.^b

⁶When again Gomer conceived and bore a daughter, the Lord said, Call her name Unloved, for never again will I show pity for the house of Israel so as to forgive them at all. ⁷I will, however, still show pity for the house of Judah, and I will deliver them through the LORD their God; but I will not deliver them by bow, or sword, or war, or horses, or horsemen.

⁸Gomer weaned Unloved, then con-

ceived again and bore a son. ⁹And the Lord said: Call him, Not-my-people;^c for you are not My people, and I shall not be your God.^d

¹⁰Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea that cannot be measured or counted; and where it used to be said to them, "You are not my people," they will be called, "Sons of the living God."

¹¹Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered into one, and they shall choose for themselves one head; and they shall go up from the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

2 SAY TO YOUR BROTHER, "MY PEOPLE," and to your sister, "Beloved."

²Strive with your mother, plead — for she is not my wife, nor am I her husband — persuade her to clear her face of her marks of harlotry and remove her adulterous charms from her breasts; ³or I shall strip her naked and leave her as in the day she was born; I will make her as a desert waste and leave her like a land all parched, and thus I will slay her with thirst.^e ⁴For her children I shall have no mercy for they are children of harlotry. ⁵Their mother played the harlot; the one who con-

a) This verse, the title of the book, may have been provided to convey Hosea's prophecies to Judah, mentioning four kings of Judah but only one of Israel.

b) Jezreel in the northern kingdom was the scene of the bloody massacre by Jehu, as told in II Kings 9-10. In Jehu's day it was accepted as an act of justice, being done under an order of Elisha as punishment of the house of Ahab for the sins of Jezebel. c) Her son was not Hosea's.

d) The book of Hosea presents some of the greatest, most revealing writings in the O.T. The prophet was a man of profoundly spiritual insight. He loved his people, being born among them and reared with them, he being the only "writing prophet" of the northern kingdom. He loved Gomer in spite of her infidelity; so did God's love for Israel continue, steady and sure, in spite of her apostasy. e) The speaker here is the LORD. He is addressing the whole nation.

ceived them has been shameless. She said, "I shall go after my lovers, who give me my bread and water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink."^f

⁶Therefore I will hedge up her path with thorns, and I will build a wall against her, so she will never find her way out. ⁷She will run after her lovers but she will not overtake them; she will search for them but will not find them. Then she will say, "I shall go back to my first husband; for then it went better with me than now." ⁸However, she did not understand that it was I who gave her the grain, the wine and the oil; and silver I gave her, too, in abundance, as well as gold, which they made into a Baal. ⁹Therefore, I shall take back My grain in harvest time and My wine in its season; I shall reclaim My wool and My flax, given to cover her nakedness. ¹⁰Now I shall show her in her shame to her lovers, and none shall come to take her again. ¹¹So shall I put an end to all her gaiety, her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths, and all her festal assemblies.^g

¹²I will destroy her vines and her fig trees of which she said, "They are my pay; my lovers gave them to me."^h I will turn them into a jungle, and the wild beasts shall devour them. ¹³I shall visit upon her the days of the Baals, when she offered incense to them, decked herself out with her rings and her jewels, sought to attract her lovers and forgot Me utterly. Such is the LORD's message.

¹⁴Therefore, see! I shall allure her; I will take her to the wilderness, and I will speak tenderly to her heart. ¹⁵I will give her there her vineyards, and the Valley of Achor for a door of hope.ⁱ There she will sing as in the time of her youth, in those days when she came up from the land of Egypt.

¹⁶On that day — this is the word of the LORD — you will call Me, "My Husband," and not again will you say to Me, "My Baal." ¹⁷I will take away from her lips the names of the Baals, and they shall never again be mentioned by name. ¹⁸Then, too, on that day I shall make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field and with the birds of heaven, even with the creeping things of the ground. Bow, sword, and war I will banish from the earth, and they shall live in safety. ¹⁹I will betroth you to Me for ever, in righteousness and justice, in love and tender mercy, ²⁰betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD.

²¹On that day too — it is the LORD who says it — I will call on the heavens, and they shall call on the earth; ²²the earth shall call on the grain, the wine and the oil, and they shall call on Jezreel.^j ²³I will sow her for Myself in the land; I will love Unloved; I will say to Not-my-people, "You are My people," and they will say, "My God!"^k

3 AGAIN THE LORD SAID TO ME: GO, love a woman now in love with a paramour, herself an adulteress, besides; such is the way the LORD loves His people Israel, even though they keep turning to other gods and love raisin cakes.^l ²So I bought her, paying fifteen silver dollars and fifteen bushels of barley for her,^m ³and I said to her: "For many days you will remain quietly here at home with me; no more are you to play the harlot; nor are you to have a husband; furthermore my relation to you will not change." ⁴For the people of Israel shall continue many days without a king or a prince, without sacrifice or an altar, and without a pillar, without ephod or

f) This refers to Israel's most serious religious problem; most of the people believed they owed all the products of the soil to the Baals, the pagan gods of Canaan, all fertility to be due to their bounty.

g) Such as the feast of ingathering when the people lived in booths or tents in the vineyards and celebrated the occasion in song and gaiety. They made religious festivals of them, observed their rituals and brought sacrifices.

h) The harlot's hire was the harvest as coming from the Baals.

i) The valley in which Achan and his family had been destroyed because of their treacherous sin [Josh. 7:1, 20-24].

j) The relationship between God, the heavens, the earth, the grain, wine and oil is close, and the people should have been an inner part of it; but they lost that marvelous heritage. However, it is theirs if they will return for it.

k) The names which Hosea gave the children, typifying Israel, are reversed; the people may be restored to God's grace. Cf. Rom. 9:23-26. ¹) An important item in the Baal feasts.

m) Almost certainly Gomer, who had left Hosea for one or more "lovers."

teraphim. ⁵Thereafter the Israelites shall turn to seek the LORD their God and David their king.ⁿ They shall come with reverence to the LORD and to His goodness in the end of the days.

4 LISTEN TO THE WORD OF THE LORD, sons of Israel; for the LORD has a charge against the dwellers of the land, because there is no fidelity, no kindness, no knowledge of God in the land. ²There is swearing, lying, murder, theft, adultery, violent outbreaks, bloodshed after bloodshed. ³Wherefore the land mourns and everything living in it languishes; the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, too, are swept away.

⁴Even at that, let no one enter complaint; let no one bring accusation, for My people are like their priestlings.^o ⁵You priests! You stumble by day; the prophet, too, stumbles with you by night, and I will destroy your mother. ⁶My people perish for lack of knowledge, and because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being priest to Me. Since you^p have forgotten the law of your God, I, too, will forget; I will forget your children.

⁷The more they multiplied, the more they sinned against Me;^q I will turn their glory into shame. ⁸They feed on the sin of My people, and toward their iniquity they turn their desire.^r ⁹So it becomes — like priest, like people. I will visit their ways upon them and reckon to them their doings. ¹⁰They shall eat and not be satisfied; they shall play the harlot but beget no increase, since they have failed to pay heed to the LORD.

¹¹Lust, strong drink, and wine take away the intelligence; ¹²people inquire of their wood, and their staff gives them their answers;^s for a spirit of har-

lotry has led them astray, and it has made them apostates from their God. ¹³They sacrifice on the tops of their mountains and burn incense on the hills, under an oak or poplar or terebinth, for their shade is pleasant. Therefore your daughters give themselves to harlotry and your brides to adultery.^t ¹⁴I will not punish your daughters for playing the harlot, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go aside with harlots; they sacrifice with temple prostitutes, and the people, not being sensible, are ruined.

¹⁵Though you play the harlot, Israel, let not Judah be guilty. Never go up to Gilgal or to Bethaven, and never swear, "By the life of the LORD." ¹⁶Yes, like a stubborn heifer, Israel is stubborn. How can the LORD feed them like a lamb in a broad place? ¹⁷Ephraim is wedded to idols; let him be! ¹⁸Their drinking bout over, whoring they go; they love shame more than glory. ¹⁹A wind has folded them in its wings, and they shall be put to shame by their altars.^u

5 HEAR THIS, YOU PRIESTS; GIVE heed, O house of Israel; and you, too, family royal, lend an ear; for the sentence pronounced pertains to you. A snare you have become at Mizpah, a net spread out on Tabor,^v ²and the pit they made deep at Acacia.^w But I, I will be a scourge to all of you.

³Yes, I know Ephraim well, and Israel is not hid from Me. You have played the harlot, Ephraim; Israel is defiled. ⁴Their doings will not permit them to return to their God; for with a spirit of harlotry in them, they cannot know the LORD.

⁵But Israel's pride testifies to his face;^x both Israel and Ephraim go

n) To every Hebrew David meant true worship of God and, in God, a united nation.

o) The fault lay not as much with the people as with their leaders.

p) Probably the parents who set their children an idolatrous example. q) Especially the priests.

r) The priests thrive by collecting fines and sin offerings from the people; then use their income for their own pleasure — to buy wine, etc. s) Objects made of wood, looked to for divination.

t) This was a type of prostitution participated in at places of worship and at shrines, common throughout the ancient world. It was believed that by some magic it fostered fertilization. The women involved were respected as contributing to the prosperity of the community.

u) The wind is the Assyrian invasion which Hosea sees on the horizon. It came, and in 12 years the nation disappeared from history.

v) Mizpah, Tabor, etc., are conspicuous shrines, where the people were led to adopt pagan worship.

w) Snare, net and pit were used by hunters. Acacia was the camp at Baal-Peor in Moses' day.

x) Under Jeroboam II, the northern kingdom prospered, felt no need of God.

stumbling in their guilt; Judah, too, will stumble with them. ⁶With their flocks and herds they shall go to seek the LORD^y but they will not find Him; He has withdrawn Himself from them. ⁷For they have dealt treacherously with the LORD and have begotten strange children.^z Now a new moon shall devour them together with their portions.^a

⁸Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet, too, in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth-Aven. "After you, Benjamin!"^b ⁹Ephraim shall become a desert on the day of rebuke, and concerning the tribes of Israel, what I now make known is determined. ¹⁰The princes of Judah for their part have become like those who remove a landmark;^c upon them will I pour out My indignation like water. ¹¹Ephraim is an oppressor; he crushes justice to earth, for he has gone after vanity with a will. ¹²Therefore I am like a moth to Ephraim and as dry rot to the house of Judah.

¹³When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah his running sores, Ephraim turned to Assyria and sent to the fighter king.^d But he is unable to heal you or to cure your sore distress.^e ¹⁴For I am as a lion to Ephraim, a young lion to the house of Judah; so I tear and go My way; I carry off, and there is none to come to the rescue. ¹⁵I will go and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face. When trouble comes, they will earnestly seek Me, and then their cry will be:

6 "COME, LET US RETURN TO THE LORD; for He has torn, and He may heal us; He has smitten, and He may bind us up. ²In two days He will revive us, and on the third day He

will raise us up that we may once more live before Him. ³Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD; for as certain as the break of dawn He comes to us; He will come to us like winter rain, as the spring showers that water the earth."

⁴What can I do with you, Ephraim, and with you, too, Judah, what can I do? Your love is like a morning cloud and like the dew, so early gone.^f ⁵Wherefore I hewed them down by the prophets; I slew them by the words of My mouth, and My judgment breaks forth as the light. ⁶For I desire loving-kindness and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.^g

⁷But they, like Adam, transgressed the covenant; there^h they broke faith with Me. ⁸Gilead is a city of evildoers,ⁱ tracked with footprints of blood. ⁹A pack of priests lies in wait for a man, as do bands of marauders. On the road to Shechem they murder;^j they practice villainy. ¹⁰In the house of Israel I have seen horrible sights; there Ephraim has indeed played the harlot; Israel is defiled. ¹¹For you, too, Judah, a harvest is reserved, when I would turn the fortunes of My people.

7 WHEN I WOULD HEAL ISRAEL, THE guilt of Ephraim is before Me and the evil doings of Samaria; for they commit fraud. Burglars they are, who break into houses; bandits who raid on the highways. ²Through it all they never consider in their hearts that I remember their evil doings. Now their sinful deeds confront them everywhere; before My face, too, they appear.

³With their evil doings they gladden the king,^k and in their intrigues they include princes. ⁴They are all adul-

y) With all their sacrifices.

z) They have married foreign wives; the parents have not taught the children knowledge of the LORD.

a) They are faithless to the LORD and any month now, any new moon, the invader may come and they will perish. b) A war cry [Judg. 5:14].

c) Those who removed landmarks were the lowest thieves [Deut. 19:14; 27:17].

d) Nickname for the Assyrian king.

e) Only Israel's God could cure her. Troubles at home were due to her disregard of Him.

f) Hosea sees that Israel's repentance was too easy. They must be made to realize how serious their situation is.

g) Love and obedience God desires; the blood of bulls cannot bring forgiveness.

h) Trans-Jordan, farthest from worship-center.

i) East of the Jordan and often representing the whole Trans-Jordan country.

j) Simeon and Levi with their servants had murdered many in Shechem, because their sister Dinah had been dishonored by its crown prince [Gen. 34:25-27].

k) They anoint one king after another.

terers; like an oven heated by the baker who rests from kneading the dough until it is leavened. ⁵On our king's day¹ the royal princes became sick with the fever of wine; they made common cause with worthless fellows, ⁶and their hearts were fired like an oven with their plotting. All night their anger smoldered; in the morning it blazed out like a raging fire, ⁷all aglow like an oven.^m They consume their rulers; so all their kings have fallen, not one among them ever calling on Me.

⁸Ephraim mixes himself among the nations; Ephraim is a cake not turned.ⁿ ⁹Strangers have devoured his strength, and he does not know it; gray hairs are sprinkled upon him, but he is not aware of it. ¹⁰The pride of Israel bears witness against him; but they neither turn to the LORD their God, nor seek Him on account of all this. ¹¹So Ephraim has become like a silly, witless dove; they call to Egypt; they run off to Assyria. ¹²As they fly off, I cast My net over them; as if they were birds of the air, I bring them down; I will punish them because of their evil ways. ¹³Woe to them for forsaking Me! As for Me, I would have redeemed them, but they spoke lies against Me!

¹⁴They never cry out to Me from their hearts when howling upon their beds; for grain and new wine they cut themselves and rebel against Me.^o ¹⁵Although I trained them and strengthened their arms, yet toward Me they think only evil. ¹⁶They turn, but not to the Most High; they are like an unreliable bow. Their princes shall fall by the sword because of the insolence of their tongue. So there shall be only scorn for them in the land of Egypt.^p

8 THE TRUMPET TO YOUR MOUTH! For like an eagle it comes against the

LORD's house,^q because they have transgressed My covenant and have revolted against My Law. ²To Me they cry, "My God, we know Thee, we of Israel!" ³But Israel has spurned the good, and an enemy shall pursue him.

⁴They have made kings, but without My consent; they have made princes too, but I knew it not.^r With their silver and their gold they have made themselves idols to their own elimination. ⁵I reject your calf, Samaria; My wrath burns against them.^s How long will a pure heart be impossible among them? ⁶For this^t too is of Israel, a craftsman made it; it is not God. It shall become broken chips, the calf of Samaria.

⁷They are sowing the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. A grain stalk standing bare without a shoot will produce no grain, and if perchance it did produce, foreigners would soon swallow it. ⁸Devoured is Israel, now among the nations like a useless vessel. ⁹For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey wandering off by himself; So too Ephraim offers love-gifts,^u ¹⁰but even though they hire help among the nations, I am now going to gather them in; they have begun to be few because of the burden of tribute to the great king.^v

¹¹Ephraim has indeed multiplied altars, but to him they have become altars for sinning. ¹²If I were to write for him My laws by the myriads, they would be accounted laws of foreigners. ¹³They bring sacrifices; they offer flesh and eat it; the LORD has no pleasure in them; He will remember their guilt and visit their sins upon them. They must return to Egypt.^w

¹⁴Truly Israel has forgotten his Maker and has built himself palaces, while Judah has multiplied cities highly fortified; but I shall send a fire on his

1) The king's birthday or the anniversary of his ascension to the throne.

m) These most godless years, 743-735, and no repentance. n) Half-baked.

o) They approach God by heathen practices.

p) As it was for their fathers in Egypt [Ex. 5:21; 14:11, 12].

q) Sound alarm; war will break upon Israel; the enemy will come swiftly.

r) They did not consult Me. s) One at Bethel, one at Dan. t) This calf probably at Bethel.

u) In these perilous times Israel seeks to hire help from Assyria, or from Egypt, but it will not accomplish anything, for it is not the help she needs.

v) The king of Assyria; as king of kings he was an emperor.

w) Slaves [again and now] to sin and to others because of their forsaking God.

cities, that shall consume his strongholds.

9 NO REJOICING NOW, ISRAEL, NOR any exulting in gladness like that of the pagan people around you; for you have played the harlot. Turning away from your God, you have, indeed, loved a harlot's hire upon every threshing floor.^x

²Threshing floor and wine-vat shall nourish them no more, and the new wine shall play them false. ³They shall not be dwelling in the LORD's land;^y but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and in Assyria they shall eat unclean food.

⁴There they shall not pour out libations of wine to the LORD, nor would their sacrifices please Him. Their bread shall be like mouners' bread; all who partake of it shall be defiled; for they shall eat bread only to satisfy hunger; it cannot enter the LORD's house.^z

⁵What will you do on the great assembly day and on the LORD's feast day? ⁶For lo, they are going to Assyria; away from destruction, Egypt will gather them in; Memphis will bury them. Weeds shall possess the strong-box of their silver, and brambles shall be in their tents. ⁷The days of punishment have arrived, the time for retribution; Israel shall experience it. The prophet is a fool;^a the spiritual man has gone demented, because of the multitude of your sins and your massive enmity. ⁸God's watchman over you, Ephraim, is His prophet, yet on every path which he must tread there are fowler's snares; within the house of his God there is hostility. ⁹They are as deeply steeped in depravity as in the days of Gibeah.^b God will remember their guilt and punish their sins.

¹⁰Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel, and as the first fruits of

the fig tree's first crop I looked upon your fathers.^c But they came to Baal-peor^d and there gave themselves over to shame, becoming abominable, like the object of their love.

¹¹Ephraim's glory has flown away like a bird; no more births, no more motherhood, no more conception!^e ¹²Even if they brought up children, I would bereave them to the last man; it is woe to them when I turn from them. ¹³Ephraim's sons, as I foresaw, are destined to be a prey; he must bring forth his sons for slaughter. ¹⁴Give them, LORD, what wilt Thou give? Give them wombs that miscarry, withered breasts! ¹⁵All their evil is in Gilgal,^f there I have hated them; because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of My house;^g no more will I love them; their nobles are all rebels.

¹⁶Ephraim is smitten; their roots are all dried up; they will never produce fruits; even if they should bear offspring, I will slay the darlings of their womb. ¹⁷My God will cast them off for they have not listened to Him, and they shall become wanderers among the nations.

10 A LUXURIANT VINE IS ISRAEL, productive of fruit for himself; but the more fruits he produced, the more he multiplied altars; and the better his land became, the more beautiful he made his sacred pillars.^h

²Their heart was slippery, and so they must suffer for it. Their altars the Lord shall break down; their sacred stones He will destroy.

³Now they say, "We have no king; if we have no reverence for the LORD, what could the king do for us?" ⁴They mouth words; with false oaths they enter covenants, and judgments sprout

x) The harvests Israel ascribes to the Baals as answer to her recognition of them at their local altars.

y) Israel ate no meat without first offering part of it on the altar; but in exile there will be no altar, hence all foods will be unclean. z) To be offered to Him before being eaten.

a) The men of God are beside themselves because of the evil all about them.

b) The Israelites. [See Judg. 19].

c) In God's first dealings with Israel they were an attractive people.

d) When Israel arrived there, some sinned with Moabite women, who enticed them to the feast of Baal-peor.

e) The religious prostitution, practiced at the Canaanite shrines, was deemed to have fertilizing effects. f) A chief center of idol worship [Amos 4:4 and 5:5]. g) Meaning Palestine.

h) An essential part of a pagan shrine erected beside the altar.

like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field. ⁵For the calf of Beth-avenⁱ the dwellers in Samaria shall tremble; yes, its people shall mourn for it and its priestlings wail on account of it, lamenting its glory that has departed. ⁶The thing itself they shall pack along to Assyria; it will be tribute for the fighter king. Ephraim shall suffer disgrace, and Israel shall be put to shame through his counsel.

⁷Samaria's king will cease to be; as a chip on the surface of the waters will he be. ⁸The high places of Aven,^j Israel's sin, will crumble away; thorns and thistles shall come creeping up over their altars. They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us," and to the hills, "Fall upon us."^k

⁹From the days of Gibeah you have sinned, Israel; you have not advanced in the warfare against the sons of iniquity; you never even caught up with the men of Gibeah.^k ¹⁰I will come and I will chastise them, and peoples shall be gathered against them to punish them for their double guilt. ¹¹Ephraim was a young, trained heifer loving to tread the threshing floor, and I have been sparing her comely neck; but I will put Ephraim to the yoke; Judah must plow and Jacob must harrow.

¹²Sow for yourselves righteousness and reap the fruit of love; break up your fallow ground;^l it is time to seek the LORD until He comes and rains righteousness upon you. ¹³You have cultivated ungodliness; you have harvested injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies because you trust in your chariots and in the abundance of your warriors.

¹⁴Tumults shall rise among your peoples, and all your forts will be destroyed as Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel,^m on the day of battle when the

mother was dashed in pieces with the children. ¹⁵So shall Iⁿ do to you, O house of Israel, because of your great wickedness. Israel's king shall be cut off utterly in the morning.

11 WHEN ISRAEL WAS YOUNG, HOW I loved him and called him from Egypt to be My son.^o ²But the more I called to them, the more they deserted Me, offering sacrifices to the Baals and burning incense to idols.

³But it was I who taught Ephraim to walk; I who took them up in My arms; yet they did not know that I healed them. ⁴With human cords I would lead them, with bands of love. I was to them as one lifting the yoke from their jaws, and, bending down, I fed them.

⁵They shall return to the land of Egypt, and Assyria shall be their king; for they refuse to return to Me. ⁶So the sword shall whirl in their cities, destroy the bars of their gates, and devour them in their fortresses. ⁷My people are bent on wandering away from Me, and though they call to Him on high, He will not lift them up.

⁸How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I let you go, Israel? How can I give you up like Admah or make you like Zebaoim?^p My heart overturns within Me; all My compassions kindle. ⁹I will not let the heat of My anger burn; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God, not man, the Holy One among you; I came not to consume.

¹⁰They will walk after the LORD; like a lion He will roar; and as He roars, sons will come trembling from the west. ¹¹Like birds they come hurrying from Egypt and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will bring them back home; it is the word of the LORD. ¹²Ephraim surrounds Me with

i) Hosea's nickname for Bethel, which means House of God; Beth-aven means House of Nothingness. So Aven. j) The cry of Rev. 6:16.

k) The men of Gibeah [Judg. 19:22-30] proved as low as those of Sodom; sins were not adequately dealt with in Hosea's time.

l) To which Jeremiah adds, "and sow not among the thorns," meaning, cleanse the heart to do the will of God.

m) Identified with Arbela in Galilee, 4 miles w.n.w. from Tiberias, cruelly destroyed by Shalman, probably Shalmaneser, Assyria's emperor, whose armies were near. Beth-Arbel means, House of God's ambush.

n) They will be punished for their ungodly practices at the shrine of the golden calf.

o) Hosea insisted it was God's love for Israel which had made her mankind's teacher in the things of the Spirit. p) Two cities destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah.

lies and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah still acknowledges God and is faithful to the Holy One.

12 **EPHRAIM IS FEEDING ON THE** wind and following after the east wind all day long.^q They multiply lies and desolation, entering into contracts with Assyria and carrying oil to Egypt.^r

²The LORD has a lawsuit with Judah, to see that Jacob is punished as his ways require, to repay him according to his doings. ³In the womb he seized his brother's heel^s and later in his manly strength he strove with God. ⁴Yes, he wrestled with the Angel and prevailed;^t he wept and entreated Him for mercy. At Bethel he found Him and there God spoke with him^u ⁵the LORD, the God of hosts, YAHWEH I His name. ⁶So, you return to your God, hold on to love and justice and wait continually on your God.

⁷As for Canaan, in his hand are false balances; for he loves to practice fraud. ⁸But Ephraim says, "Truly, I am growing wealthy; I have gotten me riches, and none of my gains have come to me wrongfully, for that would be sin."

⁹Now I the LORD, your God, since the land of Egypt,^v could again make you to live in tents, as in the days of the harvest festival.^w ¹⁰I spoke to you repeatedly by the prophets; I multiplied visions for you, and by the prophets I appealed to you in parables;^x ¹¹but in Gilead all is wicked worthlessness; in Gilgal their bullocks were offered to demons. Their altars shall become as stone-heaps in the furrows of the field. ¹²Jacob fled to the land of Aram, and there Israel served for a wife — for a wife he herded sheep.^y ¹³By a prophet the LORD brought Israel from Egypt, and by a prophet he was shepherded. ¹⁴But Ephraim has provoked (Him) bitterly; so He will leave

his bloodguilt upon him and make him pay for his reproach.

13 **WHEN EPHRAIM SPOKE, THERE** was trembling;^z he was prince in Israel; but he fell into sin through Baal, and thus he died. ²Now they continue their sinning; they make themselves molten images, shaping as they are minded their silver into idols — the work of craftsmen, all of it. They say of them, "The men who offer sacrifices kiss the calves."^a ³Wherefore they shall be like the morning cloud and like the dew vanishing early, like chaff driven in the wind from the threshing floor and like smoke from a window.

⁴Yet I am the LORD your God, since the land of Egypt; and you, you know no God but Me; nor is there any Savior besides Me. ⁵I knew you in the desert in that scorched land. ⁶But as they ate and were filled, their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me. ⁷So I shall be like a lion to them, like a leopard by the wayside ready to leap. ⁸I will spring on them like a bear bereaved of her young; I will tear open their hearts and devour them there as would a lion, as wild beasts would rend them.

⁹When I destroy you, O Israel, who then comes to your aid? ¹⁰Where now is your king, that he may save you, and all your princes besides, that they may rule over you, concerning whom you said, "Give me a king and princes"? ¹¹I will give you a king, but in My anger, and I will take him away again in My indignation. ¹²Harvested is Ephraim's guilt; stored up now is his sin. ¹³Pangs like those of childbirth are come upon him; but a foolish son is he; for this is no time to stay in the mouth of the womb.^b

¹⁴Should I save them from the hand

q) Hosea has a gift for striking expressions. Ephraim was ever the shepherd; he still is, but now it is only the wind he herds. r) Isa. 30:6, 7. s) Gen. 25:26. t) Gen. 32:28.

u) God spoke with Jacob, but the revelation was also for Jacob's descendants.

v) Through all the time since I brought you out.

w) Those were the happy days while the grapes were being gathered and the wine made. x) This equals: "I have used every channel whereby to send warning, but without avail."

y) Gen. 29:20.

z) Once the tribe of Ephraim was awe-inspiring as chief among the northern tribes.

a) Homage to kings and others, shown by a kiss, was common; here the same to idols.

b) Spiritually, the northern kingdom, since their independent beginning was like a stillborn babe; there has been no life, no growth.

of Sheol? Should I redeem them from death? Where, O Death, are your plagues; where, O Sheol, is your destruction?^c Relenting is hid from My eyes. ¹⁶Though among his brothers he is the "fruitful" one,^d an east wind^e shall come, a wind of the LORD out of the desert, and mounting high, it shall dry up his fountain and parch his spring, stripping him of every precious thing. ¹⁶Samaria must bear her guilt, for she rebelled against her God. They shall fall by the sword; their children shall be dashed in pieces and their women with child ripped open.

14 COME BACK, O ISRAEL, TO THE LORD your God; for your sins have caused you to stumble. ²Come back to the LORD and bring words with you. Say to Him, "Take away all guilt, grant us favor, that we may bring as an offering to Thee the fruit of our lips!"^f

³Assyria will not save us; neither will we be riders of horses;^g nor will we ever again say, "Our God," to what

our hands have made; for in Thee the fatherless finds mercy.

⁴I will heal their backsliding;^h I will love them freely, for My anger is now turned from them. ⁵I will be as the dew to Israel; he shall blossom as the lily; he shall throw out his roots like Lebanon. ⁶His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be like that of the olive tree, his fragrance like Lebanon. ⁷They shall return and dwell beneath His shadow. They shall live as a well-watered garden, flourish like the vine and become as fragrant as the wine of Lebanon.

⁸What more then has Ephraim to do with idols? I make answer to him; I look after himⁱ with watchful care; I am like an evergreen cypress; and your fruit, it is found, comes from Me.

⁹Whoever is wise will understand these things, and the discerning man will know them; for the ways of the LORD are right and the righteous walk in them; but transgressors stumble in them.^j

c) St. Paul's I Cor. 15:55 recalls this passage, but with a glorious reversed meaning.

d) Ephraim, in Heb. "fruitful," was thought of as the "productive" one.

e) The wind from the east is Assyria. f) Offer words of thanksgiving and praise.

g) They will no longer look to Assyria for help nor turn to Egypt [Isa. 30:16; 31:1].

h) Now God responds. i) When he calls to Me.

j) Ch. 14 offers an encouraging picture — Israel's return to God, to the land, and to the blessings to follow — such as only God's love could offer. Could Hosea have written thus after all those messages? Yes, his understanding of God's love would make it agreeable to him.

JOEL

1 THE WORD OF THE LORD THAT CAME to Joel, the son of Pethuel:

²Hear this, you old men, and listen, all you who dwell in the land!

Has such a thing ever taken place in your days, or in the days of your fathers?

³Tell these things to your children, and they to their children, and their children to the generation after them.

⁴What the crawling locust left, the swarming locust ate, and what the swarming locust left, the hopping locust ate, and what the hopping locust left, the stripping locust ate.^a

⁵Wake up, you drunkards and cry aloud; wail, all you drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine, for it is cut off from your mouth.

⁶For a nation has now invaded My land, mighty and beyond numbering; their teeth are the teeth of a lion, their fangs are those of a lioness.

⁷He has made of My vineyards a waste-land,

And My fig trees he has blasted; He has stripped them clean of their bark, and thrown it away.

He has bleached the branches white.

⁸Wail (O land), like as a virgin girded with sackcloth for the bridegroom of her youth.

⁹The meal offerings and the drink offerings^b are cut off from the house

of the LORD; the priests, the ministers of the LORD, now mourn.

¹⁰The fields are desolate, the land is in mourning, for the grain is destroyed; the new wine is dried up; the oil does not flow.

¹¹The farmers are depressed, the vine-dressers lament; for the wheat and the barley, the harvest of the field is ruined.

¹²The vines languish, and the fig tree is withered.

The pomegranate, the palm and the apricot, all the trees of the field are dried up, and all gladness is gone from among men.

¹³Gird yourselves and mourn, O priests! Wail, you ministers of the altar!

Come inside, and lie all night in sackcloth, you ministers of my God.

For sacrifices and drink offerings are now not offered in the house of your God.

¹⁴Sanctify a fast, announce a solemn assembly,

gather together the elders, and all those living in the land, to the house of your God, and cry to the LORD fervently.

¹⁵Alas, for the day, for the day of the LORD is near! It comes as a day of destruction from the Almighty.

a) Of the nine names for locust used in the Hebrew Old Testament four are found here and in 2:25. Palestine had similar terrifying experiences as here described in the years 1915 and 1928.
b) The regular daily offering, Ex. 29: 4-6; Num. 15:5-7; 28:7-9.

¹⁶Has not food been cut off from before
your eyes,
gladness and joy from the house of our
God?

¹⁷The seed rots under the clods;
the granaries are all empty;
the barns are falling down, now that
all grain is withered.

¹⁸What can we put away in them?
The herds of cattle wander aimlessly
about

because there is no pasture for them.
The flocks of sheep also are depressed.

¹⁹To Thee, O LORD, I cry aloud,
for fire has destroyed the pastures of
the plains,
and flames have burned up the trees
in the fields.

²⁰Also the beasts of the field turn pant-
ing to Thee,
for the water brooks have run dry,
and fire has destroyed all pastures of
the land.

2 BLOW THE TRUMPET^c IN ZION;
raise the alarm in my holy mountain.
Let all those dwelling in the land
tremble,
for the day of the LORD is coming, it
is near.^d

²A day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and dense darkness!
Like morning gray that spreads upon
the mountains,
there comes a great and powerful peo-
ple, the like of whom have never
been from of old,
nor will they again be known through-
out the years of all coming genera-
tions.

³Before them fire destroys, and after
them a flame consumes;
before them the land was like the Gar-
den of Eden,
and after them it is a desert waste.
From them there is no escape.

⁴Their appearance is that of horses,
and they run like war horses;

⁵they leap like the rumbling chariots
on the tops of the mountains,

Like the crackling flames of fire de-
vouring the stubble;
like a mighty people prepared for
battle.

⁶Before them people are in anguish,
all faces grow pale with consternation.

⁷They run like warriors; like men of
war they climb the walls;
they go each in his own path, they do
not entangle themselves.

⁸They do not jostle each other in the
way,
each goes his own path;
they plunge through the defenses;^e
they are not stopped.

⁹They leap upon the city; they run
upon its walls;
they climb upon its houses;
they enter through its windows as do
thieves.

¹⁰Before their face the earth quakes,
and the heavens tremble;
the sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars lose their brightness.

¹¹The LORD thunders before His army,
His advancing host is mighty;
he that obeys His commands is very
powerful.

The day of the LORD is very great and
terrible,
who can withstand it?

¹²Yet even now the LORD announces,
Return to Me with all your hearts,
fasting, and weeping and mourning,
come!

¹³Rend your hearts and not your gar-
ments,
and return to the LORD, your God.

For He is merciful and compassionate,
long-suffering and abounding in mercy,
and feels grieved over punishment.

¹⁴Who knows but that He will turn and
feel grievance

and leave a blessing behind Him,
even for cereal offerings and drink
offerings

which you may offer to the LORD,
your God.

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion,
sanctify a fast day; proclaim a solemn
assembly.

c) The original trumpet was a ram's horn.

d) This arrangement of the sentence is apparently that of the original.

e) In the locust invasions of Palestine mentioned in note "a" of ch. 1, heaps upon heaps were
beaten to pulp and burned, but the invaders moved on over the debris, and all attempts to stop
them were useless.

- ¹⁶Assemble the people; arrange a holy convocation.
Bring together the elders; gather the children,
even those nursing at the breast.
Let the bridegroom come forth from his quarters,
and the bride from her bridal closet.
- ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, those ministering to the LORD, weep,
and let them say, "Spare Thy people, O LORD,
and make not Thy heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations.
Why should those among the nations say,
'Now where is your God?'"
- ¹⁸Then the LORD became zealous for His land,
and had pity on His people.
- ¹⁹The LORD answered and said to His people,
Lo, I will send you the grain, and the wine and the oil;
you will be satisfied with them,
and I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.
- ²⁰I will remove the invader from the north^f far from you
and I will drive him into a parched wasteland,
his front to the eastern sea,^g and his rear to the sea of the west.^h
His stench will arise, his foul smell will ascend,
for his (evil) works have been vast.
- ²¹Fear not, O land, be glad, and rejoice;
for the LORD has done great things!
- ²²Fear not, ye beasts of the field,
for the pastures of the plains are now green; the tree bears its fruit,
the fig tree and the grapevine give their full yield.
- ²³And you, O sons of Zion, be glad;
rejoice in the LORD your God;
for He gave you warning, teaching unto righteousness;
and He has now poured down rain for you,
the early rains, and the latter rainsⁱ at the first.
- ²⁴The threshing floors will be full of grain,
and the wine vats overflow with wine and oil.
- ²⁵I will repay for the years which the locust devoured —
the hopper, the stripper and the shearer—
My great army which I sent upon you.
- ²⁶You shall eat and be full, and be satisfied,
and you shall praise the name of the LORD your God,
who has done these wonders for you.
My people shall never again be put to shame,
- ²⁷and you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
that I am the LORD your God, and
My people shall never again be put to shame.
- ²⁸It shall come to pass after this
that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh,
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy;
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions,
- ²⁹Even upon the servants and the maids
I will, in those days, pour out of My Spirit.
- ³⁰And I will give signs in the heavens
and upon the earth,
blood and fire, and columns of smoke.
- ³¹The sun shall be changed into darkness,
and the moon into blood,
before the coming of the day of the LORD, dark and terrible;
- ³²but every one who calls upon the name of the LORD shall be saved.
For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said.
And those who are saved will be those whom the LORD has called.
- 3** FOR BEHOLD, IN THOSE DAYS AND AT that time, when I restore ²the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I shall gather all the nations and bring them

^f) Most of the invaders of Israel came, or will come, from the north. Cf. especially Ezek. 38:6, 15.

^g) Dead Sea; Ezek. 47:18. ^h) Mediterranean; Deut. 11:24.

ⁱ) Early-winter rains; latter-spring rains.

down into the valley of Jehoshaphat;¹ I shall there enter into judgment with them on account of My people and My heritage, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations. ³My land they have divided up, and for My people they have cast lots; they have given a boy for a harlot, and have sold a maiden for wine and have drunk it.

⁴And further, what are you to Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia?^k Are you paying Me back for something I have done? If so, I shall speedily return your recompense upon your own heads; ⁵for you have taken My silver and My gold, and My precious treasures you have carried away into your own temples. ⁶The sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem you have sold to the Greeks, that you might remove them far from their own borders. ⁷But listen! I am going to remove them from the place whither you have sold them, and I shall return your retribution upon your own heads. ⁸I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans,^l a nation far away; for the LORD has spoken.

⁹Proclaim this among the nations:

Declare a holy war; arouse your warriors,
let all fighting men draw near, let them all go up!

¹⁰Beat your plowshares into swords
and your pruninghooks into spears;
let the weak one say, I am strong.

¹¹Come^m and help, all you nations,
from every side,
gather yourselves there;
thither bring together thy heroes, O LORD.

¹²Let the nations bestir themselves,
and come up to the valley of
Jehoshaphat;
for there, will I, the LORD, sit to
judge all the nations round about.

¹³Bring forth the sickle, for the harvest
is ripe;
go in and tread, for the wine press is
full;
the vats overflow, for their wickedness
is great.

¹⁴Multitudes, multitudes in the valley
of decision,
for the day of the LORD is near, in
the valley of decision;

¹⁵The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withhold their shining.

¹⁶For the LORD roars from Zion,
and from Jerusalem He utters His
voice.

The heavens and the earth are
shaken;
but the LORD is a refuge for His
people

and a stronghold for the sons of Israel.

¹⁷You shall know that I am the LORD
your God,
that I am dwelling in Zion, My holy
mountain.

Jerusalem shall remain holy,
and aliens shall never again pass
through her.

¹⁸It shall be in that day that the moun-
tains shall drip sweet wine,
and the hills shall flow with milk;
all the brooks of Judah shall flow full
of waters,
and a fountain shall send forth its
waters from the house of the LORD,
and irrigate the valley of Acacia.

¹⁹Egypt shall become a desolation,
and Edom shall be a barren wasteland,
because of their violence against the
sons of Judah;

for they have poured out innocent
blood in their land.ⁿ

²⁰But Judah shall be inhabited forever
and Jerusalem from generation to
generation,

²¹and I will avenge their blood; I will
not leave it unrequited.
I am the LORD, dwelling in Zion.

j) The name of this valley is found only here and in ch. 3:12 in the Old Testament. The word means "Jehovah has judged."

k) I Sam. 6:17 names five such areas in Philistia.

l) The Sheba of the queen who visited Solomon, I Kings 10:1-13; it was a noted country of trading people, Ezek. 28:22.

m) The Hebrew verb used here is found only here in the Old Testament. The Arabic root means to help. Change the verb *ushu* to *hushu*, and you get the word for hasten. Scholars do not agree as to the best translation.

n) Compare the fuller statement in Obadiah, vss. 8-18.

AMOS

1 THE WORDS OF AMOS,^a WHO WAS one of the shepherds from Tekoa,^b which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah^c and Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel,^d two years before the earthquake.

²He said, "The LORD will roar from Zion; He will utter His voice from Jerusalem;^e the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall be dried up."

³Thus says the LORD: Because of three transgressions of Damascus, yes of four,^f I will not revoke it;^g because they have threshed Gilead with iron threshing sleds. ⁴I will send fire on the house of Hazael, and it will consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.^h ⁵I will break the bolt of Damascus and cut off the inhabitants from the valley of iniquity,ⁱ and the holder of the sceptre from the house of luxury,^j and the Syrian shall go captive to Kir, says the LORD.

⁶Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of Gaza, yes of four, I will not revoke it;^k because they took a complete captivity to turn it over to Edom. ⁷Therefore I will send fire on the walled city of Gaza, and it shall

consume her palaces. ⁸I will cut off the inhabitants of Ashdod and the holder of the sceptre from Ashkelon; I will cause my hand to turn against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines^k shall perish, says the Lord God.

⁹Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of Tyre,^l yes of four, I will not revoke it;^m because they turned over a complete captivity to Edom and they did not remember the covenant of brothers. ¹⁰Therefore I will send fire on the walled city of Tyre, and it shall consume her palaces.

¹¹Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of Edom,ⁿ yes of four, I will not revoke it;^o because he pursued his brother with the sword and stifled his love while his anger tore incessantly and he kept his wrath forever. ¹²Therefore I will send fire on Teman, and it shall consume the palaces of Bozrah.

¹³Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of the sons of Ammon, yes of four,^p I will not revoke it;^q because they ripped up the pregnant women of Gilead in order to expand their boundaries.^r ¹⁴Therefore I will kindle a fire on the walled city

a) Not to be confused with Amoz, father of Isaiah [Isa. 1:1].

b) Now Tekoa, a ruined village five miles south of Bethlehem. Amos prophesied at Bethel to the northern kingdom. c) Reigned 790-739 B.C. d) Jeroboam II, reigned 793-753 B.C.

e) Cf. Joel 3:16.

f) A common Semitic idiom stressing the fact that the sins have been numerous. The one singled out in each instance is the most heinous. g) His decree to punish the nation mentioned.

h) Son of Hazael, who maintained his palace in Damascus. i) Or Aven. j) Or Beth-edon.

k) Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron represent the Philistines.

l) Cf. I Kings 5:12, where Hebrews and Phoenicians are allies; the Tyrians may have sold Hebrews to Edomites, or people from other Phoenician cities.

m) The Hebrews were Edom's closest relatives as descendants of Jacob and Esau. Usually the Hebrews ruled the Edomites, but fortunes changed; tables were turned.

n) We know that the Ammonites plagued the Hebrews repeatedly. Gideon and Jephthah fought them successfully, after much suffering from them.

o) Territorial expansion gained by extremely cruel methods.

of Rabbah, and it shall consume their palaces with a cry on the day of war, with a storm on the day of tempest. ¹⁵Their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, says the LORD.

2 **THUS SAYS THE LORD:** BECAUSE OF three transgressions of Moab, yes of four, I will not revoke it;^g because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.^p ²Therefore I will send fire on Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of the city; and Moab shall die in the tumult with a cry, with the sound of a ram's horn. ³I will cut off the judge from its midst, and all its princes I will kill with him, says the LORD.

⁴Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of Judah, yes of four, I will not revoke it;^g because they despised the law of the LORD, and His statutes they did not keep. Their lies after which their fathers walked have led them astray; ⁶therefore, I will send fire on Judah, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

⁶Thus says the LORD: On account of three transgressions of Israel,^q yes of four, I will not revoke it;^g because they sold the righteous for silver and the poor for a pair of sandals. ⁷They are panting after dust on the head of the poor; the way of the meek they stretch out.^r A man and his father go in to the same girl in order to profane My holy name; ⁸on pledged garments they stretch out beside every altar; wine bought with fines they drink in the house of their god.^s ⁹Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, although his height was as the cedars and his strength was that of the oak; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below. ¹⁰It was I who brought

you up from Egypt, and I led you in the desert 40 years, so you could possess the land of the Amorite.

¹¹I raised up some of your sons to be prophets and some of your young men to be Nazarites. Is it not so, sons of Israel? — it is affirmed by the LORD. ¹²But you caused the Nazarites to drink wine and the prophets you commanded, "Do not prophesy." ¹³Behold, I will make you groan as a wagon groans loaded with sheaves. ¹⁴Flight shall perish from the swift; the strong man shall not save his life; ¹⁵the bowman shall not stand; the lightfooted shall not be saved,^t even the rider of the horse shall not save his life. ¹⁶The strong of heart among the heroes shall flee naked in that day — it is affirmed by the LORD.

3 **HEAR THIS WORD WHICH THE LORD** has spoken to you, sons of Israel, to every family that I brought up from Egypt:^u ²Only you have I known^v of all the families of the earth. Therefore will I visit upon you all your iniquities. ³Do two walk together without having agreed? ⁴Does a lion roar in the forest when there is no prey for him? Does a young lion growl from his den unless he has seized something? ⁵Shall a bird swoop down into a snare on the earth when there is no bait in it? Does a snare spring up from the ground if it has seized nothing? ⁶If a ram's horn is blown in a city, are the people there not afraid? Shall there be calamity in a city and the LORD has not made it? ⁷Truly the Lord God will not do anything unless He has revealed His secret to His servants the prophets. ⁸A lion has roared; who is not afraid? The Lord God has spoken, who can but prophesy?

⁹Cause it to be heard at the palaces

g) His decree to punish the nation mentioned.

p) A glimpse is afforded in II Kings 3:5-27, where Moab's hatred develops especially against Edom. Not able to take Edom's king alive, they got his corpse and cremated it, an outrage among all Semitic peoples.

q) Amos had enjoyed little formal schooling, but note his skill as a speaker. His hearers agreed and felt good about God's judgment on surrounding nations, including Judah. Now he shows that northern Israel deserves no less.

r) These figures are equivalent to saying, "They ground the poor in the dust; the meek they compel to lengthen their walking."

s) Israelites, like pagans, satisfying lust under a mantle of religion.

t) Hebrew, "will not save"; without harmony with God there is no success in life.

u) The southern as well as the northern kingdom of Israel; both singularly privileged, therefore singularly guilty. v) In the Biblical meaning of "know," intimately and with favor.

in Ashdod* and at the palaces in the land of Egypt and say, "Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria and see the many disorders within her and oppressions in her midst." ¹⁰They do not know how to do right — it is affirmed by the LORD — those who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.

¹¹Therefore thus says the Lord God: An enemy! He is surrounding the land, and he shall break down your strongholds from you and your palaces shall be plundered. ¹²Thus says the LORD: As a shepherd snatches from the mouth of a lion two leg bones or part of an ear, so shall the sons of Israel be delivered; those who sit on the corner of a bed in Samaria, or on a couch in Damascus. ¹³Hear and bear witness in the house of Jacob, says the Lord God, the God of hosts, ¹⁴for when I bring back the transgressions of Israel upon him, then I will punish the altars of Bethel;^x the horns of the altars shall be cut off, and they shall fall to the earth. ¹⁵I will cut off the winter house together with the summer house; the houses of ivory shall perish, and the ample houses shall come to an end — it is affirmed by the LORD.

4 HEAR THIS WORD, YOU HEIFERS OF Bashan,^y who are in the mountain of Samaria, the oppressors of the common people, the crushers of the poor, those who say to their husbands, "Bring, that we may drink!" ²The Lord God has sworn by His holiness that the days are even now coming upon you when He shall lift you up with hooks and your posterity with fish-hooks. ³You shall go out at the breaches, each of you going straight ahead; and you shall be driven to the fortress — it is affirmed by the LORD.

⁴Come to Bethel and transgress, to Gilgal and multiply transgression; bring

your sacrifices every morning, your tithes^z every three days! ⁵Offer leavened burnt offerings as a thank offering, and proclaim freewill offerings and publish them, for thus you love (to do), O sons of Israel — it is affirmed by the Lord God.

⁶But on My part, I have given you cleanness of teeth^a in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, and still you have not returned to Me — it is affirmed by the LORD. ⁷Also I have held back from you the heavy rain when there were yet three months to the harvest; I caused rain to come upon one city, and I withheld the rain from another city. One portion was rained upon, and the portion which was not rained upon withered, ⁸so that two or three cities wandered into one city to drink water; but they were not satisfied, and still you have not returned to Me — it is affirmed by the LORD.

⁹I have smitten you with blight and with mildew. The yield of your gardens, of your vineyards, of your fig trees and your olive trees, the locusts are eating, and still you have not returned to Me — it is affirmed by the LORD. ¹⁰I sent upon you pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I slew your warriors with the sword and took away your horses; I caused the stench of your camps to rise even to your noses, and still you have not returned to Me — it is affirmed by the LORD. ¹¹I have overthrown in your midst as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; you have been like a firebrand plucked from the burning, and still you have not returned to Me — it is affirmed by the LORD.^b

¹²Therefore thus shall I do to you, O Israel, and since I shall do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel!

¹³Look at the Fashioner of the moun-

w) One of five larger cities in Philistia. The ark of the covenant was taken there, to Dagon's temple, after its capture and the defeat of the Hebrew army [1 Sam. 5:1-8]. It is Azotus of Acts 8:40.

x) Amos was preaching there. The golden calf, which Jeroboam had erected, was its worship shrine. y) Designating the dissolute women of Samaria. The Bashan plateau, east of Jordan, contained rich pasture land [Ps. 22:12].

z) The sacrifices were to be offered at the annual feasts and the tithe once every three years. These offerings and tithes, even though greatly multiplied, did not suffice; there was no surrender of self in them. a) Little to eat.

b) Because God still cares for them, He applies His fatherly discipline. Will they learn their lesson?

tain, the Creator of the wind, the One who proclaims to man His thought, the Maker of the dawn and darkness, the One who treads upon the high places of the earth: the LORD, the God of hosts, is His name.^c

5 HEAR THIS WORD WHICH I AM bringing against you as a complaint, O house of Israel! ²The virgin Israel has fallen, never to rise. She is forsaken upon her ground; there is no one to lift her up. ³For thus says the Lord God: The city which goes forth a thousand strong shall return a hundred, and the one which goes forth a hundred strong shall return ten to the house of Israel.

⁴For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: Seek Me and live. ⁵Do not seek Beth-el; do not enter Gilgal; do not pass through Beersheba. For Gilgal shall go rolling away,^d and Beth-el shall become wickedness.^e ⁶But seek the LORD and live, lest He break out as fire in the house of Joseph and it will consume and there is no extinguisher at Beth-el. ⁷O you who turn justice into wormwood,^f and cast down righteousness to the earth! ⁸(Seek Him) who makes the Pleiades and Orion, who turns blackness to morning and darkens day to night; Him who calls the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth — the LORD is His name, ⁹Him who causes destruction to flash forth against strength, and destruction comes upon the fortified city.

¹⁰They hate the one who reproves in the gate,^g and they abhor the one who speaks with integrity. ¹¹Therefore, because you have trodden upon the poor and exact wheat from him — rock houses you have built, but you shall not dwell in them; desirable vineyards you have planted, but you shall not drink their wine! ¹²For I know your transgressions to be many, and your

sins very great. You are enemies of the righteous, receivers of bribes, and you turn down the needy in the gate.

¹³Therefore the prudent shall be silent at that time, for it is an evil time. ¹⁴Seek good and not evil, that you may live; so shall the LORD, the God of hosts, be with you, as you say. ¹⁵Hate evil, and love good. Place justice up high in the gate, and perhaps the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

¹⁶Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord: In all the squares there will be wailing, and in all the streets they shall say, "Woe, woe!" They shall call the plowman to mourning and professional mourners to lamentation. ¹⁷In all the vineyards there shall be mourning — for I will pass through your midst, says the LORD.

¹⁸Woe to those who long for the day of the LORD! What good will the day of the LORD do you? It is darkness and not light — ¹⁹as when a man flees from a lion only to have a bear fall on him; then he runs into the house and leans his hand against the wall only to have a serpent bite him. ²⁰Is not the day of the LORD darkness and not light, gloom with no gleam in it? ²¹I hate, I despise your festivals; I will not be pleased with your assemblies. ²²For if you cause burnt offerings to ascend to Me and meal offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fatlings I will not look upon. ²³Take away from Me the noise of your songs; the melody of your musical instruments I will not hear. ²⁴Let justice roll on like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.^h ²⁵Did you offer to Me sacrifices and cereal offerings during the 40 years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? ²⁶But you did carry Siccuth your king, and Kiyyun the images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves.ⁱ

c) The man who centers his thoughts on God is being educated. What sublimity in this thirteenth verse! d) This in Hebrew is a play on the word Gilgal — rolling [Josh. 4:19-24]. e) Again this is a play on the Heb. words; for Bethel, "house of God," was sometimes called Beth-aven, "house of sin."

f) There is a suggestion of iniquity in the word "wormwood" in Hebrew.

g) Where the local court sat, dealing with local affairs—appeals, complaints, fair and unfair dealings.

h) Prophetic of our Lord's, "Not everyone who says LORD, LORD, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

i) Siccuth was an Assyrian god, also known as Kiyyun, which some of the Hebrews, or the mixed crowd that came along with them from Egypt, must have worshiped in the desert.

²⁷Therefore I will cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, says the LORD; the God of hosts is His name.

6 WOE TO THOSE WHO ARE AT EASE in Zion and those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria, the appointed men of the first of the nations, to whom the house of Israel comes! ²Pass through Calneh¹ and see. Go from there to greater Hamath.^k Then go down to Gath¹ of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms, or are their boundaries greater than your boundary? ³You who put off the day of punishment, yet cause the seat of violence to draw near; ⁴who lie on beds of ivory and stretch out on couches; who eat sheep from the flock and calves straight from the stable;^m ⁵who croon to the sound of the lute; who like David invent for themselves instruments of song; ⁶who drink wine from bowls and anoint themselves with the choicest ointments, but they are not at all grieved over the ruin of Joseph!ⁿ ⁷Therefore they shall now go into captivity with the first of the captives, and the noisy banquets of those who stretch out shall come to an end.^o

⁸The Lord God has sworn by Himself — it is affirmed by the LORD, the God of hosts: I detest the pride of Jacob, and I hate his palaces! I shall hand over the city and its fulness. ⁹It shall come to this, that if there are ten men left in one house, they shall die. ¹⁰If a man's uncle and the one who is to anoint^p him shall lift him up to bring the bones out of the house and shall say to those who are still in the house, "Is there yet another with you?" and he says, "No," then he shall say, "Hush, we must not mention the name of the LORD!"

¹¹For see, the LORD commands: He

will smite the great house with breaches and the little house with clefts. ¹²Do horses run on the rock? Does one plow there with oxen? But you turn justice to wormwood and the fruit of righteousness to bitterness.^q ¹³You who rejoice in what is nothing; who say, "Is it not by our own strength we have taken horns" for ourselves?" ¹⁴Behold, I am raising up against you, house of Israel — it is affirmed by the LORD, the God of hosts — a nation, and they shall oppress you from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of the Arabah.^a

7 HERE IS WHAT THE Lord God showed me. He is forming locusts in the first stages of the shooting up of the aftergrowth; in fact, it was the aftergrowth after the king's mowings. ²When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "O Lord God, pardon me; who will lift up Jacob, for he is little?" ³The LORD had compassion on account of this. The LORD said, It shall not be.

⁴Thus the Lord God showed me, and see, the Lord God was calling for a trial by fire: it would consume the great deep, it would also consume the tilled land. ⁵So I said, "O Lord God, cease, I pray; who shall raise up Jacob, for he is little?" ⁶The LORD had compassion on account of this. The Lord God said: This too shall not be.

⁷Thus He showed me, and behold, the LORD stood upon a plumb line with a plumb line in His hand. ⁸The LORD said to me, What do you see, Amos? And I said, "A plumb line." The LORD said, See, I am placing a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel.^t I will not again pass by him any more. ⁹The high places of Isaac shall be desolate and the sanctuaries of Israel

j) City of Assyria on the banks of the Tigris. k) City of Syria on the Orontes River.

l) Formerly the capital of the Philistines. God is here calling upon His people to learn from the lessons of history. m) Where they had been confined to be fattened. n) Northern Israel.

o) Amos said this about 760 B.C. when Jeroboam II reigned a prosperous people. Less than 40 years later Northern Israel was conquered by Assyria and all but the poor were exiled.

p) Rub him with oil for the burial, or possibly cremate the body.

q) God is accusing the leaders of Israel of violating the very principles of common sense; making life unbearable by discouraging fair dealings. r) The symbol of strength or authority.

s) The depression of the Galilean Sea, the Jordan, the Dead Sea and on to the Red Sea. The word means desert, as does Arab. Its brook marks the southern boundary of Palestine.

t) How straight were the people walking the God-appointed way?

shall be destroyed, and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

¹⁰Then Amaziah^u the priest of Beth-el sent to Jeroboam the king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land can not bear all his words. ¹¹For thus said Amos, 'With the sword shall Jeroboam die, and Israel shall surely go into captivity from his own land.'"

¹²And Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee into the land of Judah; there eat your bread and prophesy;^v ¹³but do not prophesy any more at Beth-el; for it is the king's sanctuary and the house of the kingdom."

¹⁴Amos answered Amaziah, "I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I was a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. ¹⁵The LORD took me from behind the flock and the LORD said to me, Go, prophesy to My people Israel. ¹⁶Now hear the word of the LORD. You are saying, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.' ¹⁷Therefore thus says the LORD: Your wife will commit adultery in the city; your sons and daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be divided by the sword. As for you, upon an unclean ground you will die, and Israel shall certainly go into captivity from its own land."^w

8 ¹THUS THE LORD GOD SHOWED ME and see, a basket of summer fruit. ²He said, What do you see, Amos? I said, "A basket of summer fruit." The LORD said to me, The end^x has come for My people Israel. I will not again pass by any more. ³The songs of the temple they shall make into howlings in that day — it is affirmed by the

LORD God. Many shall be the corpses; in every place they shall, with a hush, cast them out.

⁴Hear this, you who swallow up the needy and cause the poor of the land to cease, ⁵saying, "When will the new moon^y be over, so we can sell corn for money, and the Sabbath, so we can open the wheat market to make the bushel little and the shekel large and to deal crookedly with false balances; ⁶to buy the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, and sell the refuse of the wheat?"^z

⁷The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: I will never forget all their deeds!^a ⁸On account of this shall not the earth shake and every dweller in it mourn! All of it shall rise like the Nile, and it shall be tossed and sink like the River of Egypt.

⁹In that day — it is affirmed by the LORD God — I will bring in the sun at noonday; I will cause darkness on earth in broad daylight time. ¹⁰I will turn your festivals to mourning and all your songs to a dirge. I will cause sackcloth to go up on all loins and baldness on every head. I will make it as mourning for an only son; the end shall be as a bitter day. ¹¹For the days are coming — it is affirmed by the LORD God — that I will send famine in the land; not famine for bread or thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the LORD. ¹²Then they shall be cast from sea to sea and from the north even to the sunrising. They shall scurry about to seek the word of the LORD, but they shall not find it. ¹³In that day beautiful virgins and young men shall faint for thirst. ¹⁴Those who swear by the guilt of Samaria^b — "As your God lives, Dan!" and, "As the way of Beer-sheba^c lives!" — they shall fall, and they shall not rise again!

u) Taking the place of the LORD's high priest in the Jerusalem temple, Amaziah was serving at the shrine of the golden calf, set up at Beth-el to keep worshippers away from Jerusalem.

v) Intimating that Amos tried to make a living from his prophesying.

w) The warning applied to the people generally, including the priest, who would die captives abroad. x) The Hebrew word for "end" is very similar to the word for "summer."

y) Retaining sacred customs of the faithful Hebrews, the new moon was observed by cessation of work and of marketing, but with a feeling of wasting time.

z) They measured out less than they should and charged more for it than was fair.

a) Which always holds where there is no sincere sorrow and confession.

b) In agreement with golden-calf worship.

c) Where Abraham lived for years and called on Jehovah; where Jacob sacrificed on his way to Joseph in Egypt, thus a secondhand relationship with God.

9 I SAW THE LORD STANDING^d BY the altar, and He said: Smite the capitals,^e and the threshold shall shake! Break them in pieces on the head of all of them! The last of them I will slay with the sword. Not a single one shall escape, and not one fugitive of them shall be saved. ²If they dig through to Sheol, from there My hand shall take them. If they go up to heaven, from there I will cause them to go down. ³If they hide in the top of Mount Carmel, from there I will dig them out and take them. If they be hid from before My eyes in the bottom of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and he shall bite them. ⁴If they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword, and it shall slay them.^f I will set My eyes upon them for hurt and not for help. ⁵The Lord, God of hosts, He it is who smites the earth and it melts, and all the dwellers in it mourn; it shall rise like the Nile, all of it, and it shall sink like the River of Egypt. ⁶He who builds His upper room in the heavens, who rests His vaults upon the earth, He who calls the waters of the seas and pours them out upon the face of the earth — the LORD is His name.

⁷Are you not as the sons of Cush^g to Me, O sons of Israel? says the LORD. Was it not Israel that I caused to go up from the land of Egypt, also the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? ⁸Behold, the eyes of

the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom. I will root her up from the face of the earth; only I will not completely root up the house of Jacob — it is affirmed by the LORD. ⁹For I command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes a sieve. There shall not fall to earth the smallest portion.^h ¹⁰All the sinners of My people shall die with the sword, those who say, "Harm will not soon approach because of us!"

¹¹In that day I will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David;ⁱ I will repair its breaks; I will raise up its ruins and build it as in the days of old, ¹²so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations upon whom My name is called — it is affirmed by the LORD, who is doing this.

¹³The days are coming, it is affirmed by the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who scatters the seed. The mountains shall drip new wine, and all the hills shall dissolve. ¹⁴I will turn the captivity of My people Israel. They shall build cities which have been desolate; they shall dwell in them; they shall plant vineyards, and they shall drink their wine. They shall make gardens, and they shall eat their fruit. ¹⁵So I will plant them on their land, and they shall not be plucked up again from their land which I have given them, says the LORD your God.

d) Isaiah sees God seated; but Amos sees Him standing — previously on the wall, here by the altar; for He is administering justice in both instances.

e) Ornaments on top of the pillars; so from top to bottom the place will turn to ruin.

f) The reverse of Ps. 139 where God's benevolent omnipresence is sung.

g) The Ethiopians, who also are His offspring. And God is the Ruler of Egypt, Philistia, and the Syrians too — God of all the earth, for there is no other.

h) Their sifting served to let fine particles drop through, to retain the grain.

i) Amos sees repentance on the part of David's house, representing Judah, whom discipline has brought back to God. Not only Judah, but Simeon, most of Benjamin, the majority of Levites and priests, and the godly of the northern kingdom will enjoy these blessings, spiritually, with adjoining nations sharing divine favor.

THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

1 THE VISION OF OBADIAH.

Thus the LORD God speaks concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the LORD, and a messenger has been sent among the nations: "Rise up, let us rise up against her for battle!"²Behold! I will make you insignificant among the nations; you will be greatly despised.³The insolence of your heart has misled you, you who reside in the retreats of the cliff, whose dwelling is high,^b who say in your heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?"⁴Though you fly high like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, says the LORD.

⁵If thieves came to you, if robbers by night — how you have been ruined! — would they not steal (only) what they want? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? ⁶How Esau has been ransacked, his hidden treasures searched out!^c ⁷All your allies^d have pushed you to the border, they have misled you; your intimate friends^e have prevailed over you; those eating your bread have placed a trap under you^f without your sensing it.

⁸Shall it not be on that day, says the LORD, that I will cause the wise men to perish from Edom, and discern-

ment from the mount of Esau? ⁹Then your mighty men shall be filled with terror, O Teman, so that every man may be cut off from the mount of Esau by slaughter. ¹⁰Because of violence against your brother Jacob, shame will overwhelm you, and you shall be cut off forever. ¹¹On the day when you stood aloof, as foreigners carried off his possessions and aliens came into his gate,^g and for Jerusalem they cast lots, yes, you were as one of them.

¹²Now do not gloat over your brother's day, the day of his misfortune; do not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day when they perish; do not speak overbearingly^h in the day of his distress. ¹³Do not enter the gate of My people in the day of his disaster; yes, you, do not take pleasure in seeing his misery in the day of his misfortune. Do not reach out for his possessions in the day of his calamity. ¹⁴Do not stand at the crossroadsⁱ in order to cut off those refugees of his who escape and do not deliver up his survivors in the day of distress.

¹⁵For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations; as you have done, so it shall be done to you; your doings will come back upon your own head. ¹⁶For as you have drunk upon My holy mountain, so all the nations will

a) The divine message begins with this second verse; vs. 1 is introduction.

b) Most of Edom was rocky and high, specially Petra [biblically Sela], the remains of which show how secure the Edomites might feel in their rock-dwellings.

c) Thieves bother only with what they want but Esau has been thoroughly looted.

d) Men of your covenant. e) Men of your peace.

f) The sustenance derived from an alliance with Edom has been made the occasion of conspiring against her. g) That is, into Judah's cities.

h) Literally, "do not make your mouth great," like our idiom, "do not get the big-mouth."

i) At the fork in the road, or, where the road divides.

drink^j continually. They will drink and sip slowly^k and will become as though they had not been.

¹⁷But in Mount Zion there will be escape,^l and it^m shall be a sanctuary, and the house of Jacob shall take possession of their heritage.ⁿ ¹⁸The house of Jacob shall be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame, but the house of Esau shall become stubble. They shall set them ablaze and consume them, and the house of Esau shall not have a single survivor,^o for the LORD has spoken it.

¹⁹Then they of the south country^p

shall take possession of the mount of Esau, and they of the lowland^q shall possess the plain of the Philistines; and they shall possess the field of Ephraim and the field of Samaria, and Benjamin (shall possess) Gilead. ²⁰Exiles of this host belonging to the children of Israel (shall possess) that of the Canaanites up to Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad^r shall possess the cities of the south country. ²¹Deliverers shall go up in Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingship shall belong to the LORD.

j) "Drink," that is, of God's wrath.

k) They will continue to taste the wrath of God. l) A way of escape. m) Mount Zion.

n) The possessions of the nations. o) None shall escape from the sword. p) The Negeb.

q) The Judean foothills.

r) Probably Shaparda in southwestern Media, to which Sargon transported Israelites [II Kings 17:6].

THE BOOK OF

JONAH

1 THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO Jonah the son of Amittai, with this message: ²Get up and go to Nineveh,^a that great metropolis, and preach against it, because their wickedness has mounted up before Me. ³But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish^b from the presence of the LORD; so he went down to Joppa^c and found a ship going to sail for Tarshish; he paid the fare and boarded it to go with them to Tarshish, from the presence of the LORD.

⁴But the LORD flung a terrific wind over the sea so that there was a great tempest on the sea, and the ship was about to be wrecked. ⁵Then the sailors^d were afraid, and each cried out desperately to his god; and they threw out into the sea the cargo which was in the ship, to lighten it. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the vessel, had lain down, and fallen sound asleep.^e ⁶So the captain came to him and said to him, "What's the matter with you, you sleeper? Get up, call on your god; perhaps your god will think about us, that we may not perish." ⁷Then they said one to another, "Come, let us cast lots so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us." They cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸Then they said to him, "Tell us, we beg of you, for what fault this disaster has come on us.

What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? What people are you from?" ⁹Then he told them, "I am a Hebrew; and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." ¹⁰Then the men were terribly afraid, and they said to him, "What is this you have done?" For the men realized that he was running away from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

¹¹They said to him, "What shall we do to you, so that the sea may calm down for us?" For the sea kept growing more tempestuous. ¹²He replied, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea, and the sea will quiet down for you; for I know that because of me this terrific tempest is upon you." ¹³But the men worked hard at the oars in order to get back to the shore; but they could not make headway, because the sea grew ever more stormy against them. ¹⁴So they cried out to the LORD, "We beg of Thee, O LORD, do not let us perish for the life of this man. Do not charge innocent blood against us; for Thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleases Thee!" ¹⁵Then they picked up Jonah and flung^f him into the sea; the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶And the men, in great awe of the LORD, offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

¹⁷Meanwhile the LORD had ap-

a) Capital of the Assyrian Empire [cf. Gen. 10:12].

b) A copper-smelting station in Sardinia or Spain, from which Phoenician traders brought the refined metal in exchange for other commodities.

c) Joppa [Jaffa], 34 miles n.w. of Jerusalem, whose port it was in ancient times.

d) Heb. "salts," well-seasoned sailors. e) Probably snoring, too, as the Heb. *rahdam* suggests.

f) Same word as in verse 4.

pointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 THEN JONAH PRAYED TO THE LORD his God from the belly of the fish and said, ^{2a}"I called to the LORD out of my anguish, and He answered me. From the innermost part^g of Sheol I cried for help — Thou didst listen to my voice.

³"Thou didst cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the current was engulfing me. All Thy breakers and Thy waves passed over me.

⁴"Then I^h said, 'I have been driven away from Thine eyes; but I shall again behold Thy holy temple.'

⁵Waters encompassed me, threatening my life, the oceanⁱ surrounding me. Seaweed was wrapped about my head. ⁶I went down to the base of the mountains; the earth with its bars was behind me forever; yet Thou hast brought up my life from the pit,^j O LORD my God.

⁷"When my soul fainted away within me, I remembered the LORD; then my prayer came to Thee, into Thy holy temple. ⁸Those who revere worthless idols give up the grace that might be theirs.^k ⁹But I will sacrifice to Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; what I have vowed, I will make good. Deliverance is the LORD's."

¹⁰Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it disgorged Jonah onto the dry land.

3 THEN THE WORD OF THE LORD came to Jonah the second time: ²Get up, and go to Nineveh, that great metropolis, and preach to it the message which I tell you. ³So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh in accordance with the LORD's instruction.

Now Nineveh was an extremely large city requiring three days' travel.¹

⁴When Jonah began to enter the city one day's travel, he proclaimed, "Forty days more and Nineveh shall be overthrown." ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and from the greatest to the least of them put on sackcloth.^m ⁶When the news reached the king of Nineveh,ⁿ he arose from his throne, laid aside his royal robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷He made a proclamation and published it throughout Nineveh by a decree of the king and his nobles:^o "Let not man or beast, herds or flocks, taste anything at all; let them not feed or drink water; ⁸but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry out fervently to God, and let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands." ⁹Who knows but God may change His mind, relent and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?"

¹⁰So when God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the punishment which He had said He would inflict on them, and He did not do it.

4 BUT THIS GREATLY DISPLEASED Jonah, and he grew angry. ²Then he prayed to the LORD, saying, "O LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my homeland? This is why I fled to Tarshish to prevent it; for I know that Thou art a gracious God and disposed to pity, slow to anger, most merciful, and grieved at calamity. ³So now, LORD, please take my life^a from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴Then the LORD said: Do you have good reason to be angry? ⁵Now Jonah had left the city and lodged to the east of the city. There

g) Or, "Womb," a different word than in 1:17 and 2:1. h) "I" is emphatic.

i) Hebrew, *tehom*, used often for the primeval ocean. Hence, waters, as old as time, enclosed about him. His fate seemed sealed. j) Grave, dwelling place of the dead.

k) Heb. "their own benefit" [grace], the result of being properly related to the LORD, the "Gracious One."

l) That is, to go through the complex of turns that made up the city and its extensive suburbs. m) A garb of penitence, either coarse material of goat's hair or a loin covering of mourning worn on the naked body.

n) That is, the king of Assyria. Probably Adad-nirari III, 810-783 B.C., who worshiped a single God; possibly Assur-dan III, 771-754 B.C., during whose reign two serious plagues and one total sun eclipse occurred. o) His cabinet, to some degree representing the people.

p) Heb. *caph*, the hollow or palm of the hand. q) Heb. "soul."

he constructed a foliage covering for himself and sat underneath it in the shade until he might see what was going to happen to the city. ⁶And the Lord God appointed^r a gourd^s and made it grow up over Jonah to be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was very much elated over the gourd. ⁷But when dawn came the next day, God appointed a cutworm, and it struck the gourd so that it withered. ⁸Then as the sun shone forth, God appointed a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down upon Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wanted to die and said, "It is better

for me to die than to live." ⁹But God said to Jonah, Do you have good reason to be angry about the gourd? He answered, "I have good reason to be angry, enough to die."^t ¹⁰Then the Lord said, You feel grief over the gourd for which you neither labored nor did you make it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night.^u ¹¹Then should not I feel grief over Nineveh, that great metropolis, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who cannot discriminate between their right hand and their left,^v and much livestock?^w

r) Or, "ordained," same word as in 1:17 and 4:7, 8.

s) Of uncertain variety, perhaps a species of cucumber or the castor oil plant.

t) Jonah gave no reason for his anger.

u) Heb. "which is a son of a night and perished a son of a night," that is, lasted a night.

v) Who had not reached the age of choice between good and evil.

w) Our Father is concerned about His whole creation, supremely about His offspring.

MICAH

740-710 B.C.

1 THE WORD OF THE LORD THAT WAS given to Micah of Moresheth^a in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah,^b which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

²Hear, all you peoples; pay attention, earth and its fulness, so that the Lord God may be a witness against you, the LORD from His holy temple. ³For behold! The LORD is going out from His place; He is coming down to tread upon the high places of the earth. ⁴The mountains shall melt beneath Him, and the valleys shall split like wax before the fire, like water poured out upon a slope. ⁵All this is because of the transgression of Jacob and the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria?^c And what are the sins of the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?^d ⁶So I will make Samaria a ruin on the field with terraces for planting a vineyard; I will throw down her stones into the valley, and her foundation I will lay bare. ⁷All her idols shall be broken; all her harlot hires shall be burned in the fire; all her carved images I will make an astonishment; for from the hire of a harlot she has collected them, and to a harlot's hire they shall return.

⁸On account of this let me weep, let me mourn, let me go away barefoot and stripped; let me make howling like the jackals and mourning like the ostrich. ⁹For her wounds are incurable, for it has come to Judah; it has touched even the gate of my people — Jerusalem. ¹⁰Do not publish it in Gath; weep not at all in Acco, in Beth-le-Aphrah^e roll in dust. ¹¹Move on, dwellers of Shaphir, in nakedness and shame! The dwellers of Zaanan do not dare go forth; the wailing of Beth-ezel takes from you his standing place. ¹²The dwellers of Maroth wait for good, because calamity has come down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem. ¹³Hitch the horse to the chariot, dwellers of Lachish, for she was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion; the transgressions of Israel are found in you. ¹⁴Therefore give a parting gift for Moresheth-gath; the houses of Achzib shall be deception to the kings of Israel.^f ¹⁵Yet will I bring to you, dwellers of Moreshah, the possessor; the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam. ¹⁶Make yourselves bald; cut off your hair on account of your fondled children. Make your baldness as bald as the eagle, for they go from you into captivity.

a) Called Moresheth-Gath, vs. 14, probably near Gath but inside the Judah boundaries.

b) Jotham "reigned" [as co-regent and king] 751-736, Ahaz 735-716, and Hezekiah 716-687 B.C.

c) The idolatries of Samaria and what went with them were being practiced in the southern kingdom.

d) Vss. 5, 6, 8, and part of 9 were found among the Dead Sea scrolls, agreeing with our text. False teachers are called culprits, whose punishment is certain. e) "House of dust."

f) The names found in these five verses are used as a series of plays on words in Hebrew, the names of places corresponding to their distressing experiences: Aphrah, dust; Shaphir, fair; Zaanan, sheepyard; Maroth, bitterness; Moresheth, possession; Achzib, deceitful.

2 WOE TO THEM THAT PLAN IN-iquity, that scheme wickedness upon their beds; in the morning light they act on it; for it is in the power of their hands. ²They covet fields and seize them; houses, and take them away. They defraud a man and his household, the person and his inheritance.

³Therefore thus says the LORD: See! I am planning punishment against this family, from which you shall not remove your necks, and you shall not walk erect,⁵ for this is disastrous. ⁴In that day they shall take up against you a proverb, and they shall wail a lamentation, "Done for!" They shall say, "We are certainly laid waste! He let go the inheritance of my people; how He does remove it from me! He divides our field to the apostate!" ⁵So you shall have no one to cast a line by lot in the congregation of the LORD.

⁶"Don't preach," they^b preach. (But if) they do not preach to these, the shame will never cease. ⁷Are you called, "House of Jacob?" Is the Spirit of the LORD limited? Are these His ways? Do not My words benefit him who walks honestly? ⁸Only yesterday My people were rising up as an enemy; from one languishing in peace you strip off the garment, from those who pass by in security, averse to war.¹ ⁹The women of My people you evict from their happy homes; from their young children you take away My splendor forever. ¹⁰Get up and leave, for this is not a resting place; because uncleanness destroys, and the destruction is grievous. ¹¹If a man went around having lied with wine and falsehood, (saying), "I will preach to you of wine and strong drink," he would be the preacher of this people. ¹²I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob; I will certainly collect the remnant of Israel; I will collect them like a flock in a fold; like a herd in the midst of its pasture; it will be humming with people.

¹³The breach-maker will have gone up before them; they have broken through and have passed by the gate and have gone out through it; their king has passed by before them, and the LORD at their head.

3 THEN I SAID: HEAR NOW, HEADS OF Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel: Are you not supposed to know justice, ²you who hate good and love evil; who strip the skin off people and their flesh off their bones; ³who eat the flesh of my people? The skin they have stripped from them, and their bones they have broken as for a kettle, like meat in the midst of the cauldron. ⁴Then they cry to the LORD, but He does not answer them; He hides His face from them in that time, according as they have made their deeds evil.

⁵Thus says the LORD to the prophets who lead my people astray; who, when they get something between their teeth, preach "Peace!" — but whoever does not put something in their mouths, against him they sanctify¹ war. ⁶Therefore it shall be night to you without vision, darkness to you without divination;^k the sun shall go down upon the prophets, and dark shall be the day to them. ⁷The seers shall blush, and the diviners shall be ashamed; they shall cover their mouths,¹ all of them; for there is no answer from God. ⁸As for me, I am full of power, by the Spirit of the LORD and of judgment and might, to proclaim to Jacob his rebellion and to Israel his sin.^m

⁹Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who spurn justice and twist everything that is straight, ¹⁰who build Zion in blood and Jerusalem in iniquity. ¹¹Her leaders deal out judgment for a bribe; her priests teach for hire; her prophets divine for silver, and then they lean on the LORD, saying, "Is not the LORD in our midst? Evil shall not

g) Proudly. h) The false prophets.

i) The ungodly become unreasonable, for they have no love or respect for men; they manhandle even those who have no selfish purpose to promote with them.

j) This use of the word is still found in the word "sanction" in international law.

k) We would say, "revelation." l) Hebrew, "beard," the sign of having nothing to say.

m) Micah is addressing the southern kingdom, 740-710 B.C., about 20 years later than Amos in the north, but the burdens are very similar — backsliding into paganism, the wealthy taking the lead.

come upon us!" — ¹²Therefore, for your sake, Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall be heaps, and the temple mountain shall become as a jungle hill.^a

4 IN THE LATTER DAYS THE MOUNTAIN of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains; it shall be raised above the hills, and the nations shall flow unto it. ²Many nations shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, so He may teach us His ways, and we may walk in His paths." For from Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³He shall judge among many peoples and decide for mighty nations afar off. Then they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears; nation shall lift up no sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more. ⁴A man shall dwell beneath his vine and fig tree and no one shall make him afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken it. ⁵For all the nations walk, each one in the name of its god, but we shall walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

⁶In that day — it is affirmed by the LORD — I will gather the lame and those who have been driven out; I would gather even those whom I have afflicted.^o ⁷I will put the lame for a remnant and the outcast for a mighty nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time and through eternity.

⁸As for you, tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it shall come, even the former dominion shall come, a kingdom for the daughter of Jerusalem. ⁹Now why do you shout aloud? Is there no king with you, or has your counsellor perished? For pangs have taken hold of you as of a woman in travail. ¹⁰Writhe and cry out, daughter of Zion, like a woman in labor, for

now you shall go out from the city, and you shall live in the field. You shall enter into Babylon; there you shall be delivered; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies. ¹¹Now many nations shall be gathered to you; those who say, "Let her be defiled! Let our eyes gaze on Zion!" ¹²But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand His counsel; for He has gathered them like sheaves on the threshing floor. ¹³Rise and thresh, daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn of iron, and your hoofs I will make of brass; you will crush many people, and I will devote to the LORD their ill-gotten gain,^p and their wealth to the LORD of all the earth.

5 NOW ASSEMBLE IN TROOPS, O daughter of troops; a state of siege has been placed against us; with a rod they shall strike the judge of Israel on the cheekbone.^q

²As for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, little as you are among the thousands of Judah, from you shall He come forth to Me, who is to be ruler over Israel,^r His goings forth are from of old, from days of eternity. ³Therefore He shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth,^s and the rest of His brothers shall return to the sons of Israel. ⁴He shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD; in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth, ⁵and He shall be peace.

When Assyria shall enter our land and tread on our palaces, we shall raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes among men. ⁶They shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword and the land of Nimrod within her gates,^t but He shall deliver us from Assyria, when He shall go forth in our land and tread in our borders.

⁷The remnant of Jacob shall be in

n) Or, "as a wooded hill" [cf. Jer. 26:18]. Note the identity of vss. 1-5 with Isa. 2:2-5. His period, 740-710 B.C., coincides with that of Isaiah, who was exceptionally well educated.

o) A foretaste of Gospel days; for such Jesus had special sympathy and help.

p) The Exile will prepare them for the Messiah.

q) In Hebrew this is ch. 4:14, and this verse belongs to ch. 4.

r) Bethlehem had also furnished their first conquering king. This verse was quoted to the wise men. s) Cf. Isa. 7:14. t) Where the city's council and court sat.

the midst of many people as dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, which do not wait for man nor tarry for the sons of men.⁴ ⁸The remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations in the midst of many peoples as a lion among the animals of the forest, as the young lion in a sheepfold, which, if he passes through, he tramples and tears, and there is no deliverer. ⁹Your hand shall be lifted up against your foes, and all your enemies shall be cut off!

¹⁰In that day — it is affirmed by the LORD — I will cut off your horses from your midst, and I will destroy your chariots.⁵ ¹¹I will cause the cities of your land to be cut off; I will throw down all your fortifications. ¹²I will cut off all the sorceries from your land, and you shall have no more soothsayers. ¹³I will cut off your graven images and your idols; you shall no longer worship the works of your hands. ¹⁴I will root out your shame-images^w from your midst; I will annihilate your cities. ¹⁵I will execute retribution in anger and indignation with the nations which did not hear.

6 HEAR WHAT THE LORD IS SAYING:

Rise, enter your plea before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ²Hear, O mountains, the LORD's indictment, and you, everlasting foundations of the earth, for the LORD has an accusation against His people, and He will indict Israel. ³My people, what have I done to you, and how have I exhausted your patience? Answer Me, ⁴for I brought you up from the land of Egypt and from the house of bondage; I ransomed you from slavery; I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. ⁵My people, I urge you, remember what King Balak of Moab devised, and what Balaam son of Beor

answered him;^x (also the events) from Acacia to Gilgal,^y so that you may fully understand the LORD's rights.

⁶With what shall I come before the LORD, or bow myself in the presence of God, the exalted? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sins of my soul? ⁸He has declared to you, O man, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God?^z

⁹The voice of the LORD cries to the city^a — and it is wholesome to revere Thy name. Heed the rod and him who has appointed it. ¹⁰Are there not still in the house of the ungodly treasures of wickedness and the condemned bushel of scant measure? ¹¹Would I be innocent with crooked balances and bags of false weights? ¹²For her rich men are full of oppression; her inhabitants seek falsehood; they have false tongues in their mouth. ¹³On My part, I have smitten you with a grievous wound; I have made you desolate on account of your sins. ¹⁴You will eat; but you will not be satisfied; inside you there will still be hunger. You will put away, but you will not save, and what you do save I will give to the sword. ¹⁵You will plant, but you will not harvest; you will tread the olives, but you will not anoint yourself with the oil; you will tread^b the grape, but you will not drink the wine. ¹⁶You have kept the statutes of Omri and all the work of the house of Ahab;^c you have walked in their counsel in order that I might hand you over to destruction and the inhabitants to scorn, and the reproach of My people you shall bear.

u) As God had ordained in His covenant with Abraham for Israel to bless the world [Gen. 12:2].
v) When Israel became a nation, the multiplying of horses and chariots was forbidden [Deut. 17:16], lest they put their trust in them.

w) Asherah, the Canaanite shrine that encouraged lewdness. The court of heaven is moved down to earth, to clarify the unwholesome situation of a thankless, paganizing people.

x) Balak had secured Balaam, hoping he would curse Israel, but instead he blessed them [Num. 23]. y) Cf. Num. 22-36. Israel is sinning high-handedly [Num. 15:30].

z) A responsive life rather than response in offerings, the grateful attitude to the merciful Helper.

a) Referring to the city, Jerusalem. b) The word "tread" supplied from the previous clause.

c) The most idolatrous of kings in northern Israel, committing high-handed sins [Num. 15:27-31].

7 WOE TO ME! FOR I HAVE BEEN AS the gatherings of summer fruit, as the gleanings of the grape harvest. Not a cluster to eat; not an early fig, on which my heart is set! ²The godly man has perished from the earth; not one is honest among men. They all lie in wait for blood, each man to snare his brother with a net. ³They do evil with both hands and have skill in using them. The prince asks for a bribe; so does the judge; the outstanding man seeks his own satisfaction; so between them they make their deal. ⁴The best of them is like a briar; the straightest is worse than a thorn hedge. The day of your watchmen — your visitation — is on the way; now is their confusion. ⁵Do not trust your neighbor; do not confide in your friend; guard the doors of your mouth from the one who lies in your bosom! ⁶For son despises father, daughter stands up against mother, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law, and a man's enemies are the men of his house.^d

⁷As for me, I will wait on the LORD; I will hope in the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. ⁸Do not rejoice, my enemy, against me! If I fall, I shall rise;^e though I live in darkness, the LORD is my light.

⁹The LORD's indignation I will bear, for I have sinned against Him;^f He shall plead my cause and execute my justice. He shall bring me out to the light; I shall gaze on His righteous ways. ¹⁰So my enemy shall see, and shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?"^g My eyes shall look upon her; she shall be

trodden down as mud of the streets. ¹¹A day comes for rebuilding your walls — the day of broad extensions — ¹²when they shall come to you from Assyria to Egypt, from Egypt to the Euphrates, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. ¹³Yet the earth shall become a waste on account of her inhabitants, because of the fruits of their works.

¹⁴Shepherd the people with Thy rod, the flock of Thy inheritance,^h who live alone in the forest in the midst of a fruitful land; they shall feed in Bashan and in Gilead, as in days of old. ¹⁵As in the days when Thou didst bring them out from the land of Egypt, I will cause them to see wonders. ¹⁶As the nations see, let them despair of all their might; they shall put their hand on their mouth; their ears shall become deaf. ¹⁷They shall lick the dust like serpents; like worms of the ground, trembling they shall come out of their fortresses to the LORD our God, whom they shall revere, and they shall stand in awe of Thee. ¹⁸Who, O God, is like Thee, forgiving iniquity, passing over transgressionⁱ for the remnant of His inheritance? He does not maintain His indignation forever because He delights in covenant love. ¹⁹He will turn; He will again show us mercy; He will trample upon our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.^j ²⁰Thou wilt show faithfulness to Jacob and covenant love to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

d) Largely quoted by Jesus of situations where some in the same home accept Him and some reject Him (Matt. 10:34-36).

e) "I steadier step when I recall, that when I slip, God does not fall."

f) The godly person sees adversities as divine discipline.

g) Throughout Scripture and through life the ungodly either deny God's hand in life or see His displeasure when His children are disciplined.

h) A picture of the Messianic fulfilment, when the Redeemer of Israel is the world's Redeemer.

i) No idol was ever formed and no god has been humanly thought of who forgives; forgiveness is God's unique attribute.

j) His forgiving is thorough. As Christians we have a mind to forgive, but how hard it is to forget! God dropping our sins to the bottom of the sea is a picture of His complete forgetting.

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

1 AN ORACLE ON NINEVEH: THE book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.^a

²The LORD is a jealous God, a LORD of retribution, and indignant. The LORD takes full vengeance upon His adversaries, retaining wrath toward His foes. ³The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and will not at all acquit the guilty.

The way of the LORD is in the whirlwind and in the storm; the clouds are the dust of His feet. ⁴He restrains the sea and dries it up; He makes all the rivers desert places; Bashan and Carmel wither; likewise the bloom of Lebanon.

⁵At His presence the mountains tremble, and the hills shrink away; the earth is laid waste before Him, the world and all its occupants. ⁶Who can stand before the LORD's indignation, and who can keep standing in the heat of His anger? His fury is poured forth like fire, and before Him rocks are shattered.

⁷The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; He knows those who commit themselves to Him.^b

⁸With an overwhelming flood He will make an end of all who rise up against

Him, and He will pursue His foes into darkness.

⁹Whatever your plotting is against the LORD, He will bring it to nothing; He will not avenge Himself upon His foes a second time.^c

¹⁰Though they are as entangled thorns, they shall be consumed utterly like dry stubble.

¹¹Did not a plotter of evil against the LORD come out from your presence, a counselor of wickedness?^d

¹²This is what the LORD says: Although they are strong and many, they shall be cut off so as to vanish; although I have humbled you, I will humble you no more.^e ¹³And now I will break his yoke from upon you, and snap your bonds asunder.

¹⁴The LORD has given command concerning you:^f Nothing of your name shall survive; even from the house of your gods I will cut off the graven and molten images, and I will make your grave; for you are vile.

¹⁵Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace. So keep your feasts, O Judah, pay your vows; for not again shall the wicked pass over against you; he will be cut off completely.

a) The book of Nahum is a brief prophecy on the fall of Nineveh, capital of Assyria [612 B.C.]. The Assyrians were northern Babylonians who had migrated about 2000 B.C. to the area on the Tigris river where Nineveh was built. They were the most powerful of the Semitic peoples and their first world-conquerors. They captured Samaria and destroyed northern Israel in 722 B.C. Elkosh was pointed out to Jerome [c. 400 A.D.] as Elcesi in Galilee. We know of Nahum only what we learn from this book. He was one of the ablest writers in Israel.

b) This chapter introduces the prophecy proper. Ch. 1:2-6 is a general description of the LORD's power to avenge Himself and His people; verses 7-15, His promise to utterly destroy the enemies of His people, the Assyrians and Nineveh. c) Once will be enough.

d) These plotters of evil are Assyrian kings.

e) This line is addressed to Judah; what lies before is said of Nineveh. f) Assyria.

2 THE SHATTERER HAS COME UP against you,^g so, man the ramparts; watch the road; gird your loins; build up your strength to the limit! ²For the LORD is restoring the vine^h of Jacob as also the vine of Israel; for devastators have stripped them and have destroyed their branches.

³The shields of his mighty men are red; the soldiers are clad in scarlet; the chariots flame like torches on the day of mustering, while the chargers prance.

⁴The chariots are racing in the streets, dashing back and forth in the broad, open places; they appear like torches darting about like lightning.

⁵Heⁱ summons his officers; they stumble in their speed as they hurry to her walls; the mantelet^j is being constructed. ⁶The river gates are opened, and the palace is dissolved in the tumult. ⁷Its queen is stripped and taken into captivity while her ladies lament, moaning like doves and beating their breasts.

⁸Nineveh is of old like a pool full of water, that is now draining away. "Stand! Stand!" they shout, but no one rallies them. ⁹Loot the silver, loot the gold! the plunder is endless. Wealth is everywhere, all kinds of precious things, untold amounts!

¹⁰Emptiness! Desolation! Utter waste! Hearts melting, knees knocking; on every loins only anguish and all faces colorless. ¹¹Where is now the lion's lair, the cave of the young lions?^k Where do the lions hide, all of them, with none to molest? ¹²The lion tore up enough to feed his whelps; other prey he strangled for his lionesses; he then filled his caves with prey and his den with plenty of booty.

¹³Behold, I am against you, says the LORD of hosts; I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions; I will eliminate your plunder from the earth, and the voice of your envoys shall be heard no more.

3 WOE TO THE CITY OF BLOOD, FULL of lies, and crammed with plunder, never ceasing her pillaging. ²Hear the crack of the whip, the wheels rumbling, the horses prancing, and the chariots rattling, ³cavalry charging, swords flashing, spears gleaming along the way; masses of the slain, many carcasses everywhere, men stumbling over the corpses of men; ⁴and all because of the harlot in her harlotries^l with all her beauty besides, mistress of seduction, selling nations by her prostitutions, bewitching peoples everywhere.

⁵Look, I am opposing you, says the LORD of hosts, I will lift your skirts to your face; your nakedness I will display before nations and your shame before kingdoms. ⁶I will fling filth your way, treat you with contempt and render you a gazingstock. ⁷Such that every one who looks at you will take to flight, crying out, "Nineveh is ruined! Who will lament her? Where can I find any to console her?"

⁸Are you any better than No-Amon,^m enthroned upon the banks of the Nile with waters all around her, her rampart the sea and the water her walls? ⁹Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, unlimited; Put and the Libyans were her allies. ¹⁰Yet even so she was exiled and carried into captivity. At every street corner her children were dashed to death. For her leaders they cast lots, and all her great ones were shackled in chains.

¹¹You, too,ⁿ will reel and swoon, and seek refuge from the foe. ¹²All your fortresses are but fig trees with their first ripe fruits; when they are shaken, they fall quickly into the eater's mouth. ¹³Observe the warriors among you; they are women. The gates of your land are wide open to your enemies; fire has consumed your lock-bars.

¹⁴Draw water for the siege;^o strengthen your forts; go down into the clay pits; trample the mortar and lay hold

g) Nineveh. After the attack of Sennacherib upon Judah, the Hebrews believed the LORD would avenge them, so they now are expecting Nineveh's downfall. It is to this expectation that Nahum gives voice. h) The glory of His people. i) The commander in Nineveh.

j) A shot-proof shelter for siege-war.

k) Symbolic of looting Assyria with her palaces in Nineveh. Vss. 11-13 with comments were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, essentially identical with our text. l) Nineveh.

m) No-Amon is Nahum's name for Thebes, a great city up the Nile, captured and destroyed by the Assyrians in 663 B.C. n) "You, too," Nineveh.

o) In time of siege, then as now, water is most essential.

of the brick mold! ¹⁶There fire will consume you; the sword will cut you down, devour you like young locusts; there is no escape. You must make yourselves many, as numerous as the young grasshoppers; multiply like locust swarms! ¹⁶You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars of heaven! Young locusts unfold their wings and fly away. ¹⁷Your princes are like locusts, your nobles like swarms of grasshoppers that settle in the hedges

on a cold day; and when the sun rises they fly away, no one knows whither.

¹⁸Your shepherds are asleep, O king of Assyria! Your nobles are lying down. Your people are scattered on the hills with no one to get them together. ¹⁹There is no cure for your fracture and no healing for your wound. All who hear this report about you will clap their hands over you. For who is there upon whom your wrongs have not rested unceasingly?

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

1 ^aTHE DIVINE ORACLE WHICH Habakkuk^b the prophet saw: ²How long, O LORD, shall I cry and Thou wilt not hear? I cry to Thee, "Violence!" and Thou wilt not save! ³Why dost Thou show me iniquity and (make me) look upon perverseness? For violence and oppression are before me; strife and contention keep on rising. ⁴In the presence of this, the law is slack^c and justice is not at all applied; for the wicked encircle the righteous,^d hence justice goes forth perverted.

⁵Look out among the nations, observe and be astounded, be amazed; for I am doing a work^e in your day, which you would not believe, if it were told you. ⁶Behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans,^f a fierce and impetuous nation, who march through the breadth of the earth to seize dwelling places which are not theirs. ⁷Dreadful and terrible they are; their judgment and dignity proceed from themselves.^g ⁸Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than evening wolves;^h their horsemen also spread themselves, coming from afar. They fly as an eagle hastening to devour. ⁹They all

come for violence; their vanguard breaks through as the east wind; they gather captives as the sand.ⁱ ¹⁰At kings they scoff; deriding princes, laughing at every stronghold, and piling up earth, they take them.^j ¹¹Then they sweep by like the wind and pass on; but they are guilty men, for their might is their god.

¹²Art Thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die! O LORD, Thou hast ordained them for judgment, and Thou, O Rock,^k hast placed them for correction. ¹³Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold evil and to countenance wrong, why dost Thou look upon those unfaithful ones and keep silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?

¹⁴For Thou makest men like the fish of the sea, like creeping things who have no ruler over them. ¹⁵He hauls all of them up with a hook; he drags them out with his net and collects them in his seine; then he^l rejoices and exults.^m ¹⁶Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his seine,ⁿ because by them his portion is

a) The book opens with a dialogue between the prophet and God that continues through ch. 2:5. Problem: Why does a righteous God permit universal rampant evil? b) The embracer.

c) Numbed, paralyzed, bereft of life and force.

d) Chs. 1 and 2, remarkably identical with ours, with comments, are among the Dead Sea Scrolls; "the righteous" is the Law teacher. e) Used of divine operation [see Psa. 44:1; Isa. 5:12].

f) Term for Babylonians. "Kasdim" in Hebrew — became the ruling caste in Babylon under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar. D.S.S. suggests Kittaeans [of Kition in Cyprus] foreigners.

g) An impetuous and autocratic nation — a law unto themselves.

h) Wolves in the East conceal themselves during the day, but prowl at night.

i) As innumerable as the sand [see Gen. 22:17; 32:12].

j) Piling it higher than the wall of the besieged city.

k) The unchangeable support or refuge of His people: "The Rock of Israel."

l) "He" refers to the Chaldeans thrice in this verse. m) Over his successful catch.

n) Deifies his instruments of success.

fat,^o and his food is rich. ¹⁷Shall he therefore keep on emptying his net^p and continually slay nations without mercy?

2 I WILL TAKE MY STAND ON MY post, station myself on the tower, and watch to see what He will say to me; what answer I shall receive concerning my complaint. ²The LORD answered me and said: Write the vision! Make it plain upon tablets, so he who runs by may read it! ³However, the vision waits for its appointed time; it hastens toward the end; it will not lie. If it lingers, wait for it; for it will certainly come; it will not lag. ⁴Look, his soul is puffed up;^q it is not upright in him!^r But the righteous shall live by his faith.^s ⁵But wine is treacherous to a haughty man; he cannot endure. He who widens his greed like the grave^t is like death, never satisfied; he gathers to himself all the nations and collects all peoples as his own.

⁶Shall not all these take up a taunt-song against him, a song of derision, saying, "Woe to him who heaps up what is not his! — How long? — Or who loads himself with pledges!" ⁷Will not your creditors suddenly arise, and those wake up who make you tremble? Then you will be plunder for them! ⁸Because you have robbed many nations, all the remnant of peoples^u shall rob you, because of the blood of men and violence done to the land, to the city,^v and to all its inhabitants.

⁹Woe to him who acquires an evil gain for his house, in order to set his seat on high, to be out of the reach of calamity! ¹⁰You have directed shame to your house; also by cutting off many peoples, you have forfeited your own life. ¹¹For the stone will cry out from

the wall, and the beam from the timbers will answer it.

¹²Woe to him who builds a town by blood and establishes a city by iniquity! ¹³Consider, it is not from the LORD of hosts that peoples exert themselves for what goes up in smoke,^w and that nations exhaust themselves for nothing. ¹⁴For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁵Woe to him who gives his neighbor drink; pouring out from your wine-skin to make him drunk so as to gaze upon his nakedness. ¹⁶You will be filled with reproach instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and be as one uncircumcised!^x The cup^y in the LORD's right hand will come around to you and great shame will come on your glory. ¹⁷For the violence done to Lebanon^z shall overwhelm you, and the destruction of beasts will terrify you, because of the blood of men and the violence done to the earth, to cities, and all who live in them.

¹⁸What profit is a graven image, when its maker has formed it: a molten image and the instructor of lies? For the maker trusts in his own creation when he makes dumb idols.^a ¹⁹Woe to him who says to a wooden object, "Awake!" or to a dumb stone, "Arise!" Can this teach? See, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no life in any of it. ²⁰The LORD^b is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him.

3 A PRAYER OF THE PROPHET HABAKKUK according to Shigionoth:^c ²⁰O LORD, I have heard tidings of Thee, and Thy work, O LORD, fills me with fear. In the midst of the years revive Thy work;^d in the midst of the years

o) He lives in luxury.

p) Changing *hermo* to *harbo*, the D.S.S. has "bare his sword" for "empty his net."

q) Swollen, commented in D.S.S., as piling up double retribution for their sins.

r) Sin is suicide — carries within itself its power of destruction.

s) Some prefer "faithfulness" to "faith," but Paul (Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11) quotes "faith"; so Heb. 10:38, where only "faith" would serve. t) Insatiate as the grave.

u) Retribution will come upon the Chaldeans [see Isa. 14:2; 33:1].

v) Those who have escaped destruction. w) Heb. — for fire. x) Become an object of mockery.

y) Cup of His wrath which intoxicates and renders helpless [see Jer. 25:15, 17, 28].

z) Cutting large amounts of timber from the forests to build temples and palaces in their capitals.

a) Idols useless in time of need. b) Contrasting idols and Yahweh, the true and living God.

c) Set to irregular music. d) The prophet looks back to the Exodus.

make it known!^e In wrath remember mercy!

³God comes from Teman,^f the Holy One from Mount Paran.^g *Selah*
His majesty covers the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise.

⁴His brightness is like the light;^h rays flash from His hand, and there is the hiding of His power.

⁵Before Him the pestilence goes out, and burning fever follows at His feet.

⁶He stands and surveys the earth; He looks and startles the nations.ⁱ

The eternal mountains are scattered;^j the everlasting hills bow down; His goings are as of old.^k

⁷I see the tents of Cushan in distress; the curtains of the land of Midian^l are trembling.

⁸Is the LORD displeased with the rivers? Is Thy anger against the rivers, or Thy wrath against the sea, that Thou dost ride upon Thy horses, upon Thy victory-chariots?

⁹Thou dost strip the sheath from Thy bow and puttest arrows to the string. *Selah*

Thou cuttest through the earth with rivers;

¹⁰The mountains see Thee and are in pangs;

the raging waters sweep on.^m The deep utters its voice and lifts its hands on high.ⁿ

¹¹The sun and the moon stand still in their habitations;^o

at the light of Thy arrows as they speed,

at the shining of Thy glittering spear.

¹²Thou dost stride the land in indignation;

Thou dost thresh the nations in Thy anger.

¹³Thou dost march out for the deliverance of Thy people, for the salvation of Thy anointed.

Thou dost demolish the top of the house of the ungodly, laying bare the foundation even to the nethermost stone. *Selah*

¹⁴Thou dost pierce with his own shafts^p the heads of his warriors; who come like a whirlwind to scatter me,

rejoicing as if to devour the innocent^q in secret.

¹⁵Thou dost tread the sea with Thy horses;

the mighty waters are piled up.

¹⁶I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound.

Decay enters my bones,^r and I tremble where I stand.

I will quietly wait for the day of trouble

to come upon the people who would invade us.

¹⁷Although the fig tree may not blossom,

nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail

and the field yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold,

and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I^s will rejoice in the LORD,

I will joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹The LORD God is my strength;

He makes my feet like hinds' feet, He makes me tread upon my high

places.

To the chief musician,^t with stringed instruments.

e) LXX: "make Thyself known."

f) A district northwest of Edom. g) Between the Sinaitic Peninsula and Kadesh-Barnea.

h) The full light of the sun. i) The Judge's look made them quail with terror.

j) Cleft asunder before Him [Micah 1:4].

k) When He stood in the stream of history during the Exodus.

l) The country on the east side of the Gulf of Aqabah.

m) The rush of waters, pouring down the mountain side, dug out channels in the earth and filled dry waddies with terror. n) Its waves mounted high. o) Josh. 10:12, 13.

p) Enemies will be thrown into a panic and will turn their weapons against themselves [Zech. 14:13]. q) Suffering and afflicted people of God.

r) Framework of the body - his strength utterly failed him. s) Introducing an antithesis.

t) Among the collection of psalms sung in the temple services.

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

1 THE WORD OF THE LORD THAT came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, during the days of Josiah^a the son of Amon, king of Judah.

²I will completely consume all things from off the face of the earth, says the LORD. ³I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks^b with the wicked. I will cut off man from the face of the earth, too, says the LORD.

⁴I will stretch out My hand^c against Judah and all the inhabitants in Jerusalem; I will cut off the remnant of Baal^d from this place and the name of the idolaters with the priests;^e ⁵those who worship the host of heaven upon the housetops;^f those who worship, swearing by the LORD and then by Malcham;^g ⁶those who have turned back from following the LORD; and those who have not sought the LORD, nor inquired after Him.

⁷Be still in the presence of the Lord God! For the day of the LORD is near!

The LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has sanctified His guests.

⁸It shall be in the day of the LORD's sacrifice^h that I will punish the princes,ⁱ the king's sons,^j and all who are dressed in foreign apparel.^k ⁹On that day I will punish all who leap over the threshold,^l who fill their master's house with violence and deceit. ¹⁰Also on that day there shall be, says the LORD, the noise of a cry from the fish gate, a howling from the second quarter, and a great crashing from the hills.^m ¹¹Howl, you inhabitants of Maktesh,ⁿ for all the people of Canaan are undone; all who were loaded with silver are cut off. ¹²And it shall be at that time that I will search out Jerusalem with lamps,^o and I will punish the men who are settled on their dregs,^p who say in their heart, "The LORD will do no good, neither will He do harm."^q ¹³Their wealth shall become a spoil and their houses a desolation. Yes, they will build houses, but not inhabit them; they will plant vineyards, but not drink their wine.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near;

a) Beginning in 639 B.C. at 8 years of age, under guidance of Hilkiyah the high priest, Josiah reigned until 608, honored by Jeremiah and all his people.

b) All objects giving occasion for moral and religious stumbling [Ezek. 14:3, 4; Matt. 13:41].

c) Ready to smite [see Isa. 14:26; 23:11].

d) The god of Phoenicians and Canaanites, whose worship fascinated many Israelites.

e) Vss. 5, 6: three classes of laity who will also be swept away in judgment.

f) Worship of the heavenly bodies, a cult prevalent in Judah.

g) Also named Milcom and Molech, the god of the Ammonites [I Kings 11:5, 7, 33; II Kings 23:13; Jer. 49:1, 3]. h) Figure: sacrifice for judgment, first used by Zephaniah.

i) "Nobles," i.e. those entrusted with a judicial or other responsible office.

j) The royal house, not including good king Josiah.

k) Parading their sympathy with some foreign country.

l) A superstitious performance, as in I Sam. 5:5, or this first clause balancing with the second.

m) No class spared. n) "Pounding place," i.e., where traders dwelt.

o) Explore thoroughly the darkest corners [Luke 15:8].

p) Sunken into a state of moral stagnation and spiritual indifference.

q) Because He either lacks interest or power.

it is near and hastening greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD. The mighty man will then cry bitterly. ¹⁶That day will be a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wreck and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and heavy darkness, ^{16a}a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and the corner towers. ¹⁷And I will bring distress upon men; they shall walk like blind men because they have sinned against the LORD! Their blood shall be poured out as dust and their flesh as dung. ¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold^r will be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's indignation, for the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy; for He will make an end, yes, a speedy end, of all those who dwell in the land.

2 COME TO YOURSELVES, CHECK UP on yourselves, O shameless people, ²before the decree takes effect^s — for the day passes like chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD falls upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you. ³Seek the LORD, all ye humble^t of the earth, who have kept His ordinance; seek righteousness, seek meekness; perhaps you will be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

⁴For Gaza shall be depopulated, Ashkelon, a desolation; they shall drive out Ashdod at noon,^u and Ekron shall be rooted up. ⁵Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of the Chere-thites!^v The word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines; I will so destroy you that there will be no inhabitant left. ⁶The seacoast will be pastures, with caves for shepherds and folds for flocks. ⁷The coast will be for the remnant of the

house of Judah;^w they shall feed their flocks there; in the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down in the evening. The LORD their God will visit them and restore their fortune.

⁸I have heard the reproach of Moab and the revilings of the children of Ammon, with which they have reproached My people and exalted themselves against their domain.^x ⁹Therefore, as I live, says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be as Sodom^y and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah — a possession of nettles, salt pits, and a perpetual desolation. The remainder of My people shall loot them, and the leftover of My nation shall inherit them. ¹⁰This they will receive for their pride, because they have reproached and have vaunted themselves against the people of the LORD of hosts. ¹¹The LORD will be terrible to them, for He will make lean^z all the gods of the earth; men shall worship Him, everyone from his place,^a even all the islands of the nations.

¹²You Ethiopians, too, you shall be slain by My sword. ¹³He will also stretch out His hand against the north^b and destroy Assyria; He will make Nineveh a desolation, dry as the desert. ¹⁴Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her; all the beasts of the nations, both the pelican and the porcupine, shall lodge on top of its columns; the noise they make shall wail in the windows; desolation shall be on the threshold, for He has laid bare the cedar work.^c ¹⁵This is the exulting^d city which dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, "I am, and there is none else."^e How^f is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! Every passerby shall hiss and shake his fist at her.^g

r) A time when money will fail! s) God's decree of judgment [see Prov. 27:1].

t) Hope of the nation rests on this group, a nucleus.

u) Time of the noon siesta [see II Sam. 4:5], a sudden surprise.

v) A clan or subdivision of the Philistines [see I Sam. 30:14; Ezek. 25:16].

w) Those who escape the coming judgment. x) To encroach on Hebrew territory.

y) As a salt and barren plain — a type of desolation [see Deut. 29:23; Isa. 13:19; Jer. 49:18].

z) Rendered powerless by the LORD; unable to defend their worshippers.

a) Not making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

b) Taken as an example of distant lands. Although located eastward, the Assyrians invaded Palestine from the north. c) Walls of palaces and temples were panelled [see I Kings 6:9, 10].

d) Exuberant joy, unrestrained by any thought of responsibility or care [see Isa. 22:2; 23:7; 32:13].

e) Proud of her unique, imperial position.

f) Amazement at such tragic turn of fortune [see Jer. 50:23; 51:41].

g) In scorn and hatred [see I Kings 9:8]; in anger and aversion — compare "shaking the head" in derision [Lam. 2:15; Ps. 22:7].

3 WOE TO HER WHO IS DEFIANT^h AND polluted, the oppressing city. ²She obeyed not the voice;ⁱ she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God. ³Her princes among her are roaring lions;^j her judges are evening wolves; they leave nothing until the morning. ⁴Her prophets are reckless and treacherous men; her priests have defiled the sanctuary; they have done violence to the law.

⁵The LORD in the midst of her is righteous; He will do no iniquity; morning by morning He brings His judgment to light;^k He does not fail; but the unjust knows no shame. ⁶I have cut off nations, their corner towers are desolate; I have made their streets waste so that no man passes through; their cities are so desolate that there is no man, nobody to inhabit them. ⁷I said: Surely you will revere Me; you will receive instruction, so that her residence would not be cut off, in accordance to all that I assigned to her. Nevertheless they rose up early and corrupted all their actions.

⁸Therefore wait upon Me, says the LORD, for the day when I stand up for booty;^l for My verdict is to muster the nations, to assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them My indignation, even all My fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy. ⁹For then I will give the people a pure language^m that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder.ⁿ ¹⁰From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia they will bring^o My supplicants, My dispersed, as a present for Me. ¹¹In that day you shall not be

ashamed because of all your actions, in which you have transgressed against Me; for then I will remove from among you your proud, exulting ones; you will no more be haughty in My holy hill.^p ¹²But I will leave among you a humbled and poor people,^q who shall take refuge in the name of the LORD. ¹³The remnant of Israel will neither act perversely nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth, for they will graze and lie down,^r and no one shall frighten them.

¹⁴Sing joyfully, O daughter of Zion;^s shout, O Israel, be glad and rejoice wholeheartedly, thou daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has dismissed the sentence against you. He has repelled your enemy; the King of Israel, even the LORD,^t is among you. You shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Do not fear, O Zion; let not your hands droop. ¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a Mighty One^u who will save. He will rejoice over you with delight; He will rest you in His love; He will be joyful over you with singing.

¹⁸I will gather those belonging to you who sorrow for the solemn assembly,^v who have borne the burden of reproach. ¹⁹Observe how at that time I will deal with all those who oppress you; I will save the one who limps and gather in the one who was driven away; to those whose disgrace^w was in all the earth I will assign praise and a reputation. ²⁰At that time, the time when I gather you, I will appoint you for renown and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes,^x says the LORD.

h) Obstinate refusal to listen to the LORD.

i) The voice of God by the prophets [see Jer. 7:23].

j) Ready at any moment to seize and rend the prey.

k) Both on the daily life of the individual and on the nations.

l) For the destruction of the nations. m) Literally "lip." n) Unanimously.

o) The present to be "led" or "brought up," accompanied by a procession.

p) Judah will be purified; unworthy members swept away, leaving a righteous "remnant," the nucleus of a new community. q) Those who survive the judgment.

r) Like a flock, grazing and lying down in complete security.

s) Poetical personification of the community. t) Your Protector.

u) A warrior [see Exod. 15:3; Isa. 42:13; Jer. 20:11].

v) A stated place of time — fixed, sacred seasons of the Jewish year.

w) On account of their exile [see Ezek. 36:15].

x) So that you will witness and experience it yourselves.

HAGGAI

1 IN THE SECOND YEAR OF DARIUS the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month,^a the word of the LORD came through the ministry of the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, ²Thus says the LORD of hosts: This people say, "The time has not yet come for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt." ³Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: ⁴Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? ⁵Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways.^b ⁶You have sown much, but you have brought in little; you eat, but you do not have enough; you drink, but you do not have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages earns wages for a purse with holes.

⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways. ⁸Go up to the hill country, bring lumber and rebuild the house; I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, says the LORD. ⁹You counted on much; and see, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the LORD of hosts. Because of My house that is in ruins, while you each busy yourself with his own house. ¹⁰Therefore for your sake

the heavens have withheld the dew and the earth has withheld its produce.

¹¹I called for a drought^c upon the land, upon the mountains, upon the grain, upon the new wine, upon the oil, upon what the ground produces and upon men, upon cattle and upon all the labor of their hands.

¹²Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people stood in awe of the LORD. ¹³So Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD's message: I am with you, says the LORD. ¹⁴The LORD also stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people. They came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, ¹⁵on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.^d

2 IN THE SEVENTH MONTH, ON THE twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: ²Say now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of

a) Around September in the year 520 B.C.; the first return from exile was 537 B.C.

b) This call to self-examination is one of the key expressions of the book. [Cf. 1:7; 2:15, 18].

c) A clear case of play on words. Because the people left God's house *chareb* ["in ruins," vss. 4, 9], He brought them *choreb* ["drought"].

d) The lesson of the first of Haggai's four prophecies is the need for giving priority to God's interests, the New Testament parallel being Matt. 6:33, first the kingdom of God.

Judah, to the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak, and to the remnant of the people: ³Who is there left among you who saw this house in its former glory?^e And how do you see it now? Is it not in your eyes nothing when compared with it? ⁴Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, says the LORD, and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land, says the LORD, and work; for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts, ⁵according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; fear not. ⁶For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; ⁷and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come,^f and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts. ⁸Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold, says the LORD of hosts. ⁹The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give peace, says the LORD of hosts.^g

¹⁰On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, saying, ¹¹Thus says the LORD of hosts: Ask now the priests for instruction concerning the law, ¹²"If one carries holy flesh in the skirt of his garment and if his skirt touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any food, will it become holy?" The priests answered, "No." ¹³Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean because of contact with a dead body, touches any of these, will it be un-

clean?" The priests answered, "It will be unclean." ¹⁴Then Haggai responded, So is this people, and so is this nation before Me, says the LORD, and so is every work of their hands, and what they offer there is unclean.^h ¹⁵And now, please call to mind days now past, before a stone had been laid upon a stone in the temple of the LORD. ¹⁶Through all that time, when one came to a heap of twenty bushels, there were only ten; when one came to the winevat to draw out fifty barrels, there were only twenty. ¹⁷I smote you and all the work of your hands with blight, and with mildew and with hail; yet you turned not to Me, says the LORD. ¹⁸Please, think back from this day, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, since the day that the foundation of the temple of the LORD was laid, consider it. ¹⁹Is the seed yet in the barn? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still bear nothing? From this day I am blessing you.ⁱ

²⁰The word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month: ²¹Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: I will shake the heavens and the earth; ²²I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. I will overthrow the chariots and their drivers; the horses and their riders shall go down, every one, by the sword of another. ²³In that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will take you, Zerubbabel, My servant, the son of Shealtiel, says the LORD, and make you as a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts.^j

e) The first temple was destroyed in 586 B.C.

f) This probably means, as translated in the Greek Old Testament, "the riches [or the wealth] of all nations," as the noun is singular. I Sam. 9:20 has the same noun, when Saul is told by Samuel that his people wanted a king. The verb is plural, so together the meaning seems to be — desirable things, which culminate in Christ who is our supreme wealth, and who came to this second temple.

g) The prophecy is designed to provide the comfort of divine promises amid possible discouragement at the sight of the smaller new temple.

h) Legally holiness is not communicable, but unholiness is [cf. I Cor. 5:6]. But in the realm of grace, holy influences are being communicated [see I Cor. 7:14].

i) Although all claims to divine blessing were forfeited by sin, still blessing will come by grace.

j) Zerubbabel, viewed as the representative of the Davidic line, inherits the royal promises. The glorious future and stability of the Davidic throne is assured [cf. Matt. 1:13].

THE PROPHECY OF

ZECHARIAH

1 IN THE EIGHTH MONTH OF THE second year of Darius,^a the word of the LORD came to Zechariah^b the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo the prophet: ²The LORD was very angry with your fathers. ³Now you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts: Return to Me — it has been declared by the LORD of hosts — and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.^c ⁴Be not like your fathers to whom the former prophets^d cried, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Turn back from your evil ways and your evil habits!" But they neither heard nor paid attention to Me — it has been declared by the LORD! ⁵Your fathers — where are they? And the prophets — do they live forever? ⁶But My words and My decrees which I gave as command to My servants the prophets — did they not overtake your fathers? They repented and said, "Even as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us on account of our conduct and habits, even so He has done to us."^e

⁷On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in Darius' second year, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, the prophet, the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo. ⁸I had a vision at night: a man riding

a red horse. He was waiting among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were bay, sorrel, and white^f horses. ⁹I said, "What are these, my master?" The angel who was speaking with me said to me, "I will show you what these are."^g ¹⁰And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees replied, "These are those whom the LORD sent to patrol the earth."^h ¹¹Then they answered the Angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and the whole earth is dwelling quietly."

¹²The Angel of the LORD said: O LORD of hosts, how long wilt Thou have no compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah which have been under Thy indignation now for seventy years? ¹³The LORD replied to the angel who was speaking with me in good words, comforting words. ¹⁴Then the angel who was speaking with me said, "Proclaim, Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am extremely jealous for Jerusalem and Zion, ¹⁵and I am exceedingly displeased with the arrogant Gentiles. For while I was only a little displeased,ⁱ the Gentiles helped to worsen the disaster.^h ¹⁶Therefore thus says the LORD: I have returnedⁱ

a) The Persian king Darius Hystaspes, October, 520 B.C. b) "Jehovah remembers."

c) The Gospel in a nutshell: God turns to man; but does man turn to God?

d) These include all the prophets before the exile.

e) The hearers would do well not to receive God's warnings lightly.

f) These colors are not definite. Perhaps "red" and "chestnut" are intended; but "speckled" or "dappled" is not according to the Hebrew. g) With Israel.

h) God employs enemies of His people to discipline them; but when they go beyond His commands in doing so, then those enemies must in turn be punished.

i) The prophetic perfect — already accomplished in God's sight.

to Jerusalem with compassion. My house shall be built there, it has been declared by the LORD, and a line¹ shall be stretched over Jerusalem. ¹⁷Proclaim further: Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; and the LORD shall once more comfort Zion and once more take pleasure in Jerusalem."

¹⁸Then I raised my eyes and saw four horns, ¹⁹and I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these?" He said to me, "These are the horns^k that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

²⁰Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen, ²¹and I said, "What are these coming to do?" He said, "These are the horns that scattered Judah to such extent that no one could lift up his head, but these [craftsmen] have come to rout them and to cast down the horns of the Gentiles, who are lifting a horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

2 THEN I RAISED MY EYES AND SAW a man with a measuring line in his hand; ²and I said to him, "Where are you going?" He said to me, "To measure Jerusalem to find out its length and width."

³And see, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was going out to meet him, ⁴and said to him, "Run and tell the young man that Jerusalem shall be like unwallled villages for the number of men and cattle in it, ⁵and I shall be for it — it has been declared by the LORD — a wall of fire around it, and for glory I shall be in its midst."¹

⁶Flee from the land of the north — it has been declared by the LORD — for I have scattered you like the four winds of heaven; it has been declared by the LORD. ⁷Be saved, O Zion, you

who are dwelling with the daughter of Babylon! ⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts: Afterwards glory! He sent me to the Gentiles who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.^m ⁹See, I am shaking my hand at them; they shall be plunder for their servants, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts sent me.

¹⁰Shout and rejoice, daughter of Zion, for I am coming, and I will dwell among you — it has been declared by the LORD. ¹¹Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people.ⁿ I will dwell among you, ¹²and you shall know that the LORD of hosts sent me to you. The LORD shall possess Judah as His portion upon the holy land, and He shall again take pleasure in Jerusalem. ¹³Hush, mortals, in the presence of the LORD; for He has roused Himself from His holy habitation!

3 THEN HE SHOWED ME JOSHUA THE high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD and the Adversary^o standing at his right hand to oppose him. ²But the LORD said to Satan: The LORD will rebuke you, Satan; the LORD who delights in Jerusalem will rebuke you. Is not this a smoking firebrand plucked from the fire?^p ³Now Joshua was dressed in soiled garments, and he was standing before the Angel. ⁴So He^q said to those standing before Him: Take off his soiled garments. Then He^r said, "See I have removed from you your iniquity and clothed you with honorable garments." ⁵He further said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put the clean turban on his head and dressed him in festive garments, while the Angel of the LORD was standing by.

⁶Then the Angel of the LORD charged Joshua, ⁷"Thus says the LORD

j) The measuring line of the builder.

k) Rulers who have oppressed Judah.

l) The measuring apprentice was not reckoning with God's bounteous grace, Himself a wall around His people. Enjoying God's protection, they need no walls of bricks or stones; besides, the population will so increase that walls could not contain them all.

m) Equally true today; God is ever mindful of those who trust in Him; He never lets us down.

n) Prophetic of the coming in of the gentiles as reported in Acts, i.e., Paul going to gentiles.

o) Heb., the Satan. Satan is the adversary of God and man; he tempts men to sin, then accuses them before God, with pride in his success.

p) This picture has grown deservedly popular for it applies to all of us, saved by His grace.

q) The Angel.

r) None but God could speak that sentence; we must therefore again think in terms of God's Son, representing Triune God.

of hosts: If you will walk in My ways and keep My precepts, you shall also govern My house and guard My courts, and I will give you access among these who stand here. ⁸Pay attention, O high priest Joshua, you and your friends sitting before you — for they are significant men; look, I am bringing in My servant the Branch. ⁹See the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon one stone seven eyes. Observe that I am engraving its inscription — it has been declared by the LORD of hosts — and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. ¹⁰In that day, it has been declared by the LORD of hosts, each one of you shall invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree.”^a

4 THEN THE ANGEL WHO TALKED with me returned and awoke me, as a man is awakened from his sleep, ²and said to me: “What do you see?”^t I said, “I see a lampstand all of gold with a bowl upon its top, and seven lights upon it with seven ducts, one for each light upon it. ³Also there are two olive trees upon it, one to the right of the bowl and the other to its left.”

⁴Then I asked the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these, my master?” ⁵The angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Do you not know what they are?” And I said, “No, my master.” ⁶So he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might and not by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.” ⁷Who are you, great mountain, before Zerubbabel? A plain! Then bring forth the capstone! Shoutings of “Grace, grace be to it!”

⁸Again the word of the LORD came to me: ⁹The hands of Zerubbabel established this house, and his hands

completed it; so you shall know that the LORD of hosts sent me to you. ¹⁰For who has despised the day of little things?^w And they shall rejoice when they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, these seven, [for] they are the eyes of Jehovah traveling throughout the earth.

¹¹Then I asked him, “What are these two olive trees to the right of the lampstand and to its left?” ¹²And I asked him a second time, “What are the two olive branches which, by means of the two golden tubes, are emptying [the oil] into the golden [bowl]?”^x ¹³And he said to me: “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my Master.” ¹⁴Then he said: “These are the two anointed,^y who are standing by the LORD of the whole earth.”

5 ONCE AGAIN I LIFTED UP MY EYES, and I saw a flying scroll. ²And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see a flying scroll. It is ten yards long and five yards wide.” ³Then he said to me, “This is the judgment which is going forth on the face of all the earth. If anyone be stealing, shall one like him be cleared of it? And if anyone be swearing, shall one like him be declared innocent? ⁴I sent it out,^z it was declared by the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swore by My name to falsehood, and it shall lodge in the midst of his house and destroy it and its trees and its stones.”^a

⁵The angel who was speaking with me came forward and said to me, “Raise your eyes now, and look at what is moving to the front.” ⁶I asked, “What is it?” He said, “A bushel measure is going forth,” and he added, “This is their appearance in all the earth.” ⁷As I saw the leaden cover raised, [he said]: “This is a woman sit-

s) Forever those blessed must share their blessings; else they lose them.

t) After these visions there will be prophecies.

u) No overcoming strength and no advance without the Holy Spirit. v) Or, “he shall bring forth.”

w) Again an immortal saying, applicable to our everyday experience. One never knows what change a little incident may bring into our lives.

x) The lights are fed by the oil in the bowl down to which wicks must reach.

y) Literally, “sons of oil,” Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua the high priest.

z) Divine judgment.

a) Theft and perjury were the main crimes in which the returned exiles were guilty; these sins must be rooted out. The scroll on which the crimes were written formed a big book; but it is blown out of the land, symbolic of sins removed.

ting in the center of the bushel."^b ⁸Then he said, "This is Wickedness," and he cast her back into the midst of the bushel and threw the leaden covering upon the opening. ⁹Then raising my eyes, I saw two women going forth with wind in their wings. They had wings like a stork's wings, and they lifted up the bushel between earth and heaven. ¹⁰So I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "Where are they taking the bushel?" ¹¹He said to me, "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar.^c And when it is established, it shall be placed there upon its own base."

6 ONCE AGAIN I RAISED MY EYES and saw four chariots coming forward from between two mountains,^d and those mountains were of brass. ²The first chariot had red horses, the second had black horses, ³the third white horses, and the fourth strong dappled horses. ⁴I inquired of the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these, my master?" ⁵The angel answered, "These are the four winds^e of heaven that go forth from standing before the LORD of all the earth. ⁶[The chariot] that has the black horses is going to the land of the north,^f and the white ones are going after them. Those dappled are going to the land of the south,^g ⁷and the powerful ones^h went forth intent on walking back and forth in the earth." [The LORD] said to them: ¹Go, walk back and forth in the earth. So they walked about in the earth. ⁸Then He summoned me and said: See the ones going out into the north country; they have quieted My Spirit in the land of the north.

⁹Then the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁰Accept donations from the captivity, from Heldai, from Tobijah, and from Jedaiah, and go today and enter the house of Josiah the son of

Zephaniah, where they have come from Babylon. ¹¹Accept silver and gold, and make a crown, which you shall put on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹²Then you shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold the man whose name is Branch! He shall branch out from His place and build the temple of the LORD. ¹³He shall build the temple of the LORD, and He shall fill it with splendor; He shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He shall be priest on His throne, and a perfect union will reign between the two (offices)."ⁱ ¹⁴The crown shall belong to Helem and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. ¹⁵Those at a great distance^k shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. This shall take place if you diligently obey the LORD your God.

7 IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF DARIUS the king the word of the LORD was sent to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month which is Kislev.¹ ²Now they had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech with their men to the house of God to seek favor from the LORD, ³and to ask the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, "Should I weep in the fifth month,^m fasting as I have done these many years?"

⁴Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me: ⁵Say to all the people of the land and to the priests: When you have fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months even these seventy years, did you really fast for Me — for Me? ⁶And when you eat and drink, is it not you who are eating and you who are drinking? ⁷Are these not the words which the LORD

b) Sin is personal; it must be eliminated. c) The Babylonian bottom-land.

d) These are often taken to be Mt. Zion and Mt. of Olives, and "between them" the Valley of Jehoshaphat. e) Or, spirits. f) North was Media and Greece.

g) South lay Egypt. The chariots represent divine sovereignty.

h) Verses 2 and 3 and certain versions suggest that this should be "red." i) Hebrew, "He said."

j) Although Zechariah would not fully understand the meaning of his message, we may now, from our Christian standpoint, see the office of king and of priest united in the promised Messiah.

k) This could refer to far-scattered Jews; but more likely to Gentiles, who have learned of God.

l) Our December.

m) The ninth of the fifth month [Ab] is the annual Memorial Day of the destruction of Solomon's temple.

announced by the former prophets when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous and the cities around her, and when the Negebⁿ and the Shephelah^o were inhabited?

⁸Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah: ⁹Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgment; let every one show lovingkindness and compassion to his brother, ¹⁰and do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the immigrant, or the poor. Let a man not think evil in his heart against his brother.^p ¹¹But they refused to listen; they turned a rebellious shoulder; they made their ears too heavy to hear. ¹²Their hearts they made hard as diamond,^q so as not to hear the law and the word which the LORD of hosts sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. So there developed great indignation from the LORD of hosts. ¹³And just as He called out and they did not hear, so they will call out and I will not hear, says the LORD of hosts.^r ¹⁴I will scatter them among all the Gentiles whom they have not known,^s and the land shall be desolate behind them without one to pass by or to return; for they have appointed a desirable land to desolation.

8 THE WORD OF THE LORD OF HOSTS came, saying: ²Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy; with glowing jealousy I am burning for her. ³Thus says the LORD: I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain.

⁴Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall yet sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand for his advanced age,^t ⁵and the streets of the city shall be full

of boys and girls playing in its streets.^u

⁶Thus says the LORD of hosts: Because it will be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be marvelous in My eyes? says the LORD of hosts.

⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts: Notice that I am saving My people from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the sunset; ⁸I will bring them home, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and in righteousness.

⁹Thus says the LORD of hosts: Let your hands be strong, you who in these days hear these words from the mouth of the prophets, of the day when the house of the LORD of hosts was founded, the temple that was to be rebuilt. ¹⁰For before those days there were no wages for man and no hire for cattle, and for any one going out or coming in, there was no peace because of the enemy; I had set every man against his neighbor. ¹¹But now I am not as in the former days to the remnant of this people, it is affirmed by the LORD of hosts. ¹²For I am sowing the seed of peace; the vine shall give its fruit; the earth shall give its produce; the heavens shall give dew and the remnant of this people I will cause to inherit all these things. ¹³So it shall be that as you were a curse among the Gentiles, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing.^v Fear not, let your hands be strong.

¹⁴For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I determined to do evil to you when your fathers angered Me, says the LORD of hosts, and I did not relent, ¹⁵so I have resolved to do good in these days to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. ¹⁶These are the things which you shall do: Let every

n) The desert at the south of the land, still so named.

o) The foothills southwest of Jerusalem, now part of the Gaza section.

p) God wants a godly and fraternal life, more than rituals and offerings; as Jesus put it, to love God above all and your neighbor as yourself.

q) See Isaiah 6:9, 10. r) How great a proportion of punishment is by way of retribution!

s) Or, who have not known them. t) Hebrew, "from a multitude of days."

u) It means the perfection of freedom.

v) An everlasting principle — we bring suffering upon others when we do wrong, and we are a blessing to others when we live in harmony with God.

one speak truth to his neighbor, and judge with truth and justice, leading to peace in your gates. ¹⁷Do not think evil in your heart against one another, and do not love a lying oath; for all this I hate, affirms the LORD.

¹⁸Then the word of the LORD of hosts was directed to me: ¹⁹Thus says the LORD of hosts: The fasting of the fourth, the fifth, the seventh, and the tenth month will become to the house of Judah joy and gladness and enjoyable festivals; therefore love truth and peace.

²⁰Thus says the LORD of hosts: People shall yet come, and the inhabitants of many cities ²¹and the inhabitants of one (city) shall go to another, saying, "Let us go to seek the favor of the LORD continually, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I too will go."^w ²²Yes, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to seek the LORD's favor.

²³Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of varied languages shall take hold of a Jew's coat, hold on to it, and say, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."^x

9 THE BURDEN OF THE WORD OF THE LORD: He is in the land of Hadrach,^y and Damascus is His resting-place; because the LORD's eye is upon all mankind, as on all the tribes of Israel; ²yes, and on Hamath, bordering upon it and on Tyre and Sidon, shrewd as they are; ³although Tyre has built herself a fortress and amassed silver like dust, and gold like mud of the streets. ⁴Behold, the LORD will possess it and will knock its front wall into the sea, and she shall be consumed by fire. ⁵Ashkelon shall see it and be afraid; Gaza shall shake exceedingly, and Ekron because her hope shall be put to shame. The king

shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall be uninhabited. ⁶Mongrels shall live in Ashdod, and I will end the pride of Philistia. ⁷I will take its blood from its mouth and its abominations from between its teeth, and he himself shall be left for our God. He shall be like a clan head^z in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite. ⁸And I will encamp around My house as a guard from those who pass through and return, and the oppressor shall no more pass through against them, for now My eyes are upon (them).

⁹Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King shall come to you, righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.^a ¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; the bow of war, too, shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations, and His dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the River^b to the ends of the earth.

¹¹As for you, in view of the blood of your covenant,^c I have sent forth your prisoners from the pit in which is no water. ¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope;^d even today I am proclaiming to you: I will restore to you double. ¹³For I have bent^e Judah for Myself; I have filled the bow with Ephraim,^f and I will incite your son, O Zion, against your son, O Greece, and I will make you as the sword of a mighty man. ¹⁴Then the LORD shall appear above them, and His arrow shall go out as lightning; the LORD God shall give a blast on the ram's horn, and He shall move in the tempests of the south. ¹⁵The LORD of hosts shall defend them, and they will consume and trample upon the sling-stones, and they shall drink and be turbulent as from wine; they shall be

w) When we have submitted our lives to God, then we can and should invite others to share His favor with us.

x) A world turning to God, when the Jews have found and confessed Him again, a process reversed in the new Dispensation, where Paul [Romans 11:25, 26] sees all Israel saved, when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. y) A region in Syria not far from Damascus.

z) So completely turned to God.

a) Fulfillment seen in our Lord's triumphant entry [Matt. 21:1-9; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38; John 12:12-15]. b) Usually the Euphrates; the complete phrase means "the whole earth."

c) Historically this looks back to Ex. 24:8, and prophetically it looks forward to the blood of the new Covenant. d) The prisoner of sin and Satan need never hope in vain.

e) As a bow is bent. f) Ephraim to serve God effectively as an arrow shot from a bow.

filled like a bowl, like the corners of an altar.⁸ ¹⁶The LORD their God shall save them in that day like the flock of His people; yes, they are the stones of a crown brilliant in His land. ¹⁷For how good it is and how fair! Grain will make the young men flourish and new wine the young women.

10 ASK FROM THE LORD RAIN IN the time of the latter rain.^a The LORD is the maker of the thunderbolts,¹ and He will give you rain in abundance with vegetation in every field. ²For the teraphim¹ speak nothingness; the diviners dream a lie; dreams of vanity they speak, and they comfort with hot air; therefore they^k have wandered like sheep; they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.

³Against the shepherds has My anger burned and against the he-goats¹ I will visit (punishment);¹⁰ because the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, and He has appointed them as a magnificent horse in the battle. ⁴From themⁿ comes a corner-stone; from them a tent peg; from them a bow of war; from them shall go forth every oppressor together, ⁵and they shall be as mighty men trampling (their foes) in mire of the streets in battle, and they shall fight because the LORD is with them; the riders of horses shall be put to shame.^o ⁶So I will make mighty the house of Judah; I will save the house of Joseph. I will re-establish them because I love them, and they shall be as though I had not cast them off; for I am the LORD their God, and I will answer them. ⁷They shall be like a hero of Ephraim, and their hearts shall rejoice as from wine; their sons shall see and be glad, their hearts shall rejoice in the LORD.

⁸I will whistle for them and gather them; for I have ransomed them. They

shall be many even as they were many. ⁹Although I sow^p them among the nations and among those afar off, they shall remember Me; they shall live with their sons and then return. ¹⁰I will bring them back from the land of Egypt; from Assyria I will gather them; to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon I will bring them, and there will not be room for them. ¹¹They shall pass through the sea of trouble; He shall strike the sea waves; all the deeps of the Nile shall dry up; the pride of Assyria shall be brought low, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. ¹²Then I will make them strong in the LORD, and in His name they shall walk back and forth — it is affirmed by the LORD.

11 OPEN YOUR DOORS, O LEBANON, that fire may consume your cedars! ²Wail, O cypress, because the cedar has fallen; the glory of the trees is ruined! Wail, oaks of Bashan, because the impenetrable forests have come down! ³Hear the cries of the shepherds because their glory is devastated; hear the roaring of young lions because the pride of the Jordan^q is laid waste.

⁴Thus says the LORD my God: Shepherd the flock destined for slaughter, ⁵whose owners will slay them and say they are not guilty; while those who sell them say, "Blessed be the LORD, I have become rich. Their shepherds do not spare them!"^r ⁶For I shall no longer spare the dwellers of the earth — it is affirmed by the LORD.^s See! I cause each man to fall into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king; they shall turn the earth into desert; I shall not deliver it from their hand. ⁷So I shepherded the flock destined for slaughter, even the poor of the flock. I took two sticks; one I called 'Graciousness,' the other I called

g) Covered with the blood of animal sacrifices.

h) The late rains in the springs before the dry season begins.

i) Usually much rain results from heavy thunder storms. j) Household idols.

k) The people themselves, deceived by false leaders. l) The leaders, as pointed by Ezekiel 34:20ff.

m) Those who assume leadership become responsible for those they lead.

n) From the house of Judah.

o) For centuries the army's cavalry was its dreaded division, so likely to trample upon the infantry. It symbolized the army's might. p) Scattering them as a sower scatters the seed.

q) The canyon through which the Jordan passes, thick with growth.

r) Greed, cruelty, and hypocrisy in one brief sentence.

s) A world that fails to find and do the will of its Supreme Ruler is bound for destruction.

'Cords of Unity,' and I shepherded the flock ⁸and wiped out three shepherds in one month.¹ My soul was impatient with them, and also their soul felt loathing against me. ⁹So I said: I will no longer shepherd you. You shall die the death, and you shall be wiped out — completely obliterated;² those who remain shall eat each other's flesh. ¹⁰Then I took the stick, Graciousness, and I hacked it apart to break the covenant which I had made with all the people. ¹¹It was broken in that day.³ And they knew, the wretched among the sheep, who were watching me, that it was the word of the LORD. ¹²I said to them, "If it is good in your eyes, give me my wages; if not, let it go." So they weighed my wages, thirty (dollars) of silver. ¹³Then the LORD said to me: Throw it to the potter — the magnificent value at which I was valued by them! So I took the thirty (dollars) of silver, and I threw it in the house of the LORD to the potter.⁴ ¹⁴Then I hacked apart the second stick, Cords of Unity, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

¹⁵The LORD said to me: Take again the equipment of a foolish shepherd, ¹⁶for I am raising up a shepherd in the land who will not visit the perishing, or seek the scattered, or heal the wounded; even the healthy⁵ he will not sustain; but the flesh of the fat ones he will eat — even their hoofs he will tear off. ¹⁷Woe to My worthless shepherd, who forsakes the flock! A sword be upon his arm and his right eye. May his arm be totally withered and his right eye completely dimmed.⁶

12 THE ORACLE OF THE LORD'S word regarding Israel. It is affirmed by the LORD, who stretches out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, who fashions the spirit of

man within him: ²Behold, I shall make Jerusalem like a cup that causes reeling for all the nations around it, and also against Judah will it go in the siege against Jerusalem. ³In that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome boulder⁷ for all people; all those who lift it shall be severely injured. All the nations of the earth shall be gathered against her. ⁴In that day — it is affirmed by the LORD — I will smite every horse with bewilderment and its rider with madness; on behalf of the house of Judah I will open My eyes; but every horse of the nations I will strike with blindness. ⁵The chiefs of Judah will say in their hearts, "The inhabitants are my strength in the LORD of hosts their God." ⁶In that day I will make the chiefs of Judah like a fire pot with wood and like a torch of fire in a row of fallen grain; they shall devour on the right and on the left all the peoples around them, and Jerusalem shall dwell again on its own site, at Jerusalem. ⁷The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not exalted over Judah.⁸

⁸In that day the LORD shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David and the house of David like God,⁹ like the angel of the LORD before them. ⁹In that day I shall seek to exterminate all the nations that come up against Jerusalem. ¹⁰Then I shall pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced;¹⁰ they shall wail for Him as one wails for an only son, and they shall be in bitterness for Him like the bitterness for the first-born. ¹¹In that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be

t) Leaders either spiritual or political or both, in a brief period.

u) This might also be translated, 'the dying shall die and the one to be obliterated shall be wiped out.' v) The people have broken their covenant with God.

w) Literally fulfilled when Judas betrayed our Saviour [Matt. 26:20-25; 27:3-9; Mark 14:10, 11, 43-45; John 13:2, 21-30]. x) Heb., the uprising.

y) This is definitely a curse direct from God.

z) More than half buried in the field that is to be plowed, but so heavy that efforts to raise it result in hurt. a) Not from Jerusalem but from Bethlehem of Judea was the Messiah to come.

b) The strength of heroes imparted to the weak and superhuman might to royalty.

c) Fulfilled at Golgotha, John 19:34; but see also Rev. 1:7.

like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo.^d ¹²The land shall mourn, each family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; ¹³the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; ¹⁴all of the families that remain, each family by itself and their wives by themselves.^e

13 IN THAT DAY A FOUNTAIN SHALL be opened to the house of David and to the dwellers of Jerusalem for cleansing from sin and uncleanness.^f ²Also in that day — it is affirmed by the LORD of hosts — I will cause the names of the idols to be effaced from the earth, so they shall no longer be remembered; also the prophets^g and the spirit of uncleanness I will cause to pass away from the earth. ³If one of them prophesies again, his father — even his mother who bore him — will say to him, “You shall not live, because you have spoken a lie in the name of the LORD.” His father and the mother that bore him will thrust him through when he prophesies. ⁴In that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and he will not put on a mantle of hair^h in order to deceive. ⁵Each one will say, “I am not a prophet; I am a man who cultivates the ground, for the soil has held me down from my youth.” ⁶And if anyone says to him, “What are these woundsⁱ between your hands?”^j he will say, “Those I got being beaten in the house of my friends.”

⁷O sword, arise against My shepherd and against the man who is My associate! — it is affirmed by the LORD of

hosts. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;^k but I will cause My hand to return upon the little ones. ⁸So shall it be in all the land, it has been affirmed by the LORD, two parts in it^l shall be cut off, shall perish, and the third shall be left in it. ⁹But I will bring the third in with fire; I will refine them as the refining of silver, and I will test them as the testing of gold. They shall call on My name, and I will answer them. I have said: This is My people, and they shall say, “The LORD is my God.”^m

14 BEHOLD, A DAY IS COMING which is the LORD's, when plunder shall be taken from your midst; ²for I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to wage war. The city shall be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished; half of the city shall go into captivity; but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. ³Then the LORD will go forth and wage war against those nations as He fights in a day of war. ⁴His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is on the east side of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in the middle eastward and westward by a very great valley; half the mountain shall move northward and half southward. ⁵You shall flee [from] the valley of My mountain, for the valley of My mountain shall touch Azal;ⁿ you shall flee as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah.^o Then the LORD my God shall come and all the holy ones with Him.^p

⁶In that day there shall be no light; but cold and freezing.^q ⁷It will be a unique day known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time

d) Alluding to the defeat of Josiah by Pharaoh Necho [II Kings 23:29-30; II Chron. 35:22-25]. Hadad-rimmon, now Rummaneh, is near Megiddo.

e) With no human comfort available there is none to turn to but God.

f) Joy after genuine sorrow. g) The false prophet whose teachings encouraged immorality.

h) Cf. II Kings 1:8, for Elijah's hairy mantle, imitated by false prophets.

i) Incisions which false prophets made on themselves [I Kings 18:28].

j) Hebrew, “between your hands,” means “in the chest” or “in the back,” the same as “between your arms.” k) Quoted by Jesus [Matt. 26:31], applying it to Himself.

l) Two-thirds of the inhabitants. m) Our benevolent Father wants response to His love for us.

n) Not certainly identified; apparently a hamlet east of Jerusalem and near it.

o) Reigned 790-739 B.C. [cf. Amos 1:1].

p) The ancient versions read ‘Him’ which accords with other Scriptures [e.g., Matt. 16:27; Mark 8:38, etc.].

q) The Hebrew here has been variously translated; to us this seems truest to the original

there will be light. ⁸In that day living waters^r shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the former sea and half of them to the latter^s sea; so shall it be both in summer and in winter.^t

⁹The LORD will become King over all the earth in that day; the LORD shall be One and His name One.^u ¹⁰All the land shall become like the plain^v from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, and it^w shall rise and stay in its place from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the first gate; then to the gate of the corner and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's wine press. ¹¹They shall dwell in it, and it shall not be put under a curse any more; Jerusalem shall dwell in security.

¹²This will be the plague with which the LORD shall smite all the people who have waged war against Jerusalem: their flesh shall waste away while they are standing on their feet; their eyes shall fester in their sockets, and their tongues shall decay in their mouths.^x ¹³In that day there shall be great confusion from the LORD among them; each one will grasp the hand of his neighbor; yet his hand will go up against the hand of his neighbor. ¹⁴Judah also will wage war in Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the nations around will be gathered: gold, silver, and clothing in great quantity. ¹⁵At

the same time a plague like the preceding plague will strike the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the cattle which are in those camps.

¹⁶So it shall be that all who are left from all the nations, which came up against Jerusalem, shall go up as often as once a year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the feast of booths.^y ¹⁷But if any one of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there shall not be any rain upon them. ¹⁸If a family of Egypt does not go up [to Jerusalem] and enter, there shall be no [rain] upon them, but there shall be the plague with which the LORD shall smite the nations that do not go up to celebrate the feast of booths. ¹⁹This shall be the sin of Egypt and the sin of all the nations which do not go up to celebrate the feast of booths. ²⁰In that day there shall be [inscribed] on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." Even the pots in the house of the LORD, as well as the bowls before the altar, ²¹every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of hosts;^z and all who come to sacrifice will take of these and boil in them — and there shall not be any more Canaanites^a in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

r) See Ezek. 47 for waters from the temple; also Rev. 22:1. Jesus shows it more personal [John 4:14], a water well within His disciples. s) Eastern and western seas.

t) In the dry season as well as in the wet season.

u) God shall be known and worshiped as the only God.

v) Like the Jordan plain of Arabah, so level. Geba marked the northern and Rimmon the southern boundary of Judah. w) Jerusalem.

x) So instead of on Jerusalem, the curse will rest on those who seek its destruction.

y) Those unwilling to observe it are ungrateful. They will be divinely visited with drought.

z) The common things in life are to be among those used for God, because the lives of all should be dedicated to Him.

a) Merchants, dealers, such as had gotten back into His courts, when Jesus came there to worship.

THE BOOK OF MALACHI

1 THE BURDEN OF THE WORD OF THE LORD to Israel by Malachi.^a

²I have loved you, says the LORD, but you say, "How^b hast Thou loved us?" Is not Esau Jacob's brother, says the LORD? Yet I have loved Jacob, ³but I have hated Esau; I have laid waste his mountains and have left his heritage to jackals of the wilderness. ⁴If Edom says, "We are shattered, but we will rebuild the waste places," thus says the LORD of hosts: They may build, but I will throw down. Men shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the LORD has indignation for ever. ⁵Your eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "The LORD be magnified beyond the borders of Israel."^c

⁶A son honors his father, and a servant his master; if then I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My reverence? says the LORD of hosts to you,^d O priests, who despised My name. And you say, "How have we despised Thy name?" ⁷You are bringing polluted food to My altar. And you say, "How have we polluted Thee?" In that you say, "The table of the LORD is contemptible."^e

⁸When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is not that wrong? And when you offer the lame and the sick, is not that bad? Present it to your governor (and see) if he will be pleased with you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. ⁹Now then, entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us. With such a gift from your hand, will He show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts.

¹⁰Oh, that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire upon My altar in vain!^f I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. ¹¹For from the rising of the sun to its setting, My name shall be great among the nations, and in every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. ¹²But you profane it in that you say, "The LORD's table is polluted, and its produce, that is its food, is contemptible." ¹³You say, "See, what a weariness it is," and you have sniffed at it, says the LORD of hosts. You have brought what has been taken by vio-

a) "Malachi" means, *My messenger*, probably a proper name; possibly a noun descriptive of the prophet. He brings from God a series of charges: ch. 1:6 to 2:9, that the people dishonor God and that the priests have broken God's covenant with Levi; ch. 2:10-16, that the peoples are unfair to each other and to God by marrying Gentiles; ch. 2:17-4:6, that priests and offerings need purifying; criminals and sinners must be dealt with seriously, and tithing should be fully restored.

b) One of the key words of the book [cf. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:17; 3:7, 8, 13] which expresses the nation's incredulous astonishment at the charges God makes against them.

c) The message of rebuke is preceded by a revelation of God's loving choice of Israel. Everything that follows is set in this light.

d) God was both their Father and their Master; but they were impolite to Him.

e) If not in words, certainly in behavior, they said so.

f) Hypocritical offerings are worse than none; they should be abandoned.

lence and the lame and the sick; thus you bring the offering! Shall I accept it from your hand? says the LORD. ¹⁴But cursed be the deceiver who has a male in his flock and vows it, then sacrifices something blemished to the LORD; for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and My name is held in awe among the Gentiles.⁵

2 AND NOW, O PRIESTS, THIS COMMANDMENT is for you. ²If you will not hear and if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to My name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; indeed I have cursed them already, because you do not lay it to heart. ³Look! I will denounce your offspring and will spread filth on your faces, the offal of your feasts, and you shall be taken away with it. ⁴Then shall you know that I have sent this order to you, that My covenant might be with Levi, says the LORD of hosts. ⁵My covenant with him was a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him,^h that he might stand in awe; and he stood in awe of Me and regarded My name with reverence. ⁶The law of truth was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. ⁷For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and men should seek the law from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.¹ ⁸But you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble in the law; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts. ⁹So I have made you despised and abased before all the people, just

as you have not kept My ways, but you have shown partiality in (the execution of) the law.

¹⁰Have we not all one Father?¹ Has not one God created us? Why are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our fathers? ¹¹Judah has been faithless, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the LORD's sanctuary, which He loves, and has married the daughter of a strange god. ¹²May the LORD cut off, to the man who does this, any to call or answer out of the tents of Jacob, or to offer an offering to the LORD of hosts.

¹³And this, too, you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with sighing, because He no longer regards the offering, or accepts it with favor from your hand. ¹⁴Yet you say, "Why?" Because the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, although she is your companion and your wife by covenant. ¹⁵Anyone with any intelligence does not act that way; for what did that one do, who was seeking offspring from God?^k So watch out for your feelings lest you be unfaithful to the wife of your youth. ¹⁶For I hate divorce, says the LORD the God of Israel, and the one who covers his clothing with cruelty,¹ says the LORD of hosts. So take heed to your spirit, and be not unfaithful.

¹⁷You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, "How have we wearied Him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them"; or, "Where is the God of justice?"^m

g) Pagans held God in awe when His people failed to serve and worship Him. Because of Israel's hypocritical formalism, God's love cannot gain sway over those to whom the divinely instituted ritual has become a hollow form. Paul put it, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:5). This chapter anticipates the Pharisaism and Sadduceism our LORD rebuked. h) Life and peace.

i) The first part of the prophecy closes on the note of judgment. Because Israel had despised [1:6] His name, God has made them despised [2:9], not only before Him, but also before the people. Apostasy, manifesting itself in hypocritical formalism, leads to the world's ridicule.

j) This could mean Abraham or Jacob, but it is certainly true of God. k) By His covenant with Abraham, the LORD accepted Abraham's offspring as His children, and so they consciously remained through life, presuming they worshiped and served God. Malachi warns Jews who were tempted to get rid of the wives they had married young, so as to marry young girls likely pagans.

l) Divorce was cruel to the wife, who had cared for her husband, even keeping him clothed. m) The second section of the book ends here, the prophet having now finished his denunciation of Israel's implety in mixed marriages. New Testament parallels are II Cor. 6:14-18; Matt. 19:3-12. The remainder of Malachi is a reply to the question, "Where is the God of justice?"

3 BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER, and he shall prepare the way before Me, and the LORD whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, and the Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, look, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of His coming, and who will be able to stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so they will present offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and of Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. ⁵I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against the false swearers and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the foreigner, and do not revere Me, says the LORD of hosts.

⁶For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.ⁿ ⁷From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?"

⁸Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me. But you say, "How have we robbed Thee?" In tithes and offerings.^o ⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe^p into the storehouse, so there may be food in My house, and by this put Me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour out for you a

more than sufficient blessing. ¹¹And I will rebuke the devouring locust for you, and it shall not destroy the fruit of your ground; your vine in the field shall not fail to ripen, says the LORD of hosts, ¹²and all nations shall call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land, says the LORD of hosts.

¹³Your words have been obstinate against Me, says the LORD. Yet you say, "How have we spoken against Thee?" ¹⁴You have said, "It is vain to serve God"; and, "What profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?" ¹⁵And now we call the arrogant happy; yes, evildoers prosper; yes, they put God to the test and escape."

¹⁶Then those who revered the LORD conversed with one another; and the LORD listened and heard, and a memorandum book was written before Him, for those who revered the LORD and thought on His name. ¹⁷And they shall be Mine, says the LORD of hosts in the day on which I prepare My special possession; and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. ¹⁸Then you shall once more distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.^q

4 FOR BEHOLD, THE DAY IS COMING, burning like a furnace; then all the arrogant and all evildoers shall be stubble, and the day that is coming shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will not leave them root or branch. ²But for you, who revere My name, the sun of righteousness^r will arise with healing in its beams, and you will go forth and leap like calves from the stall. ³You will trample down the wicked, for they shall

n) The question of ch. 2:17, "Where is the God of justice?" is answered in this section in the revelation of the coming of the Messenger of the Covenant in judgment. This messenger is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is not only a Savior but also a Judge. Only those who revere God [vs. 5] may expect to welcome His coming.

o) The heaven offering, an annual contribution to the priest [cf. Num. 18:11-20].

p) From Israel's earliest days, national tithing had been a distinct element in their worship, to sustain the true relationship between God and them, and to support the spiritual ministries they needed to remain intelligently loyal.

q) Worshipers need fellowship of purpose and program, encouragement and reminders.

r) There is no fulfillment of this prophecy in any person or event as complete and satisfying as in the coming of Jesus Christ, who is for us "the righteousness of God."

be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day which I shall prepare, says the LORD of hosts.

⁴Remember the law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel, its statutes and ordinances.

⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. ⁶He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.^s

s) Fittingly the Old Testament ends with the mention of a "curse," suggesting the need of man for the coming Messiah. Verse five is repeated after verse six when read in the synagogues, since it is contrary to Jewish custom to conclude a book of Scripture on the note of doom. Our New Testament ends with, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The NEW TESTAMENT

The New Berkeley Version
In Modern English

THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MATTHEW

c. 5 B.C.

1 A BOOK OF THE GENEALOGY OF Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham: ²Abraham was the father^a of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, Jacob of Judah and his brothers, ³Judah of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez of Hezron, Hezron of Ram, ⁴Ram of Aminadab, Aminadab of Nahshon, and Nahshon of Salmon.

⁵Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, Obed of Jesse ⁶and Jesse of David the king.

David was the father of Solomon by Uriah's wife, ⁷Solomon of Rehoboam, Rehoboam of Abijah, Abijah of Asa, ⁸Asa of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat of Joram, Joram of Uzziah, ⁹Uzziah of Jotham, Jotham of Ahaz, Ahaz of Hezekiah, ¹⁰Hezekiah of Manasseh, Manasseh of Amon, Amon of Josiah, ¹¹Josiah of Jeconiah and his brothers about the time of the Babylonian exile.

¹²After the Babylonian exile: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel of Zerubbabel, ¹³Zerubbabel of

Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, Eliakim of Azor, ¹⁴Azor of Sadok, Sadok of Achim, Achim of Eliud, ¹⁵Eliud of Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, Matthan of Jacob, ¹⁶and Jacob of Joseph,^b the husband of Mary,^c of whom Jesus was born, who was surnamed Christ.^d

¹⁷There are then altogether fourteen^e generations from Abraham to David; also fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen generations from the Babylonian exile until the Christ.

¹⁸The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: When His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹But as Joseph, her fiancé, was fair-minded and did not want to disgrace her publicly, he planned to break with her secretly.^f ²⁰But while he was considering this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, be not afraid to take Mary as your wife, for what is conceived in her is from the Holy

a) The Greek word rendered "was the father of" in vss. 1-16 has various meanings including *produce, originate and create*. The King James Version translates it "begat," which by implication denotes *was the father of*.

b) This genealogy, vss. 1-17, was that of Joseph, to whose care as a father Jesus was entrusted; that in Lk. 3:23-38 is of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

c) Four women named Mary are mentioned in the Gospels: (1) The mother of Jesus, Mat. 1:16, 18, 20; 2:11; 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Lk. 1:27; 2:5. She is also specifically referred to without the use of her name in more than twenty other passages, e.g. Mk. 3:31; Lk. 1:43; Jn. 2:1; 6:42; 19:25, where she is called "the mother of Jesus," "His mother," etc. (2) The wife of Clopas and mother of James and Joses, Mat. 27:56; Mk. 15:40, 47; Lk. 24:10; Jn. 19:25. (3) Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, Lk. 10:39; Jn. 11:1; 12:3. (4) Mary Magdalene, Mat. 27:56; 28:1; Mk. 15:40; 16:1; Lk. 8:2; 24:10; Jn. 19:25; 20:1.

d) *Christos*, meaning *Anointed*, is used in the Old Testament not in noun but adjective form when referring to priests and kings, but when referring to the prophesied Messiah it is used as a noun. In the New Testament it is applied to Jesus as Messiah.

e) To confine the list of Jesus' ancestors in each of the three periods to twice seven, and in the second period to stress the royalty of Christ's human ancestors, a number of them are purposely omitted. Frequently one is called a father who precedes his so-called son by several generations. Among the kings Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah are omitted.

f) Mosaic law prescribed public accusation and death.

Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son and you are to call Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

²²All this took place in fulfillment of what the Lord had said through the prophet,^g ²³"Behold! The virgin will be with child and shall bear a son, and will name Him Immanuel," which means, God with us.

²⁴When Joseph awoke from his sleep he carried out what the angel commanded of the Lord. He took to him his wife ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, whom he called Jesus.

c. 4 B.C.

2 AFTER JESUS HAD BEEN BORN AT Bethlehem^h in Judea during the reign of King Herod,ⁱ there arrived wise men^j at Jerusalem from the east, ²inquiring, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and we have come to worship Him."

³On hearing this, King Herod felt disturbed, and with him all Jerusalem, ⁴so he called together all the chief priests and scribes^k of the people and inquired of them where the Christ should be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet,^l ⁶'And you, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are by no means insignificant among Judah's rulers, for out of you a leader shall arise who will govern My people Israel.'"

⁷Herod then summoned the wise men for a private interview and ascertained from them just when the star appeared. ⁸As he sent them to Bethlehem he said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, report to me so that I too may go and worship Him."

⁹After listening to the king they

traveled on and, lo, the star they had seen in the east preceded them until it came and rested above the place where the young Child was. ¹⁰And on observing the star their joy was boundless.

¹¹Entering the house, they saw the little Child with His mother, Mary,^m and prostrating themselves they worshiped Him. And opening their treasure chests they offered Him presents: gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²Then, because of divine warning in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by a different route.

¹³After they had left an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise! Take the Child and His mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the Child in order to murder Him." ¹⁴So he got up at night, took the Child and His mother and departed into Egypt ¹⁵where he remained until Herod's death, so that the Lord's word through the prophet became fulfilled,ⁿ "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

¹⁶When Herod perceived that he had been outwitted by the wise men he was furious and sent a detachment to murder all the male children in Bethlehem and its environs, those of two years and under, according to the time he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then the saying of Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled,^o ¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children and refusing consolation because they are gone."

¹⁹But upon Herod's death an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰saying, "Rise! Take the Child and His mother and go into the land of Israel, for those who were

g) Isa. 7:14. Observe how frequently in Matthew's Gospel attention is called to the fact that events recorded are in fulfillment of O.T. prophecies, e.g. ch. 2:15,17; 3:3; 4:14.

h) Bethlehem is situated five or six miles south of Jerusalem.

i) Herod the Great, who ruled from 37-4 B.C., was the father or ancestor of other Herods.

j) Magi, from *magus* meaning *great*, a Persian title that was used for teachers and wise men, in this instance astrologers.

k) The scribes were guardians of the law and teachers of the O.T. Scriptures. Most of the Pharisees were scribes. See note at Mat. 3:3. l) Mic. 5:2.

m) Mary and the Child were in a house, not a stable. Joseph is not mentioned as being there on this occasion. When on the fortieth day Joseph and Mary took the Child to the temple they offered the smallest allowable living thing, Lk. 2:24; cf. Lev. 12:8. The Magi arrived after that bringing rich gifts. Herod died in 4 B.C. Jesus had been born at least two months earlier.

n) Hos. 11:1, referring first to Israel and the Exodus; here to Jesus. o) Jer. 31:15; cf. Gen. 35:19.

seeking the Child's life are dead." ²¹So he arose, took the Child and His mother and came into the land of Israel. ²²But when he heard that Archelaus^p had succeeded his father, Herod, as ruler of Judea he was afraid to go there. However, by divine warning in a dream he withdrew to the Galilean region ²³where he arrived and settled in a town called Nazareth,^q so that the prophetic utterance,^r "He shall be called a Nazarene," might find fulfillment.

c. A.D. 26

3 IN THOSE DAYS JOHN THE BAPTIST appeared, proclaiming in the Judean desert, ²"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near!" ³He is the one spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah,^s "The voice of one calling out in the desert, Make ready the way of the Lord; straighten His paths."

⁴John himself had clothing made of camel's hair. He wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then Jerusalem, all Judea and the entire Jordan region went out to him ⁶and, on confession of their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁷But when he noticed many of the Pharisees^t and Sadducees^u coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You viper brood, who warned you to flee from the approaching judgment? ⁸Produce fruit in agreement with your repentance, ⁹and do not fancy you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father.' For I assure you that from these stones God can raise up children to Abraham."

¹⁰"The ax is already laid at the root of the trees; so every tree that fails to yield good fruit will be cut down and

thrown into the fire. ¹¹Whereas I baptize you with water for repentance, the One who comes after me is so far superior to me that I am not fit to carry His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²The winnowing fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly clean His threshing floor. His wheat He will store in the granary, but the chaff He will burn with fire that cannot be put out."

c. A.D. 27

¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him, ¹⁴but John tried to hinder Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and why are You coming to me?" ¹⁵Jesus replied to him, "Permit it to be so now, for so it is needful for us to fulfill all righteousness."^v Then he allowed Him to come.

¹⁶At once after His baptism Jesus came up from the water and, behold, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, the Beloved in whom I delight."

4 THEN JESUS WAS LED BY THE SPIRIT it into the desert" to be tempted by the devil; ²and after fasting forty days and forty nights He was hungry. ³The tempter approached Him and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command these stones to turn into loaves of bread. ⁴But He replied, "It is written,^x 'Man shall not live on bread alone but on every command that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

⁵The devil then conducted Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the loftiest point of the temple, ⁶saying

p) Archelaus reigned from 4 B.C. until A.D. 6, when he was deposed. In Hebrew fashion the fact that Joseph and Mary had previously lived in Nazareth is not mentioned.

q) Nazareth is located about halfway between the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Sea of Galilee to the east. It is approximately sixty-five miles north of Jerusalem.

r) The name Nazareth comes from a Hebrew word, *nezer*, meaning shoot or branch. Christ is the Branch, Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12.

s) Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1.

t) The Pharisees (Pharisee means *separatist*) were members of a religious party that was composed mostly of scribes (see note at ch. 2:4). The Pharisees were ritualists who held strictly to the letter of the Law but often departed from its spirit. They opposed the Lord Jesus Christ throughout His earthly ministry. During the final months of the life of Jesus on the earth they joined with their enemies, the Sadducees (see note below) to destroy Him.

u) The Sadducees, a religious party, were rationalists. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead nor in angelic beings. Mk. 12:18; Acts 23:8.

v) That is, uprightness according to the Law. Jesus accepted the baptism of repentance; for although He was sinless He received baptism as representing sinful humanity.

w) A deserted place, not necessarily a sandy waste. x) Deut. 8:3.

to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written,^y 'He will charge His angels concerning You and they will carry You on their hands so You may at no time stub Your foot against a stone.'" ⁷Jesus replied to him, "Furthermore it is written,^z 'You shall not test the Lord your God.'"

⁸Next the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor, ⁹saying to Him, "All these I will give You if You will kneel and worship me." ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan; for it is written,^a 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone.'" ¹¹Then the devil left Him and lo, angels came and waited on Him.

c. A.D. 28

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been arrested He withdrew into Galilee. ¹³Leaving Nazareth^b He went and lived in Capernaum^c by the sea in the country of Zebulon and Naphtali, ¹⁴so that Isaiah's prophecy might be fulfilled,^d ¹⁵"Land of Zebulon and land of Naphtali, toward the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations; ¹⁶the people who sat in darkness saw a great light and on those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

¹⁷From then on Jesus began to preach: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near." ¹⁸And as He was walking by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus noticed two brothers, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹He said to them, "Come! Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰And at once they abandoned their nets and followed Him.

²¹Going a little further He saw two

other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and He called them. ²²So, immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him.^e

²³Jesus traversed all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, announcing the good news of the kingdom and healing all kinds of disease and illness among the people. ²⁴Report about Him spread to all Syria and they brought to Him all who suffered from various ailments and pains—demoniacs, epileptics and paralytics. And He healed them.

²⁵Great throngs followed Him out of Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan.

5 SO, WHEN HE SAW THE CROWDS He went up on the hill; and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ²Opening His lips, He taught them:^f ³"Blessed are they who know their spiritual poverty, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called God's sons. ¹⁰Blessed are those persecuted on account of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are you when they slander and persecute you and falsely accuse you of every wrong because of Me. ¹²Be glad and supremely joyful because in heaven your reward is rich: for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

¹³"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its taste, with what

y) Ps. 91:11-12. z) Deut. 6:16. a) Deut. 6:13. b) Lk. 4:16-30. See notes at Mat. 2:23.

c) Capernaum was situated on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

d) Isa. 9:1-2.

e) John, Andrew, Peter and Nathanael (also known as Bartholomew) had begun to follow Jesus nearly a year earlier, Jn. 1:35-51; now they became His full-time disciples.

f) Chapters 5-7 contain the Sermon on the Mount, the best known of all sermons. In it our Lord declares His own divine standard of righteousness and thereby reveals how impossible it is for a man to be saved by the works of the Law. Consequently all men need a Redeemer. Here in the Sermon on the Mount is the basic expression of Christian ethics, reflected in the N.T. epistles as the pattern for Christian living. "Blessed" in vss. 3-11 means *happy*. See note at Lk. 6:20.

shall it be salted? It is thereafter good for nothing but to be thrown out and walked on by the people.^g

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵Neither do they light a lamp and place it under a grain measure, but on a stand; then it shines for everyone in the house. ¹⁶Similarly let your light shine among the people, so that they observe your good works and give glory to your heavenly Father.^h

¹⁷"Do not suppose that I came to annul the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to complete them; ¹⁸for I assure you, while heaven and earth endure not one iotaⁱ or one projection of a letter will be dropped from the Law until all is accomplished.

¹⁹Whoever, therefore, abolishes the least significant of these commands and so teaches the people, he shall be of least significance in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall observe and teach them shall be prominent in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not at all enter into the kingdom of heaven.

²¹"You have heard how men of ancient times were told,^j 'Do not murder,' and, 'Whoever murders is liable before the court.' ²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother [without cause]^k is liable before the court, and whoever speaks abusively^l his brother is liable before the Sanhedrin.^m And whoever says 'You fool!' is liable to the fires of hell.ⁿ ²³So, when you are offering your gift at the altar and remember that your brother holds something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there at the altar and go and become reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵"Come to terms with your oppo-

nent quickly while you are on the way to court with him, else the opponent may hand you over to the judge and the judge to the attendant, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶I assure you that you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷"You have heard that it was said,^o 'Do not commit adultery.' ²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks lustfully at a woman has in his heart already committed adultery with her. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you. You had better lose one of your members than have your whole body cast into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better to lose one of your members than have your whole body cast into hell.

³¹"It was also said,^p 'Whoever divorces his wife should give her a divorce certificate.' ³²But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for unfaithfulness, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³"You have further heard how the ancients were told,^q 'Do not swear falsely, but perform your oaths to the Lord.' ³⁴But I tell you: Do not swear at all; not by heaven, because it is God's throne; ³⁵nor by the earth, because it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶Neither swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷But let your word Yes be Yes and your No, No. Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

³⁸"You have heard that it was said,^r 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹But I say to you, Do not resist injuries, but whoever strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other as well. ⁴⁰And if anyone wants

g) As salt is a preservative, so do Christians keep the world from being too wicked to exist.

h) The Christian characteristics suggested by Christ will, when practiced, distinguish disciples as lights amid darkness and will serve to illumine the darkness.

i) The iota is *i* in the Greek alphabet.

j) Ex. 20:13; 21:12,14. The Hebrew word rendered "kill" in the King James Version means to commit murder.

k) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. l) The Aramaic word *shuka* used here in the original text means empty, worthless.

m) See note at Lk. 22:66. n) See note at Mk. 9:43.

o) Ex. 20:14. Adultery always involves at least one married person; fornication may relate to the unmarried. p) Deut. 24:1. q) Num. 30:2; Deut. 23:23. r) Ex. 21:24.

to sue you for your tunic, let him have your robe as well.^a ⁴¹And whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴²Give to the one who begs from you and do not refuse the borrower.

⁴³"You have heard that it was said,^t 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemy and pray for your persecutors, ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your heavenly Father;^v for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and He pours rain upon the just and the unjust. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what is your merit? Do not the tax collectors as much? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your kin, how does your conduct excel? Do not even the pagans do the same? ⁴⁸You, then, are to be perfect^w as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6 ¹"BE CAREFUL NOT TO PERFORM your good works publicly to be noticed by the people; else you forfeit reward from your Father who is in heaven. ²Thus, when you give charity, do not blow a trumpet ahead of you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to gain glory from men. I assure you, they have reward. ³But when you practice charity, your left hand must not know what your right is doing, ⁴so that your charity will be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and at the street corners to be seen by the people. I assure you, they have been paid in full. ⁶But you, when you pray, enter your inner room and with your door closed pray to your Father who is there in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁷"When you pray do not repeat and repeat as the pagans do; for they

imagine that for their much talking they will secure a hearing. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows your need before you ask Him. ⁹This, then, is the way you should pray:

"Our Father who art in heaven, Thy name be kept holy. ¹⁰Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.

¹¹"Give us today our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts^x as we have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. [For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]*

¹⁴"For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you too; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive people, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶"When you fast, do not be saddened like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces to show others their fasting. I assure you, they have received their full reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that no one except your heavenly Father who is there in the secret place may notice your fasting. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves dig through and steal. ²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no moth or rust destroys and where thieves do not dig through and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

²²"The eye is the lamp of the body. If, then, your eye is sound, your whole body is illumined; ²³but if your eye is defective your whole body is in the dark. If, then, the light within you grows dark — how dense a darkness!

²⁴"No one can serve two masters, for he will either hate the one and love the other or support the one and

s) A tunic reached to the knees; a robe was a long outside garment which reached almost to the ankles. t) Lev. 19:18; Deut. 23:3-6.

u) We show that we are God's sons by living His principles.

v) "Perfect" is from the Greek *teleios* meaning complete, mature.

w) Debts, or trespasses, in the sense of falling short of God's requirements.

x) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. They may have been added to the text here to make the prayer more appropriate for use in public worship. Certainly the last sentence is compatible with Scripture. Cf. 1 Chron. 29:11. In Luke's account of the Lord's Prayer, Lk. 11:2-4, this sentence is omitted.

treat the other with contempt. You cannot serve God and mammon.^y

²⁵"I tell you therefore, do not worry about your living — what you are to eat or drink, or about your body, what you are to wear. Is not the life more important than its nourishment and the body than its clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air, how they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more valuable than they?

²⁷"Furthermore, who of you is able through worrying to add one moment to his life's course?^z ²⁸And why worry about clothes? Observe carefully how the field lilies grow. They neither toil nor spin, ²⁹but I tell you that even Solomon in all his splendor was never dressed like one of these. ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field that exists today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will He not more surely clothe you of little faith?

³¹"Do not, then, be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What are we to wear?'

³²For on all these things pagans center their interest while your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

³³But you, seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴Do not worry therefore, in view of tomorrow for tomorrow will have its own anxieties. Each day's peculiar troubles are sufficient for it.^a

7 "DO NOT PASS JUDGMENT,^b THAT you may not be judged; ²for the way you judge you will be judged and with what yardstick you measure you will be measured. ³But why notice the splinter in your brother's eye without taking notice of the beam in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me extract that splinter from your eye,' when there is a beam in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite! First get rid of that beam in your eye; then you will see clearly to extract

the splinter from your brother's eye.

⁶"Do not give what is sacred to the dogs, so that they may not turn around and attack you; neither throw your pearls before the hogs, so that they may not trample them under their feet.

⁷"Ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the seeker finds, and to him who knocks it is opened. ⁹Who of you men whose son asks for a loaf of bread will give him a stone; ¹⁰or if he asks for fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹If you then, evil as you are, know enough to give your children what is good, how much more surely will your heavenly Father give what is good to those who ask Him. ¹²Accordingly, whatever you would have people do for you, do the same for them; for this covers the Law and the Prophets.

¹³"Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and spacious the road that leads on to destruction, and many are those entering by it. ¹⁴Because narrow is the gate and contracted the road that leads on to life, and few are they who discover it.

¹⁵"Be wary of the false prophets who come to you in the guise of sheep while at heart they are voracious wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by the deeds they do. Do people gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷So every healthy tree bears good fruit, but a rotten tree bears defective fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that fails to bear good fruit is felled and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Similarly you will know people by the deeds they do.

²¹"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me on that Day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name and in Your name cast out demons and in Your name do many won-

y) Mammon is an Aramaic term. It refers to riches which, when trusted, stand in opposition to God, who alone is to be trusted.

z) "One moment to his life's course" could as well be translated "one cubit to his stature."

a) There is no abrogation in this passage of the commandment, "Six days you will labor and do all your work," Ex. 20:9. b) God alone knows motives behind words and deeds.

derful works?' ²³Then I will frankly say to them, 'I never knew you. Get away from Me, you evil workers.'

²⁴"Everyone, then, who listens to these sayings of Mine and puts them into practice will be like a thoughtful man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The rains came down, the floods rose, the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it never collapsed, for it was based on the rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and fails to practice them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷The rains came down, the floods rose, the winds blew and beat upon that house and it collapsed. And the wreck of it was complete."

²⁸It came about that when Jesus had finished these sayings, the crowds were amazed at His teaching, ²⁹for He taught them as an authority and not like their scribes.^c

8 WHEN HE HAD COME DOWN FROM the hill great crowds followed Him. ²And a leper came up and knelt before Him saying: "Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me." ³Reaching out His hand He touched him saying, "I am willing. Be cleansed." And instantly his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴Jesus told him, "See that you tell no one, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift which Moses prescribed^d as a witness to others."

⁵When He entered Capernaum^e a centurion^f came to Him entreating Him, ⁶"Lord, my servant boy lies paralyzed at home, in great agony." ⁷He replied, "I will come and heal him." ⁸The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not fit to have You come under my roof; only speak the word and my boy will be healed. ⁹For I am personally under authority and have soldiers under me. To one I say, 'Go!' and he goes; to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and

to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

¹⁰As Jesus listened He marveled and said to those who were following Him, "I assure you, I have not found anyone in Israel with so much faith. ¹¹And I tell you that many will come from east and west and will sit^g at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹²while the sons of the kingdom will be expelled into outer darkness. There will be weeping and grinding of teeth there."

¹³Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go home. As you have believed, so let it be for you." And at that exact moment the serving boy was cured.

¹⁴When Jesus entered Peter's house He observed that his mother-in-law was bedridden with fever. ¹⁵So He touched her hand and the fever left her. She got up and waited on Him.

¹⁶In the evening they brought to Him many demoniacs and with a word He cast out the spirits and healed all who had diseases, ¹⁷so that the word spoken through the Prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled,^h "He Himself took our weaknesses and carried away our diseases."

¹⁸Seeing a great crowd around Him, Jesus gave orders to cross to the other side. ¹⁹When a certain scribe approached and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You may go," ²⁰Jesus told him, "The foxes have lairs and the wild birds have nests but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head."

²¹Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." ²²But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."ⁱ

²³As He embarked, His disciples came along with Him. ²⁴And a severe storm came up on the lake,^j so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but He lay sleeping. ²⁵So they went to Him and roused Him, saying,

c) The scribes quoted commentators in their teaching; Jesus did not need to do so. See note at ch. 2:4. d) Lev. 14:3. e) See note at ch. 4:13.

f) A military officer generally commanding 100 soldiers, although sometimes more.

g) See note at Mk. 2:15. h) Isa. 53:4.

i) This may intimate that this man's relatives were spiritually dead; it certainly means that the inquirer must leave behind every interest that may be a hindrance.

j) Squalls from the canyon where the Jordan River entered the lake, i.e., the Sea of Galilee, were frequent and sudden. See note at Lk. 5:1.

"Lord, save us; we are perishing," ²⁶He said to them, "You of little faith! Why are you afraid?" Then standing up He rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷Amazed, the men exclaimed, "What kind of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

²⁸When He reached the other side in the Gadarene^k country, two demoniacs coming out of the tombs met Him. So ferocious were they that no one could travel on that road. ²⁹They shouted: "Son of God, what business is it of Yours to bother us? Have You come here to torture us ahead of time?"

³⁰Now at some distance from them a large herd of swine was feeding; ³¹so the demons begged of Him, "If You expel us, send us into the herd of swine." ³²He said to them, "Go!" And they, coming out, entered into the swine and the whole herd rushed down the precipice into the sea and perished in the waters.

³³The herdsmen fled, went off to town, and reported everything, including the affair of the demoniacs. ³⁴Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus and when they saw Him they begged of Him to move out of their district.

9 SO HE EMBARKED, CROSSED OVER and reached His own city. ²There they carried to Him a paralytic on a couch. And seeing their faith Jesus said to the paralytic, "Cheer up, son, your sins are forgiven." ³Some of the scribes then said to themselves, "This man blasphemes." ⁴Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵For which is easier to say, Your sins are forgiven, or to say, Rise and walk? ⁶But to let you know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on the earth," He then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your couch and go home." ⁷Arising, he went home. ⁸And when the crowds

saw it they were awed, and they praised God who had granted such power to men.

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office and said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁰And as Jesus was sitting¹ at the table in the house^m numerous tax collectorsⁿ and sinners came and sat at the table with Jesus and His disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees noticed it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹²But when He heard it He said, "The healthy have no need of a physician, but the sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means,^o 'I want mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous but sinners^p to repentance."

¹⁴Then John's disciples came up to Him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, and Your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵Jesus answered them, "Can wedding guests mourn while the bridegroom is with them?^q But the days are coming when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶But no one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old coat, for the patch would tear away from the coat and the tear become worse. ¹⁷Neither do they pour new wine into old wineskins, else the wineskins burst, the wine is spilled and the skins are ruined. Instead they put new wine into new skins, and both are preserved."

¹⁸While He was still speaking to them about this, a ruler^r came and knelt before Him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come, place your hand on her and she will live." ¹⁹Jesus rose and with His disciples followed him. ²⁰And a woman, who had for twelve years suffered from hemorrhages, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His robe; ²¹for she said to herself, "If I can only touch

k) See note at Mk. 5:1.

l) See note at Mk. 2:15. m) This was the home of Matthew, also called Levi, Lk. 5:29.

n) Tax collectors as a class were despised by the Jews because, they themselves being Jews, were in the employ of the Roman government. o) Hos. 6:6.

p) The sinners referred to here were specifically those Jews who considered themselves to be righteous and in no need of the Redeemer. They might be called the unchurched of their day, i.e., they neither attended the temple or synagogue, nor offered the sacrifices that were required by Mosaic Law. q) Cf. Jn. 3:28-30. r) Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, Lk. 8:41.

His robe I will recover."^s ²²Jesus, turning and seeing her, said, "Cheer up, daughter, your faith has healed you." And the woman was well from that hour.

²³On reaching the ruler's house and seeing the flute players and the noisy crowd, ²⁴Jesus said, "Go out; for the girl is not dead but asleep." They laughed derisively at Him. ²⁵But after the crowd had been expelled He went in and took her hand, and the girl rose up. ²⁶The fame of it spread over all that country.

²⁷While Jesus was walking away, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Son of David, pity us!" ²⁸Then when He had entered the house, the blind men came up to Him and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe I can do this?" They answered Him, "Yes, Lord." ²⁹He then touched their eyes and said, "According to the measure of your faith it shall be to you." ³⁰And their eyes were opened. Jesus charged them strictly, "See that no one learns of this." ³¹But they went out and spread His fame over that whole region.

³²As they were leaving, a dumb man who was demon-possessed was brought to Him. ³³And when the demon had been expelled, the dumb man spoke. Then the crowds marveled, saying, "The like was never seen in Israel." ³⁴But the Pharisees said, "Through the ruler of the demons He casts out the demons."

³⁵Jesus went among all the towns and the villages teaching in their synagogues announcing the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and every illness. ³⁶But as He looked at the multitudes He was filled with pity over them because they were like shepherdless sheep that are wearied and helpless. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is indeed abundant but the workers are few. ³⁸There-

fore pray the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest."

10 **CALLING HIS TWELVE DISCIPLES** to Him,^t He gave them power over depraved spirits to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every malady. ²Now these are the names of the twelve apostles: ³first, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ⁴Philip and Bartholomew; ⁵Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^w ⁶Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

⁷These twelve Jesus sent out with the charge: "Do not go to the Gentiles nor enter a Samaritan^x city, ⁸but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁹And as you go, preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. ¹⁰Heal the sick; raise the dead; cleanse lepers; expel demons. Freely you have received; freely give. ¹¹Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor copper to put in your belts, ¹²nor a bag for the journey; neither two coats, nor sandals, nor staff. For the worker deserves his support.

¹³"Whatever town or village you enter, inquire who in it is deserving and stay there until you leave the community. ¹⁴And as you enter the home, give your greetings, ¹⁵and if the home is deserving, let your peace come upon it; but if it is undeserving your peace will return to you. ¹⁶And where no one welcomes you or listens to your messages, leave that house or town and shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁷I assure you, the land of Sodom^y and Gomorrah will fare better in the judgment day than that town.

¹⁸"Mind you, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves; therefore, be as subtle as serpents and as guileless as doves. ¹⁹And beware of men; for they

s) The healing power was in Christ, not in the robe, Lk. 8:46.

t) Selecting twelve from among His followers Jesus ordained them to apostleship, to be constantly with Him preparatory to His ascension.

u) "Apostle" comes from a Greek word that means *one who is sent*, i.e., a messenger.

v) Bartholomew is called Nathanael in John's Gospel, cf. Jn. 1:45-49. Observe how the apostles are paired; they did their visiting "two by two," Mk. 6:7.

w) Thaddaeus is called Judas, not Iscariot, in Jn. 14:22. x) See note at Lk. 9:53.

y) See note at Lk. 10:12.

will deliver you to councils, and in their synagogues they will flog you; ¹⁸and you will be haled before governors and kings on My account, to testify to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹But when they hand you over, have no anxiety how or what to say, for it will be given you in that hour what to say; ²⁰for it is not you that speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

²¹"Brother shall betray brother to death, and the father his child. Children shall turn against parents and cause their death, ²²and you shall be hated by everyone on account of My name. But he who perseveres to the end shall be saved.

²³"When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for I assure you that you will not have gone through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴"A pupil is not above his teacher, nor a slave² above his master. ²⁵It suffices for the pupil to be like his teacher and for the slave to be like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul,^a how much more its members. ²⁶Do not therefore fear them; for nothing is covered that shall not be uncovered, and hidden that shall not be made known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark you must say in the light, and what you hear close to your ear you must herald from the housetops.

²⁸"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather fear Him^b who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Do not two sparrows sell for a penny? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰As for you, the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹Have no fear, then; you are of more consequence than many sparrows.

³²"Everyone, therefore, who shall acknowledge Me before men I will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven; ³³but whoever disowns Me before men I will also disown before My Father who is in heaven.

³⁴"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace on the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to bring division, a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and a man's enemies will be those who belong to his own household. ³⁷He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever on My account loses his life will find it.

⁴⁰"Whoever receives you receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. ⁴¹Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive the reward of a prophet, and whoever receives an upright man because he is upright will receive an upright man's reward. ⁴²And whoever gives one of these little ones but a cup of cold water to drink because he is a disciple, I assure you he will not lose his reward."

11 WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED INSTRUCTING His twelve disciples He left there to teach and preach in their towns.

²Now when John heard in prison of Christ's activities, he sent and asked Him through his disciples, ³"Are you the Coming One or should we look for someone else?" ⁴Jesus replied to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor are evangelized. ⁶And happy is anyone who does not lose his faith in Me."

⁷As they were leaving, Jesus began to say to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the desert to gaze at? A reed swayed by the wind?" ⁸What did you really go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? Wearers of soft clothes live in palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet?

z) See note at ch. 13:27. a) See note at Lk. 11:15.

b) The reference is not, as some suppose, to Satan but to God, who alone determines the final destiny of soul and body. c) Although he was now perplexed, John the Baptist was not weakening.

Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written, ^a'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face who shall prepare the road ahead of You.' ¹¹I assure you, none has arisen among those born of women greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²But from the time of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has endured violence, the violent seize it by force. ¹³For until John all the Prophets and the Law prophesied. ¹⁴If you will accept it, he himself is Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵Whoever has ears, let him listen.

¹⁶"But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places and calling out to their playmates, ¹⁷'We have played the flute for you and you have not danced; we have sung dirges to you and you did not beat the breast.' ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking and they say, 'He has a demon.' ¹⁹The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look! A glutton and wine drinker! A friend of tax collectors and sinners!' And still, wisdom is vindicated by her effects."^e

²⁰Then He began to reproach the towns in which most of His wonders had been wrought, because they did not repent: ²¹"Alas for you, Chorazin!^f Alas for you, Bethsaida!^g Because if in Tyre and Sidon^h the wonders had been done that were done in you, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. ²²I tell you further, it will be more enduring in the Judgment Day for Tyre and Sidon than for you.

²³"And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? Brought down

to hadesⁱ you will be. For if in Sodom the wonders had been done that were done in you, it would have remained to this day. ²⁴I tell you further, for the land of Sodom it will be more enduring in the Judgment Day than for you."

²⁵At that time Jesus responded by saying: "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding all this from the learned and intelligent and revealing it to babes."^j ²⁶Yes, Father, for thus it was pleasing in Thy sight. ²⁷Everything has been handed over to Me from My Father, and no one really knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone understand the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him.

²⁸"Come to Me all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls; ³⁰for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."^k

12 AT THAT TIME JESUS WALKED one Sabbath through the grain fields. His disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ²As the Pharisees observed it they said to Him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to be done on the Sabbath."^l ³But He replied, "Have you not read what David did^m when he and his men were hungry, ⁴how he entered the house of God and ate the loaves of presentationⁿ which neither he nor his men, but only the priests, were allowed to eat? ⁵Or have you never read^o in the Law how on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are blameless? ⁶But I tell you that some-

d) Mal. 3:1.

e) Although John was evidently an ascetic and Jesus a companionable Man who attended dinners and weddings, the people generally did not respond heartily to either of them.

f) Chorazin was situated about four miles northwest of the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

g) See note at Mk. 3:22.

h) Tyre was a city on an island just off the western shore of the Mediterranean Sea and about twenty-five miles west of Caesarea Philippi (see note at ch. 16:13). Sidon, situated on the main land, was twenty-two miles north of Tyre and fifty miles west of Damascus. Sidon was the principal city of ancient Phoenicia. Queen Jezebel had brought the sins and idolatry of Phoenicia into Israel, and this period remained a horrible memory for every Israelite.

i) The realm of the dead. j) Infants, minors, uneducated and simple people.

k) Our Lord's message now goes beyond Israel with a gracious invitation to all men.

l) To pluck heads of grain was lawful, Deut. 23:24, but not on the Sabbath. m) I Sam. 21:4,6.

n) This was the showbread, Ex. 25:30. o) Num. 28:9.

thing greater than the temple is here. ⁷And had you known what this means,^p 'I want mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

⁹Leaving there He went into their synagogue. ¹⁰And a man with a paralyzed hand was there; so, to incriminate Him, they asked Him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" ¹¹But He said to them, "Is there one of you with a single sheep who will not, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, take hold of it and lift it out? ¹²How much more valuable, then, is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." ¹³Then He said to the man, "Hold out your hand." He held it out and it was restored as healthy as the other. ¹⁴But the Pharisees went away and devised a plot against Him so that they might destroy Him.

¹⁵Jesus, knowing this, withdrew from that place. Many followed Him and He healed them all ¹⁶and charged them not to make Him known, ¹⁷that what was said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled,^q ¹⁸"Behold My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul delights; I will invest Him with My Spirit and He will announce justice to the nations. ¹⁹He will not quarrel or shout, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. ²⁰He will not break a bruised reed; He will not extinguish a smoldering wick until He carries justice to victory. ²¹And the nations will hope in His name."

²²Then there was led to Him a blind and dumb demoniac, and He healed him, so that the dumb man both spoke and saw. ²³And all the crowds were amazed and said, "Is not this the Son of David?" ²⁴But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This fellow does not expel demons except through Beelzebub,^r the ruler of demons."

²⁵Reading their thoughts, He said to them, "Any kingdom that is divided against itself goes to ruin and any city or house that is divided against itself cannot stand. ²⁶If Satan expels Satan,

he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷Besides, if I cast out demons through Beelzebub, through whom do your sons cast them out? On this score they will be your judges. ²⁸But if I expel demons through the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has overtaken you.

²⁹"How indeed can a person enter into a strong man's house and rob his belongings unless he first binds the strong man? After that he may rob his house. ³⁰Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever is not gathering with Me scatters. ³¹I tell you therefore: All sins and slanders are forgivable for men, but slander about the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³²If one should speak a word against the Son of Man he may be forgiven, but if he speaks against the Holy Spirit it will not be forgiven him either in this age or in the age to come.^s

³³"You either make both tree and fruit to be good, or you hold both tree and fruit to be rotten; for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers, how can you speak good, evil as you are? For from the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵A good man brings out good things from good treasure in his heart, and a wicked man brings out bad things from bad treasure in his heart. ³⁶But I tell you that for every careless word spoken men shall be answerable in the Judgment Day. ³⁷For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned."

³⁸Then some of the scribes and Pharisees replied to Him, "Teacher, we should like to see your token of proof." ³⁹And He answered them, "A wicked and disloyal generation craves a sign, and no sign will be given it except the sign of the Prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰For as Jonah was for three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster,^t so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment along with this generation and will

p) Hos. 6:6; cf. Isa. 1:11; Mic. 6:8. q) Isa. 42:1-4. r) See note at Lk. 11:15.

s) No salvation is possible for one who continues to resist the call and influences of the Holy Spirit. t) Jon. 1:17.

condemn it; for they repented at Jonah's preaching, and indeed something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴²The Queen of the South^u will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and indeed something greater than Solomon is here.

⁴³"When the unclean spirit goes out of a person he roams through dry places looking for rest and does not find it. ⁴⁴Then he says, 'I will go back to the house I left,' and comes and finds it vacant, cleaned and orderly. ⁴⁵He then goes out to bring along with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and they enter and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. So it will be with this wicked generation."

⁴⁶While He was still speaking to the crowds His mother and brothers stood outside wanting to talk with Him. ⁴⁷[Then someone told Him, "Your mother and Your brothers stand outside, wanting to speak to You."]^v ⁴⁸But He replied to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" ⁴⁹And stretching out His hand to His disciples, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers; ⁵⁰for whoever does the will of My heavenly Father is My brother and sister and mother."^w

13 THAT SAME DAY JESUS, LEAVING the house, sat by the seaside, ²and such great crowds gathered around Him that He stepped into a boat and sat down while the whole multitude stood on the beach. ³And He told them many things in parables, saying:^x "A sower went out to sow ⁴and, in his sowing, some seed fell along the road and the birds came and ate them. ⁵Some fell on rocky soil, where they had little earth and sprang up quickly

because the soil was shallow; ⁶but with the rising sun they were scorched and, having no root, withered. ⁷Some fell among the thorns and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸But the rest fell on the good soil and bore a crop — some a hundredfold, some sixty and some thirty. ⁹Whoever has ears, let him listen."

¹⁰The disciples came up and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" ¹¹He answered, "It is granted you to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but it is not granted them."^y ¹²For whoever has will receive superabundantly, but whoever has not will be deprived of whatever he has. ¹³For this reason I speak to them in parables, because they look and see nothing; they listen and neither hear nor understand. ¹⁴On their part Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled,^z 'You will listen and listen but not at all understand; you will look and look but never see at all. ¹⁵For this people's heart has grown dull and with their ears they hear poorly; they have their eyes shut so that they may not see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and return and I would heal them.'

¹⁶But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. ¹⁷For I assure you that many prophets and upright men have longed to see what you see and did not, and to hear what you are hearing and did not.

¹⁸"Listen, then, to the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the message of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart. This represents the sowing along the road. ²⁰But what was sown on rocky soil refers to the one who hears the word and at once accepts it gladly; ²¹but it takes no root in him; it does not last. Trouble or persecution arises

u) II Chron. 9:1-12.

v) Verse 47, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

w) Those who do God's will may have a relationship that is closer to the Lord Jesus than that of His own mother and brothers.

x) The parables of chapter 13 describe the influence of the Gospel in this present age, when not all the Word preached will be received in faith, and weeds will grow with the wheat until its end.

y) Not because of arbitrary judgment against them; but because they neglected divine grace they are themselves unresponsive soil. z) Isa. 6:9-10.

on account of the message and at once he turns away from it. ²²And what was sown among thorns means one who listens to the message, but worldly cares and the enjoyment of wealth choke the word and it becomes unproductive. ²³But what was sown in good ground means one who listens and understands the message; he bears fruit and yields, one a hundredfold, one sixty and one thirty."

²⁴He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵but while men were asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶When the blade shot up and the wheat headed, the weeds appeared too. ²⁷The owner's slaves^a went to him and said, 'Was not that good seed, sir, that you sowed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?' ²⁸He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' They asked him, 'Would you like then to have us go and weed them out?' ²⁹But he said, 'No, for in gathering up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them.' ³⁰Let them grow side by side until harvest time, and at harvest time I shall direct the reapers to collect the weeds first, bundle them up and burn them, but bring the grain into my barn."

³¹Another parable He presented to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. ³²It is the smallest of all seeds but when grown up it is bigger than any plant and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and roost in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast^c which a woman took and buried in a

bushel of flour until it was all raised."

³⁴Jesus said all this to the crowds in parables and never spoke to them except in parables, ³⁵so that the saying of the prophet was fulfilled:^d "I will open my mouth in parables; I will express what has been hidden since the creation of the world."

³⁶Then leaving the multitudes He went indoors and His disciples came to Him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." ³⁷He replied: "The sower of the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world.^e The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the weeds are the children of the evil one. ³⁹The enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age. The reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send forth His angels and they will gather up out of His kingdom all those who offend and those who are guilty of lawlessness ⁴²and will cast them into the fiery furnace. There will be weeping and grinding of teeth there. ⁴³Then will the righteous radiate like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Whoever has ears, let him listen.

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man conceals after finding it. Then out of sheer gladness he goes out and sells everything he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for beautiful pearls. ⁴⁶Having found one pearl of exceptional value he went out and sold all he possessed and bought it.

⁴⁷"Once more, the kingdom of heaven is like a net cast in the sea which collected every kind of fish.

a) The Greek word *doulos* means slave and is so translated here and in many places throughout the N.T. Slavery was extremely prevalent in the Roman Empire; estimates of the proportion of slaves to free citizens range as high as three to one. Many slaves were people of education and culture who had been taken captive and enslaved during Roman conquests. Some were placed in positions of authority and were even entrusted with large financial responsibility, e.g. ch. 25:14-18 - these "domestic servants" were slaves, Gk. *doulos*. Social conditions have, of course, changed since the first century and today slavery is looked upon as unjustifiable and reprehensible. In this translation *doulos* in its different forms is variously rendered "slave," "bond-servant," or "servant," and, in several parables, "agent," e.g. ch. 18:23-35. In cases where the writers use the word in reference to themselves, e.g. Rom. 1:1; Jas. 1:1, it suggests their total commitment to their Lord. b) God alone sees into the hearts of men; thus He, rather than men, is able to distinguish the wheat from the weeds. Cf. ch. 7:1. c) Or, leaven. d) Ps. 78:2. e) The Greek word here rendered "world," *kosmos*, means primarily *orderly arrangement*. It also denotes *universe*, *world*, and *inhabitants of the earth*. In this passage it alludes to those who dwell on the earth.

⁴⁸When it was full they drew it to shore and, sitting down, they put the good ones into baskets and threw out the bad ones. ⁴⁹So will it be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the wicked from the righteous ⁵⁰and will cast them into the fiery furnace; there will be wailing and grinding of teeth there.

⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They answered Him, "Yes." ⁵²So He said to them, "Every teacher, therefore, who is versed in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new things and old."

⁵³When Jesus had finished these parables, He went away from there ⁵⁴and, after arriving in His own home town, taught them in their synagogues in such a way that they were amazed, and said, "From where did this wisdom and these miracles of His come? ⁵⁵Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers James, Josés, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where did He get all this?" ⁵⁷And they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and house." ⁵⁸And because of their unbelief He did not perform many miracles there.

14 AT THAT TIME THE TETRARCH Herod^f heard of Jesus' fame ²and said to his attendants, "This is John the Baptist. He is risen from the dead; therefore these powers are at work in him." ³For Herod had arrested, bound and imprisoned John on account of Herodias,^g the wife of his brother Philip, ⁴because John had told him, "You have no right to have her." ⁵He wished to kill him but was afraid of the people, for they considered him a prophet.

⁶At the occasion of Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod, ⁷so he promised her on oath that he would give

her whatever she might ask. ⁸And, prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." ⁹The king was distressed; yet because of the oath and the guests he ordered it given, ¹⁰and sent and beheaded John in prison. ¹¹His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, and she took it to her mother. ¹²Then his disciples came, took up the body, buried it and went and told Jesus.

¹³When Jesus heard it, He withdrew by boat privately for a solitary place. When the throngs found that out, they followed Him afoot from the cities. ¹⁴On landing He saw a great mass of people and felt deep sympathy for them and healed their sick.

¹⁵With the approach of evening the disciples came to Him, saying, "The place is solitary and the time is now advanced. Dismiss the crowds, so that they can go away to the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away; you give them to eat." ¹⁷They answered, "We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸He, however, said, "Bring those here to Me," ¹⁹and ordered the people to sit^h down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He gave thanks and broke the loaves and handed them to His disciples, and the disciples to the people. ²⁰They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments which were left over — twelve full baskets. ²¹Not including the women and children there were five thousand men who ate.

²²He immediately urged the disciples to embark and to sail ahead of Him to the other side while He dismissed the crowds. ²³And after He had dismissed the people He climbed the hill to pray. Evening had fallen and He was there alone. ²⁴But the boat was by that time a good distance from shore and was tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. ²⁵In the

f) Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod I, i.e., Herod the Great. A tetrarch was governor of one-fourth of a province. Herod Antipas is called King Herod in Mk. 6:14.

g) Granddaughter of Herod I and half-niece of Herod Antipas.

h) See note at Mk. 2:15.

fourth watch of the night¹ He approached them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they exclaimed in terror, "It is a ghost!" and cried out from fear. ²⁷But He at once addressed them, "Cheer up! It is I; have no fear." ²⁸Peter answered Him, "Lord, if it is You, order me to come to You on the water." ²⁹He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and he walked on the water and came toward Jesus; ³⁰but looking at the wind he was afraid and, beginning to sink, he cried, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Instantly Jesus reached out His hand and took hold of him, saying, "You of little faith! Why did you doubt?" ³²After they had gotten into the boat, the wind quieted. ³³Then those in the boat knelt before Him, saying, "Truly, You are the Son of God!" ³⁴Having sailed across, they landed at Gennesaret¹ ³⁵and when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent into all that surrounding country and brought to Him all who suffered ailments. ³⁶They begged of Him that they might simply touch the fringe of His robe, and all who touched Him were completely healed.

15 THEN PHARISEES^k AND SCRIBES^l from Jerusalem approached Jesus with the remark, ²"Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before eating." ³He replied to them, "Why do you transgress the command of God through your tradition? ⁴For God has commanded,^m 'Honor your father and mother,' andⁿ 'He who curses father or mother must suffer death.' ⁵But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "What you might get from me I make an offering," ⁶he need not honor his father and his mother.'^o So you have nullified the Word of God through your tradition. ⁷You hypocrites, Isaiah rightly prophesied about you,^p ⁸"This people honors me with their lips, but their

heart is far away from Me. ⁹Uselessly, they worship Me with their teaching of human commands.'"

¹⁰Summoning the people, He told them: "Listen and understand. ¹¹What enters the mouth does not pollute the person, but what comes out of the mouth pollutes a person."

¹²Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Are You aware that the Pharisees were shocked at hearing You say this?" ¹³He replied, "Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴Leave them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. But if one blind person leads another, they will both fall into a pit."

¹⁵Peter replied, "Explain the parable to us." ¹⁶He said, "Even you do not understand?" ¹⁷Do you not know that whatever enters the mouth passes into the stomach and is purged? ¹⁸But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart; that pollutes a man. ¹⁹For out of the heart come evil designs, murders, adulteries, sexual vices, thefts, lyings and slanders. ²⁰These pollute a person; but to eat with unwashed hands does not pollute a person."

²¹Leaving there, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²²Here a Canaanitish woman from those parts came out and cried, "Pity me, LORD, Son of David! My daughter is badly demon-possessed." ²³But He answered her never a word. Then His disciples came and urged Him, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting behind us." ²⁴But He replied, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵Then she approached and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" ²⁶He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and to throw it to the house dogs."^q ²⁷But she said, "True, Lord, yet even the house dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." ²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, your faith is great! Be it as you desire." And from that very moment her daughter was healed.

i) Between 3 and 6 A.M.

j) Located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee between Capernaum and Magdala.

k) See note at ch. 3:7. l) See note at ch. 2:4. m) Ex. 20:12. n) Lev. 20:9.

o) Property thus said to be dedicated as an offering released its donor from other responsibilities, e.g., to parents. p) Isa. 29:13. q) See note at Mk. 7:27.

²⁹Moving away from there, Jesus went along the Sea of Galilee, climbed the hill and sat there. ³⁰Great throngs came to Him. They brought along lame, blind, dumb, maimed and many others whom they laid at His feet, and He healed them; ³¹so that the crowd wondered when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed sound in body, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.

³²But Jesus called His disciples and said, "I feel deeply moved for the multitude because they have now stayed with Me three days and they have nothing to eat. I am not willing to send them away hungry, for they may faint on the road." ³³The disciples said to Him, "Where are we to get loaves enough in the desert to satisfy such a crowd?" ³⁴Jesus asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven and a few small fish." ³⁵He ordered the masses to sit on the ground, ³⁶took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke them and handed them to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds. ³⁷They all ate and were satisfied; and the leftovers filled seven hampers. ³⁸Four thousand men shared the eating, aside from women and children. ³⁹Then, dismissing the crowds, He embarked and sailed to the Magadan region.^a

16 THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES^t approached and, to test Him asked Him to show them a sign from heaven; ²but He replied, "[At eventide you say, 'Fair weather, for the sky is red,' ³and in the morning, 'A stormy day, for the sky is red and overcast.' You hypocrites, you can distinguish the face of the sky, but not the signs of the times]."^u ⁴A wicked and im-

moral generation seeks a sign and no sign shall be given it except the sign of Jonah.^v" Then He left them and went away.

⁵When the disciples had reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring along bread; ⁶and Jesus said to them, "Take heed and keep away from the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." ⁷They discussed it among themselves, "We brought no bread." ⁸But Jesus, aware of it, said, "Why these discussions among yourselves, you of little faith? Because you brought no bread? ⁹Do you not understand even yet, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up, ¹⁰nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many hampers you took up? ¹¹How is it you do not see that I was not talking to you about bread, but that you should be careful about the ferment of the Pharisees and Sadducees?" ¹²Then they realized that He did not tell them to beware of yeast in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

¹³When Jesus entered the region of Caesarea Philippi,^w He asked His disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴They said, "Some say, John the Baptist; others, Elijah; others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon, son of John, because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but My heavenly Father. ¹⁸I also tell you that you are Peter,^x and on this rock I will build My church,^y and the gates of hades shall not prevail against her. ¹⁹I will give

r) See note at Mk. 2:15.

s) At a place on the western shore of the lake, probably near Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene. t) See notes at ch. 3:7.

u) The words that are enclosed in brackets in vss. 2-3 are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

v) Chapter 12:39; Jon. 1:17. Signs do not always soften stubborn hearts. Cf. Lk. 16:31.

w) Caesarea Philippi, now called Paneas, is situated about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee on one of the tributaries of the Jordan River. It was founded by Philip the Tetrarch, a son of Herod the Great.

x) From the Greek word *petros* meaning a stone, a piece of rock. The word "rock" in the next clause is a translation of *petra* meaning a rock.

y) The word "church" is translated from the Greek noun *ekklesia* which means a called out group of people, i.e., an assembly. In reading the N.T. one must distinguish whether the allusion is to the church as the whole body of believers in Christ, or to the church organization, i.e., a denomination or a local church.

you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you allow on earth will be allowed in heaven."²⁰ Then He forbade the disciples to say to anyone, "He is the Christ."

²¹From then on Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders, priests and scribes, and be killed, and raised on the third day. ²²Then Peter, leading Him aside, began to remonstrate with Him: "Mercy on You, Lord; this must never happen to You!" ²³But, turning around, He said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan, you are a snare to Me; for you are not taking the divine view but man's." ²⁴Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to walk after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me; ²⁵for whoever wants to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me shall find it."

²⁶"For what advantage will a man have if he acquires the whole world and forfeits his own life, or what will a man offer in exchange for his life? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of the Father with His angels, and then He shall reward each according to his deeds."^a ²⁸I assure you, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

17 SIX DAYS LATER JESUS TOOK along Peter, James, and his brother John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²In view of them He was transfigured: His face shone like the sun and His clothes became white as the light. ³Moses and Elijah also appeared to them as they conversed with Him. ⁴Then Peter addressed Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If You approve, I shall make here three booths, one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

⁵While he was still talking, a bright cloud overshadowed them^b and a voice from the cloud said, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am delighted; listen to Him."^c ⁶As the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces in great fear; ⁷but Jesus, coming forward, touched them and said, "Stand up and have no fear."^d ⁸And, raising their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus alone.

⁹As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Do not mention the vision to anyone until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."^e ¹⁰The disciples asked Him, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must first come?" ¹¹He replied, "Elijah will come indeed and will restore all things."^f ¹²But I tell you that Elijah has already come and they did not recognize him, but have done to him as they pleased. In a similar way the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands."^g ¹³Then the disciples realized that He was speaking to them of John the Baptist.^h

¹⁴When they approached the crowd, a man came forward and knelt to Him, saying, ¹⁵"Lord, take pity on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers badly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶I brought him to Your disciples, but they had no power to cure him."ⁱ ¹⁷Jesus replied, "O unbelieving and rebellious generation, how long shall I remain with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me."^j ¹⁸So Jesus rebuked the demon and it came out of him, and from that moment the boy was cured.

¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why did not we have power to expel it?" ²⁰He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For I assure you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. And nothing shall be impossible for you. ²¹[But this kind does not go out except through prayer and fasting.]"^k

z) What the Church teaches as taught by the Holy Spirit is acknowledged in heaven and serves to control human behavior. See the action of the church at Jerusalem, Acts 15.

a) Rev. 20:12-13; cf. Eph. 2:8-10. b) Cf. Ex. 40:34. c) Mal. 4:5-6.

d) Obviously John the Baptist was not a reincarnation of Elijah, for Elijah had just visited with Jesus; but John the Baptist came in the power of Elijah.

e) Verse 21, which is enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

²²While they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, ²³and they will kill Him, and on the third day He will be raised." And they felt deeply distressed.

²⁴When they arrived at Capernaum the tax collectors came to Peter and said, "Does not your teacher pay the tax?" ²⁵He said, "Yes." And as he entered the house, Jesus forestalled him by saying, "What is your idea, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or taxes, from their sons or from foreigners?" ²⁶When he said, "From foreigners," Jesus declared to him, "Then the sons are exempt. ²⁷However, not to offend them, go to the sea, cast a hook and take the first fish you bring up, open its mouth and you will find a coin. Take it and pay them for Me and for yourself."

18 AT THAT TIME THE DISCIPLES came and asked Jesus, "Who really excels in the kingdom of heaven?" ²Calling a little child, He stood it in the midst of them ³and said, "I assure you, unless you are converted and become like little children, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever, then, humbles himself like this little child, he excels in the kingdom of heaven; ⁵and whoever receives one such child in My name, receives Me. ⁶But whoever is an occasion for stumbling to one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷"Alas for the world because of the occasions of stumbling. The occasions have to come, but woe to the person on whose account they occur. ⁸If your hand or your foot hinders you, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to keep both hands or feet and to be thrown into eternal fire. ⁹If your

eye hinders you, pluck it out and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the fires of hell. ¹⁰See to it that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, that their angels^f in heaven are forever looking at the face of My heavenly Father.

¹¹"[The Son of Man has come to save the lost.]^g ¹²How does this seem to you? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains to go out in search of the stray one? ¹³And if he manages to find it, I assure you that he is happier over that one than over the ninety-nine that did not stray. ¹⁴So it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should be lost.

¹⁵"If your brother should do wrong against you, go and show him his fault privately; in case he listens, you have won your brother.^h ¹⁶In case he does not listen, take one or two along, so that from the testimony of two or three witnesses the whole dispute may be settled.ⁱ ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church; and if he will not listen to the church, treat him like a pagan and a tax gatherer. ¹⁸I assure you, whatever you will bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you allow on earth will be allowed in heaven.^j ¹⁹Once more I assure you that if two of you are agreed on earth about anything for which you pray, it will be done for you by My heavenly Father. ²⁰For where two or three have gathered in My name, I am there with them."

²¹Then Peter approached and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother act amiss toward me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "I do not say, up to seven, but up to seventy times seven.

²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who planned to settle accounts with his agents.^k ²⁴As he began the settlement,

f) Our Lord here teaches angelic protection of individuals.

g) Verse 11, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. h) Cf. Gal. 6:1. i) Deut. 19:15.

j) The Church should be diligent in the exercise of the disciplinary functions that Christ has committed to it. k) See note at ch. 13:27.

one was brought in who owed him twenty million dollars,¹ ²⁵but as he had nothing to pay, his master ordered him to be sold, as well as his wife and children and everything he had, and to pay. ²⁶Then the agent fell down and implored him, 'Have patience with me and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷So, in pity for that agent his master released him and canceled his debt.

²⁸"But as that agent was leaving he met one of his fellow agents, who owed him twenty-five dollars. Grabbing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay me what you owe!' ²⁹Then his fellow agent fell down and implored him, 'Have patience with me and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused, and went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt.

³¹"When his fellow servants saw what was done they were greatly distressed, and they went and told their master everything that had occurred.

³²Then his master summoned him and said to him: 'You contemptible slave! I canceled all that debt for you because you begged me. ³³Should not you have had pity on your fellow servant as I had pity on you?' ³⁴And angrily his master handed him over to the scourgers, until he should pay everything he owed him. ³⁵And so will My heavenly Father do to you, if each of you does not heartily forgive his brother."

19 WHEN JESUS HAD COMPLETED these sayings, He left Galilee and entered the Judean territory across the Jordan. ²Large crowds followed Him and He healed them there.

³Then the Pharisees approached Him to test Him. They asked, "Is it right to divorce one's wife for every given reason?" ⁴He replied, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female, ⁵and said,^m On this account a man shall leave his father and mother and

be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh?' ⁶So they are no longer two but one flesh. What God then has joined, man must not separate." ⁷They said to Him, "Why then did Moses commandⁿ to give a divorce certificate and to dismiss her?" ⁸He answered them, "Due to your hard-heartedness Moses permitted you to divorce your wives, but it was not that way from the beginning. ⁹I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except for unfaithfulness, and marries another commits adultery."

¹⁰The disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is preferable not to marry." ¹¹But He replied, "Not all people accept this saying, but only those to whom it is given; ¹²for some eunuchs are such from birth, some were made eunuchs by men, and some have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Whoever is able to accept it, let him accept it."

¹³Then little children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray, and the disciples reproved them. ¹⁴But Jesus said, "Allow the little ones and do not stop them from coming to Me, for of this kind the kingdom of heaven is composed." ¹⁵And after laying His hands on them He went away from there.

c. A.D. 30

¹⁶Someone approached Him and said, "Teacher, what good deed shall I do to secure eternal life?" ¹⁷He said to him, "Why do you ask Me about goodness? Only One is good. But if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."^o ¹⁸He inquired of Him, "Which?" Then Jesus said, "This: Do not commit murder;^p do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not witness falsely; ¹⁹honor your father and mother, and^q love your neighbor as yourself."

1) How could a slave owe his master \$20,000,000? Obviously this great sum is used to show that the man could not possibly have paid such a huge amount; it is contrasted with the reasonable figure that the second slave is said to have owed the first, namely \$25. Even this was a large sum in N.T. times, equivalent to three and a half months' wages.

The text reads "ten thousand talents" in vs. 24 and "a hundred denarii" in vs. 28. One silver talent equals about \$2000; a denarius equals approximately twenty-five cents.

m) Christ substantiates the authenticity of the Genesis account of creation.

n) Christ affirms the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy.

o) Specifically the Ten Commandments, Ex. 20:1-17. p) See note at ch. 5:21. q) Lev. 19:18.

²⁰The young man said to Him, "All these things I have observed. How do I still fall behind?" ²¹Jesus replied, "If you want to be complete, go and sell what you have and donate it to the needy, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come and follow Me."

²²But the young man, on hearing that, went sadly away, for he had much property.

²³Jesus remarked to His disciples, "I assure you, it will be difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven."

²⁴I say to you again, it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁵When the disciples heard this, they were utterly dumbfounded and said, "Who then can be saved?" ²⁶But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

²⁷Then Peter replied to Him, "We have left everything and have followed You. What then is there for us?"

²⁸Jesus answered, "I assure you that you followers of Mine, in the new age, when the Son of Man will sit upon the throne of His glory, you too will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." ²⁹Also everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields on account of My name, will receive a hundred times over and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰But many now first will be last, and the last will be first.

20 "FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN resembles an estate owner, who went out early in the morning to hire workmen for his vineyard,¹ and after agreeing with the workmen on twenty-five cents² a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³At about nine o'clock he went out and saw other workmen standing in the market place unemployed, and said to them, 'You go into the vineyard, too, and I will pay you whatever is fair.' So they went. ⁵Going

out again at twelve and at three, he did the same thing. ⁶When he went out at five o'clock, he found others standing there and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' ⁷They answered, 'Because nobody has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go out into the vineyard too.'

⁸"As evening fell the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workmen and pay their wages, starting with the last and on to the first.'

⁹When those who began around five o'clock came, they got twenty-five cents each; ¹⁰and when the first workmen came they thought that they would get more, but they, too, got twenty-five cents each. ¹¹On receiving it, they grumbled against the owner ¹²and said,

'These last have worked one hour and you have ranked them equal with us who endured the arduous toil and the scorching heat of the day.' ¹³But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not wronging you. Did you not agree with me on twenty-five cents? ¹⁴Take what is yours and go. I choose to pay this last one the same as you. ¹⁵Have I no right to do with my belongings as I please? Or do you look resentful because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last."

¹⁷As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the Twelve aside and on the road said to them, ¹⁸"Take notice. We are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes. They will sentence Him to death, ¹⁹and hand Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and on the third day He will be raised."

²⁰Then the mother of Zebedee's sons approached Him with her sons, kneeling and requesting something of Him. ²¹He said to her, "What do you wish?" She replied, "Command that these my two sons will sit one at Your right and one at Your left in Your kingdom." ²²Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup I am about to

r) See note at Mk. 10:24. s) Cf. Isa. 1:26. t) Cf. Isa. 5:7.

u) The actual coin was the denarius, worth in the mid-twentieth century about twenty-five cents. In the first century it had a much higher purchasing power than now and was a fair day's wage for a field hand.

drink?" They said to Him, "We can."²³ He told them, "You will indeed drink My cup^v but to sit at My right and My left is not Mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

²⁴When the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers, ²⁵but Jesus called them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their superiors oppress them, ²⁶but with you it is different: Whoever among you wants to be great must be your servant ²⁷and whoever would be first will be your slave, ²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

²⁹As they were leaving Jericho, a great throng followed Him. ³⁰And when two blind men who were sitting by the road heard that Jesus was passing, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, take pity on us!" ³¹The crowd rebuked them, demanding silence, but they shouted the louder, "Lord, take pity on us, O Son of David." ³²Then Jesus stopped, called them and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" ³³They said, "Lord, we would have our eyes opened." ³⁴So Jesus took pity on them and touched their eyes and at once they received their sight and followed Him.

21 WHEN JESUS CAME NEAR JERUSALEM and reached Bethphage^w at the Mount of Olives, He sent out two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go to the village opposite you and immediately you will find a donkey hitched, and a colt with her. Unhitch them and bring them to Me. ³Should anyone say anything to you, reply, 'The Lord needs them,' and without delay he will let them go." ⁴This happened so that the saying of the prophet

might be fulfilled,^x ⁵"Tell Zion's daughter, Behold, your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden."

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their coats on them, and He seated Himself on them. ⁸Many of the multitude, too, spread their clothes on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. ⁹And the crowds, some marching ahead^y and some in the rear, shouted,^z "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest."

¹⁰When He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was agitated. "Who is this?"

¹¹they asked. The crowd replied, "This is the Prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

¹²Jesus entered the temple and expelled all who were buying and selling in its courts. He overturned the tables of the money changers and seats of those who sold doves, ¹³and told them, "It is written,^a 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a robbers' den."

¹⁴The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and the scribes noticed the wonderful things He did, and the children shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant ¹⁶and said to Him, "Do You hear what they are saying?" Jesus answered, "Yes. Did you never read,^b 'From the mouth of babes and nurslings Thou hast perfected praise?'" ¹⁷And leaving them He went outside the city to Bethany,^c and there He spent the night.

¹⁸In the early morning, as He re-

v) Both James and John would dedicate their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. Part of the cup that they would drink would be martyrdom for James, Acts 12:1-3, and exile for John, Rev. 1:9. However, the request that they and their mother made of Jesus was essentially selfish.

w) "Bethphage" means house of unripe figs. See note at Lk. 19:29. x) Zech. 9:9.

y) They evidently came from Jerusalem to meet Jesus and became the van of the procession.

z) Ps. 118:25-26, "Hosanna" means save now or salvation. The expression is somewhat similar to "God save the king." a) Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11. b) Ps. 8:2.

c) "Bethany" means house of depression or house of a wine press. It was in Bethany, at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, that Jesus was sometimes entertained. Bethany was also the home of Simon, the leper, ch. 26:6, and it was from Bethany that our Lord ascended to heaven, Lk. 24:50. It was at the foot of the Mount of Olives, not more than two miles from Jerusalem.

turned to the city, He felt hungry ¹⁹and, noticing a single fig tree by the roadside, walked to it and found on it nothing but leaves. He said to it, "Let there be no fruit from you any more forever." And instantly the fig tree withered. ²⁰As the disciples observed it, they marveled and said, "How did the fig tree wither so quickly?" ²¹Jesus answered them, "I assure you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but if you say to this mountain, 'Be lifted and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. ²²And everything you ask in prayer you will obtain, if you believe."

²³Upon his entering the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people stepped up to Him during His teaching and said, "By what authority are You doing these things and who gave You this authority?" ²⁴Jesus answered them, "Let Me ask you one question, too, and if you answer Me, then I will tell you by what authority I do these things: ²⁵Where did John's baptism come from, from heaven or from men?" But they argued among themselves, "If we say 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of the people, for they all consider John a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." He said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

²⁸"But how does this seem to you: A man had two sons and, going to the first, he said, 'Son, go out and work today in the vineyard.' ²⁹He replied, 'I won't.' Afterward he felt sorry and went out. ³⁰Going to the second, he said the same to him. He answered, 'I will, sir.' But he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the father's will?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax gatherers and the prostitutes are en-

tering the kingdom of heaven ahead of you. ³²For John came to you on a mission of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax gatherers and the prostitutes believed him, and although you saw that, yet you did not afterward repent and believe him."

³³"Hear another parable:^d There was an estate owner who planted a vineyard, hedged it in, dug out a wine press in it, built a watchtower and leased it to tenant farmers, then went abroad. ³⁴When vintage time approached, he sent his agents^e to the tenant farmers to collect his share; ³⁵but the farmers took his agents and beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶Subsequently he sent other slaves more numerous than the first, whom they treated in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent them his son, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸But when the tenant farmers saw his son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and get hold of his inheritance.' ³⁹So they seized him, put him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰When therefore the owner of the vineyard arrives, what will he do to those tenant farmers?"

⁴¹They answered, "He will put the wretches to a miserable death and will lease the vineyard to other tenant farmers, who will pay him his share each season." ⁴²Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone^f which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone; this is the Lord's doing and it fills our eyes with wonder?' ⁴³I tell you, therefore, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and will be given to a people that produces its fruits. ⁴⁴[Whoever falls on that stone will be smashed, and on whom it falls, he shall be pulverized.]"^h

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they knew He was talking about them,

d) Cf. Isa. 5:1-7. e) See note at ch. 13:27. f) Ps. 118:22-23.

g) A stone or a rock is frequently used in the Scriptures as a symbol of Christ. See Gen. 49:24; Deut. 32:4; Isa. 8:14-15; 28:16; Dan. 2:34; Rom. 9:32-33; I Cor. 1:23; 3:11; Eph. 2:19-22; I Pet. 2:3-8.

h) Verse 44, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

⁴⁶and they wanted to arrest Him; but they were afraid of the crowds, since they considered Him to be a prophet.

22 JESUS AGAIN TALKED TO THEM in parables, saying,ⁱ ²"The kingdom of heaven is similar to a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son ³and sent out his servants to notify those invited to the wedding, but they would not come. ⁴Once more he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited, "Look here! I have gotten my dinner ready, my steers and fatted beasts are killed, and everything is prepared. Come to the wedding,"' ⁵But disregarding it, they went off—this one to his farm, that one to his trade, ⁶and the rest, taking hold of his servants, ill-treated and killed them.

⁷"The king was infuriated. He dispatched his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸He then told his servants, 'True, the banquet is ready, but the invited guests proved undeserving; ⁹so go to the thoroughfares and invite to the wedding everyone you find.' ¹⁰Those servants, as they went out on the roads, got together all whom they came across, both bad and good, and the wedding was fully supplied with guests.

¹¹"But when the king came in to look the guests over, he noticed there a man not dressed in a wedding robe, ¹²to whom he said, 'Friend, how did you enter here without a wedding robe?' But he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to his domestic servants, 'Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the outside darkness; there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.' ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen."

¹⁵The Pharisees then went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His speech. ¹⁶So they dispatched their disciples to Him, with the Herodians,^k

who said, "Teacher, we know that You are sincere and that You teach the way of God honestly. You are afraid of none and You court no one's favor. ¹⁷Give us therefore Your opinion: Is it right to pay tax to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸But Jesus saw through their malice and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show Me a coin." And they brought him a coin.^l ²⁰"Whose is this likeness and signature?" He asked them. ²¹They said, "Caesar's." He told them, "Then pay Caesar what is due to Caesar, and God what is due to God." ²²As they listened, they marveled and went off and left Him.

²³That same day Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, approached Him and asked Him, ²⁴"Teacher, Moses said^m if someone dies childless, his brother shall marry his widow and raise descendants for his brother. ²⁵Now there were seven brothers in our community, the first of whom married and died and, having no children, left his widow to his brother. ²⁶So the second, and the third, down to the seventh; ²⁷and, following them all, the woman died. ²⁸At the resurrection, then, whose wife will she be of the seven? For they all had her."

²⁹Jesus answered them, "You are mistaken. You understand neither the Scriptures nor the power of God, ³⁰for in the resurrected state they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹And about the rising of the dead, have you never read what God said to you,ⁿ ³²I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is God, not of dead but living beings."

³³As the crowds listened they were amazed at His teaching; ³⁴but when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they put their heads together ³⁵and one of them, a teacher of the Law, by way of testing Him, asked, ³⁶"Teacher! what is the

i) The parables of the final week of Christ's earthly ministry relate to His rejection by His own nation.

j) Cf. Rom. 3:19.

k) The Herodians were not a religious sect like the Pharisees and Sadducees (see notes at ch. 3:7) but a political party that supported the Herods. All three groups opposed Jesus, vss. 15-16, 23, 34-35.

l) The text reads "denarius," a coin equal to about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency. See notes at chs. 18:24 and 20:2.

m) A custom that predates even the Mosaic Law, cf. Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5-6. n) Ex. 3:6.

great commandment in the Law?"

³⁷He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with your whole mind. ³⁸This is the great and chief commandment. ³⁹The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰On these two^o commandments the whole Law and the Prophets depend."

⁴¹While the Pharisees were still together, Jesus questioned them, ⁴²"What is your idea about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "David's." ⁴³He asked them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying,^p ⁴⁴'The LORD said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand until I put Thy enemies under Thy feet'? ⁴⁵If then David calls Him Lord, how is He his son?" ⁴⁶No one was able to answer Him a word; neither from that day did anyone presume to question Him any more.

23 THEN JESUS SAID TO THE crowds and to His disciples: ²"The scribes^a and the Pharisees are occupying Moses' seat; ³therefore do and observe whatever they tell you, but do not behave as they do; for they talk and do not practice. ⁴They tie up heavy loads and place them on the people's shoulders, but they themselves do not care to move them with their finger. ⁵They conduct all their activities to be noticed by men. For they enlarge their phylacteries^r and lengthen their fringes;^s ⁶they cherish the chief place at dinners and the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷the greetings in the market places and to be called Rabbi^t by men.

⁸"But you must not be called Rabbi, for one is your teacher and you are all brothers. ⁹And call no one on

earth your father, for one is your heavenly Father; ¹⁰neither be called teachers, for you have one teacher — the Christ. ¹¹But he who is greatest among you will be your servant; ¹²for whoever elevates himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be elevated.

¹³"Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces; for neither do you enter^u nor do you allow those entering to go in. ¹⁴[Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for as a pretext for your piety you pray long prayers, and you cheat widows out of their houses. For this you will receive greater judgment.]^v

¹⁵Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you traverse sea and land to make one proselyte and, when he becomes one, you make him a son of perdition twice worse than yourselves.

¹⁶"Alas for you, blind leaders, who say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the temple's gold, he is bound by his oath.' ¹⁷Blind fools! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple that renders the gold sacred? ¹⁸Furthermore you say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if he swears by the offering upon it, he is bound by his oath.' ¹⁹Blind ones, which is greater, the offering, or the altar that renders the offering sacred? ²⁰So one who swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it, ²¹and one who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who occupies it, ²²and one who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.

²³"Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you title

o) Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.

p) Ps. 110:1. This psalm, written by David about 1000 B.C., points to Christ, the Messiah, and is one of a number of Messianic psalms. q) See note at ch. 2:4.

r) A phylactery was a square calfskin box in which slips of parchment, bearing Scripture texts, namely Ex. 13:2-10, 11-17; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-22, were placed. The phylactery was worn either on the forehead or on the left arm below the elbow.

s) The Israelites sewed fringes on the borders of their garments as a reminder of God's commandments and that they were His chosen people, Num. 15:37-40.

t) "Rabbi," from the Hebrew word *rav* or *rab*, means *master*, *lord*.

u) In following the scribes and Pharisees, who were themselves lost, the people would not reach heaven.

v) Verse 14, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

mint, dill and cummin,* and you omit the weightier aspects of the Law—justice, mercy, and faith. These you ought to do without omitting the others. ²¹Blind leaders, who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel!

²⁵"Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. ²⁶Blind Pharisees! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate so that its outside may be clean as well. ²⁷Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you resemble white-washed tombs which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and every impurity. ²⁸So you seem to men to be outwardly upright, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹"Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you build the tombs of the prophets and you decorate the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰and you say, 'Had we lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have had a part in shedding the blood of the prophets.' ³¹Thus you testify against yourselves; for you are the sons of the prophets' murderers. ³²Fill up the measure of your fathers. ³³Snakes! You viper brood! How will you escape the sentence to hell?*

³⁴"Therefore, take notice: I will send you prophets and sages and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some of whom you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, ³⁵so that there may come upon you all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel^y to the blood of Zechariah^z the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶I assure you

that all this will come upon this generation.

³⁷"O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! murdering the prophets and stoning those sent to you! How often have I wanted to gather your children as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were unwilling. ³⁸See, your house is left forsaken; ³⁹for I tell you that you will no longer see Me at all until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

24 LEAVING THE TEMPLE, JESUS went on His way; and His disciples came forward to point out to Him the temple buildings. ²And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? I assure you, not one stone will be left here on another, that will not be thrown down."

³When He was seated on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately and said, "Tell us, when will these things happen and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?"^a ⁴Jesus replied to them^b, "See that none misleads you; ⁵for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

⁶"You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you be not troubled; for they have to come, but that is not yet the end. ⁷For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places; ⁸all these are but the early pains of childbirth. ⁹Then they will hand you over to be persecuted, and they will kill you, and you will be hated by all the nations on account of My name. ¹⁰Many then will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another; ¹¹and many false prophets will arise and will deceive

w) Dill (or anise) and cummin are herbs that are native of the Near East. Their aromatic seeds are used in flavoring.

x) This was a warning that they were at the point of killing their Messiah's, thus following the murderous spirit of their fathers. y) Gen. 4:1-8.

z) II Chron. 24:20-22. Doubtless Jehoiada was Zechariah's grandfather, whereas Barachiah was his father.

a) There are two questions really: (1) concerning the destruction of the temple, v. 2; and (2) about the Lord's return at the end of the age. The former is answered clearly in the parallel passage in Lk. 21:20, 24, and the latter in this chapter, vss. 4-33.

b) Beginning with the events that culminated with the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus goes right on to foretell circumstances leading up to His return in judgment.

many¹²and, due to excessive lawlessness^c the love of many will grow cold.¹³But he who endures to the end will be saved.¹⁴And this good news of the kingdom will be preached all over the world to testify to all the nations, and then the end will come.

¹⁵"When you, therefore, see the desolating abomination mentioned by the Prophet Daniel,^d set up in the holy place—let the reader take note of this—¹⁶then those in Judea should flee to the mountains; ¹⁷one on the roof must not go down to fetch things out of his house, ¹⁸and one in the field must not turn back to pick up his coat. ¹⁹But alas for those who are pregnant and those who are nursing children in those days!

²⁰"Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath; ²¹for then there will be such great tribulation as has never been experienced from the world's beginning until now,^e nor ever will be. ²²If those days were not shortened, not a mortal could survive. However, for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened.

²³"If someone then tells you, 'Look! here is the Christ!' or, 'There He is!' do not believe him; ²⁴for false Messiahs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders to mislead, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵Remember that I have forewarned you. ²⁶So, if they say to you, 'He is there in the desert,' do not go out; 'In these rooms here,' do not believe it. ²⁷For like the lightning that flashes from the east and shines to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.^f ²⁸Wherever there is a corpse the vultures will flock there.

²⁹"Right after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shed her light; the stars will fall from the sky and the forces of heaven will be shaken. ³⁰Then will the sign of the Son of

Man be shown in the sky, and all the tribes of earth will mourn.^g And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven^h with great power and glory. ³¹And He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

³²"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as her branch becomes tender and puts out leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³When you observe all these things, you know that He is so near, that He is at the door. ³⁴I assure you, all these things will take place before this present generation passes on.ⁱ ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. ³⁶But no one knows about that day and hour; neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son but only the Father.

³⁷"As were the days of Noah,^j so will the coming of the Son of Man be; ³⁸for as in those days before the flood people ate and drank, married and were given in marriage until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and did not understand until the deluge came and swept them all away, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰Then there will be two men in the field—one will be taken and one left; ⁴¹two women will be grinding at the mill—one will be taken and one left.

⁴²"Keep watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But of this be sure, if the owner of the house had known in which hour of the night the thief was coming, he would have kept awake and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.

⁴⁵"Who, then, is the faithful and prudent slave,^k whom the master has

c) Cf. II Thess. 2:7; II Tim. 3:1-5.

d) Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11. One temple desecration had already occurred under Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 B.C.; the temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 under Titus; and this verse points to a future desecration by Antichrist of a rebuilt temple, Dan. 9:26-27. e) Dan. 12:1.

f) Cf. Rev. 19:11-16. g) Zech. 12:10-14; cf. Rev. 18:11, 19.

h) A cloud carried Christ up into heaven at His ascension, Acts 1:9-11.

i) The destruction of Jerusalem is a figure of the world's destruction at the return of the Lord.

j) Gen. 6:1-7:24. k) See note at ch. 13:27.

appointed in charge of his household to provide their sustenance at the proper time? ⁴⁶Happy is that servant whom his master finds doing so when he arrives. ⁴⁷I assure you, he will put him in charge of all his property.

⁴⁸"But if that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is delaying his coming,' ⁴⁹and he starts to strike his fellow workers, and eats and drinks with the drunkards, ⁵⁰that slave's master will arrive on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know ⁵¹and will scourge him till his flesh is cut and will put him with the hypocrites; there will be wailing and grinding of teeth there.

25 "THEN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN will be comparable to ten bridesmaids,¹ who, taking their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom.^m ²Five of them were foolish and five were prudent. ³The foolish ones took lamps but took no oil along with them, ⁴but the prudent ones took along oil in the flasks with their lamps. ⁵And as the bridegroom delayed his coming they all grew drowsy and fell asleep.

⁶"But at midnight there came a shout, 'Here is the bridegroom; go out to meet him!' ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the prudent answered, 'No, indeed; there would not be enough for you and us; go to the dealers and buy for yourselves.'

¹⁰"Now while they went off to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast. And the door was shut. ¹¹Afterward the rest of the bridesmaids came and said, 'Master, master, open up for us!' ¹²But he replied, 'I tell you

truly, I do not know you.' ¹³So keep watch; for you know neither the day nor the hour [when the Son of Man is coming].ⁿ

¹⁴"For it will be like that of a man going away, who summoned his domestic servants and committed to them his belongings: ¹⁵To one he gave ten thousand dollars;^o to another, four thousand; and to a third, two thousand—to each according to his own ability; then he went away. ¹⁶At once the one with the ten thousand dollars went and did business with them and gained another ten thousand; ¹⁷so did the one with four thousand dollars gain another four thousand. ¹⁸But the one with two thousand dollars went and dug in the earth and hid his master's money.

¹⁹"After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The one who had ten thousand dollars came forward and brought ten thousand dollars more, saying, 'Master, you entrusted to me ten thousand dollars; look, I have gained these other ten thousand.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, you were trustworthy in a little, I will appoint you over much. Share the happiness of your master.' ²²Then the one with four thousand dollars came and said, 'Master, you handed me four thousand dollars; see, I have gained four thousand dollars more.' ²³The master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were trustworthy in a little, I will appoint you over much. Share the happiness of your master.'

²⁴"But the one who had received two thousand dollars also came forward and said, 'Master, knowing you, that you are a harsh man, reaping where you never sowed and gathering where you did not winnow, ²⁵I was in fear;

1) The Greek word rendered "bridesmaids" here and in the verses that follow is *parthenois*, a plural form of a noun which means specifically *virgin*. It is the precise word which is used to describe Mary, the mother of Jesus, in ch. 1:23, "Behold, the virgin will be with child." Obviously the girls of this parable would be virgins. Because of the context a modern equivalent is employed here. ^m) Some translations, notably the Vulgate and Syriac, read "the bridegroom and the bride." ⁿ) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

^o) In vs. 15-28 the direct translation from the Greek text reads "five talents [*pentē talanta*]," "two talents" and "one talent," and in vs. 29 "ten talents." A silver talent would be equivalent to about \$2000 in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency, so that the figures given in this edition are approximately accurate.

so I went and buried the two thousand dollars in the ground; here you have what is yours.' ²⁶His Master replied to him, 'Despicable and lazy slave! You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not winnow?' ²⁷Then you should have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have gotten my capital with interest. ²⁸So, take the two thousand dollars away from him and give it to the one with the twenty thousand dollars. ²⁹For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have more than plenty; but from him who is wanting will be taken even what he has.' ³⁰Throw the useless slave into the outside darkness; there will be weeping and grinding of teeth there.'

³¹"When the Son of Man comes in His glory,^a and all the angels with Him, then He will be seated on the throne of His glory, ³²and all nations^r will be gathered before Him. And He will separate them from one another as a shepherd parts the sheep from the goats; ³³and He will place the sheep at His right and the goats at His left.

³⁴"The King will then say to those at His right, 'Come, My Father's blessed ones, inherit the kingdom that has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you entertained Me; ³⁶naked, and you clothed Me; sick, and you looked after Me; in prison, and you visited Me.'

³⁷"Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and nourished You, or thirsty and provided You drink? ³⁸When did we see You a stranger and entertained You, or naked and provided You with clothing? ³⁹When did we see You ill or in prison and visited You?' ⁴⁰And the King will answer, 'I assure you, insofar as you did it to one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did it to Me.'

⁴¹"Then will He say to those at His left, 'Begone from Me, accursed ones, to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you did not feed Me; thirsty and you gave Me no drink; ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not entertain Me; naked and you failed to clothe Me; ill and in prison and you did not come to see Me.' ⁴⁴Then will they too answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison and did not serve You?' ⁴⁵Then He will answer them, 'I assure you, insofar as you failed to do it to one of the least of these, you failed to do it to Me.' ⁴⁶And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

26 WHEN JESUS HAD FINISHED ALL these words, He said to His disciples, ²"You know that after two days the Passover will be celebrated and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified." ³Then the chief priests and the elders of the people met at the palace of the high priest, Caiaphas by name, ⁴and plotted to arrest Jesus underhandedly and to kill Him. ⁵But they said, "Not during the Feast, else there might be a riot among the people."

⁶While Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon, the leper, ⁷a woman^a approached Him with an alabaster flask of very precious perfume and poured it on His head as He was seated^t at the table. ⁸Observing it, the disciples said indignantly, "Why this waste? ⁹This could have been sold at a good price and given to the poor." ¹⁰When Jesus heard it He said to them, "Why do you embarrass the woman? She has done something lovely for Me; ¹¹for you always have the poor with you, but Me you do not have always. ¹²By pouring this perfume on My body she has prepared for My burial. ¹³I assure you that wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, this

p) A basic spiritual principle - i.e., that those who have received most from God are held most responsible to Him. q) Rev. 19:11-16.

r) This does not refer to nations in totality but to individuals among the Gentile nations. Each person who stands before the Lord on this occasion will be classed either as a sheep or a goat.

s) This was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, Jn. 12:3. t) See note at Mk. 2:15.

that she has done will be mentioned to her memory."

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, "What are you willing to give me and I will hand Him over to you?" And they offered him thirty pieces of silver." ¹⁶From then on he watched for an opportunity to betray Him.

¹⁷On the first day of unleavened bread the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Where do you want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

¹⁸He said, "Go into the city to so-and-so and tell him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I shall observe the Passover with My disciples at your house.'"

¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus directed them and prepared the Passover.

²⁰As evening was falling, He sat at the table with the twelve disciples ²¹and, while they were eating, He said, "I tell you truly that one of you will betray Me." ²²Greatly distressed, they began to say to Him one after the other, "Surely it is not I, Lord?" ²³But He replied, "He who has dipped his hand with Me in the dish, he will betray Me. ²⁴The Son of Man will indeed go away as has been written of Him, but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Better for that man had he never been born!" ²⁵Judas, who betrayed Him, said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said it."

²⁶As they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take, eat," this is My body." ²⁷He also took the cup and, after giving thanks, gave it to them, saying, "All of you drink of it; ²⁸for this is My blood of the new covenant poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you, from now on I shall not drink of the product of the vine at all until that

day when I shall drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

³⁰When they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹Then Jesus said to them, "Tonight you will all desert Me; for it is written,* I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."

³²But after I am raised up I will precede you to Galilee."

³³Peter answered Him, "Though all the rest desert You, I will never desert You." ³⁴Jesus said to him, "I assure you, this night before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ³⁵Peter said to Him, "Even if I must die with You, never will I deny You." And all the disciples spoke the same way.

³⁶Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane,[†] and told the disciples, "Sit down here, while I go yonder and pray." ³⁷Taking along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,[‡] He began to feel grieved and deeply distressed. ³⁸Then He said to them, "My soul is mortally grieved; stay here and keep watch with Me." ³⁹And, moving forward a little, He fell on His face, praying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; however, not as I will but as Thou wilt."

⁴⁰When He came to the disciples, He found them fast asleep and said to Peter, "So you were not able to watch with Me for a single hour? ⁴¹Watch and pray, so that you may not fall into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

⁴²For a second time He went away and prayed, "My Father, if it cannot pass from Me without My drinking it, Thy will be done." ⁴³When He came back, again He found them asleep, for their eyes were heavy. So ⁴⁴He left them once more and went away the third time speaking the same words. ⁴⁵Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping

u) These pieces of silver were probably silver shekels equal, in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency, to a little more than one dollar per shekel. Judas' price for betraying Christ was from thirty to thirty-five dollars.

v) "Rabbi," a courteous title of address meaning *master*, *lord*. Judas apparently left after Jesus answered his question and did not share in the institution of the Lord's Supper.

w) Cf. I Cor. 11:23-29.

x) Zech. 13:7.

y) "Gethsemane" means *oil press*. It is situated east of Jerusalem on a slope of the Mount of Olives and across a brook called Kidron. z) James and John, ch. 4:21.

and taking your rest? The hour has come, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.^a ⁴⁶Arise, let us be going. Look, My betrayer is at hand."

⁴⁷He was still speaking when Judas, one of the Twelve, came and with him a large mob from the chief priests and elders of the people, carrying swords and clubs. ⁴⁸Now His betrayer had given them a signal, "Whom I kiss, He is the man. Seize Him." ⁴⁹At once he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed Him. ⁵⁰But Jesus said to him, "Friend, for what are you here?" Then they came forward, put their hands on Jesus, and arrested Him.

⁵¹One of Jesus' companions^b put out his hand, drew his sword and, striking the high priest's slave, cut off his ear. ⁵²Jesus then spoke to him, "Return your sword to its place, for all who draw the sword shall be destroyed by the sword. ⁵³Or do you suppose I cannot appeal to My Father and at once He would provide Me with more than twelve legions^c of angels? ⁵⁴How, then, will the Scriptures be fulfilled that it must happen this way?"

⁵⁵At the same time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come as against a robber, with swords and clubs to arrest Me? Daily I have sat in the temple teaching, and you never seized Me. ⁵⁶But all this has occurred, so that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled.

⁵⁷Those who had arrested Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered together. ⁵⁸But Peter^d followed Him from a distance as far as the high priest's courtyard and, stepping inside, sat down with the attendants to see the end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin^e looked for false testimony against Jesus,^f in order that they might exe-

cute Him; ⁶⁰but although many false witnesses came forward, they found nothing. Finally two came forward, ⁶¹who said, "This fellow said, 'I have power to destroy God's temple and to build it again in three days.'"

⁶²So the high priest stood up and said to Him, "Have You nothing to say? What about their evidence against You?" ⁶³But Jesus was silent.^g The high priest said to Him, "I charge You on oath by the living God that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "As you say. Besides, I tell you that shortly you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty and coming upon the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? You have now heard His blasphemy. ⁶⁶What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death!" ⁶⁷Then they spat in His face^h and struck Him with the fist.ⁱ Others slapped Him^j ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ! Who struck You?"

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard and one slave girl came up to him, saying, "And you were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰But before them all he made denial, "I do not know what you mean!" ⁷¹As he was going out into the entrance of the courtyard, another girl noticed him and said to those who were there, "This fellow was with Jesus the Nazarene." ⁷²Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!" ⁷³A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "You certainly are one of them too, for your accent reveals it." ⁷⁴Then he started to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man!" Then a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵And Peter recollected the word that Jesus had spoken, "Before a rooster crows you will deny Me three times." And going outside he cried bitterly.^k

a) This may mean the approaching crowd, v. 47, but it also refers to the Romans to whom He would be delivered, ch. 20:19. b) Simon Peter, Jn. 18:10.

c) A Roman legion was composed of 5000 to 6000 men. d) John followed also, Jn. 18:15-16.

e) See note at Lk. 22:66. f) Cf. Ps. 35:11.

g) Isa. 53:7. See also Matt. 27:14. h) Isa. 50:6; Zech. 13:7. i) Cf. Isa. 52:14. j) Cf. Mic. 5:1.

k) See note at Lk. 22:62.

27 AT DAWN ALL THE CHIEF priests and the elders of the people held consultation against Jesus in order to execute Him. ²Having bound Him, they led Him away and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor.

³When Judas, His betrayer, saw that He was condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴saying, "I sinned in betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? You see to that yourself." ⁵He then flung down the silver pieces in the temple, withdrew and, going off, hanged himself. ⁶The chief priests picked up the money and said, "It is not right to put this in the treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷So, after conferring, they bought with it the Potter's Field as a cemetery for strangers; ⁸therefore that field is called to this day, "The Field of Blood." ⁹Then the saying of Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, ¹"And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the man on whom a price was set, whom Israel's sons had evaluated, ¹⁰and gave them for the potter's field as the Lord directed me."

¹¹But Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "As you say." ¹²And to the accusations of the chief priests and the elders against Him He made no reply. ¹³Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how much they testify against You?" ¹⁴But to the governor's great surprise He answered him never a word.

¹⁵Now it was customary for the governor to release at the feast one prisoner selected by the populace. ¹⁶And at that time they held a notorious convict called Barabbas. ^m¹⁷So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want released to you, Barabbas or Jesus, who is called

Christ? ¹⁸For he knew that theyⁿ had delivered Him out of envy.

¹⁹While he was seated on the tribunal, his wife sent him a message that said, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for I suffered a great deal today in a dream because of Him."

²⁰But the chief priests and elders persuaded the masses to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus destroyed. ²¹The governor answered them, "Which of the two shall I release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" ²²Pilate asked them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let Him be crucified!" ²³Pilate said, "Why, what wrong has He done?" But they shouted all the more loudly, "Let Him be crucified!"

²⁴When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing but that instead a riot was brewing, he took water and washed his hands^o before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this man; you yourselves see to it." ²⁵And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and our children." ²⁶He then released Barabbas to them; but Jesus he flogged and handed over to be crucified.

²⁷Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus along into the palace and gathered the whole cohort^p around Him. ²⁸They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him; ²⁹they plaited a crown of thorns and placed it on His head, also a reed in His hand, and, kneeling before Him, they ridiculed Him, "Long live the King of the Jews!" ³⁰They spat on Him; they took the reed and struck Him on the head; ³¹and after they had mocked Him, they took off the robe and put on His own clothes. Then they led Him away to be crucified.

³²On the way out they found a Cyrenian called Simon,^q whom they forced to carry His cross. ³³Arriving at a place called Golgotha, which means

1) Although the citation is attributed to Jeremiah, the reference is certainly to Zech. 11:12-13. In Jer. 18:1-4 and 19:1-3 allusion is made to a potter, but no prediction concerning a potter's field for burial is found there. Doubtless "Jeremiah" in vs. 9 is due to a copyist's error. To discover how low a value Judas placed upon Jesus, see Ex. 21:32, note. m) "Barabbas" means son of the father. n) "They" means the leaders and not the crowd; for it was to the leaders of the people that Pilate appealed.

o) It was customary in ancient times to wash one's hands before an audience when absolving oneself from guilt, Deut. 21:6-7. p) See note at Acts 10:1.

q) A Jew from North Africa, near Tripoli. His sons were Alexander and Rufus, Mk. 15:21. One of them may have become a Christian, cf. Rom. 16:13.

"Place of a Skull," ³⁴they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall;^r but after tasting it He would not drink it.

³⁵And when they had crucified Him, they distributed His clothes among them by casting lots [so that the prophet's saying was fulfilled,^s "They parted My garments among them, and over My vesture they cast lots"].¹ ³⁶And, sitting down, they watched Him there. ³⁷Over His head they placed the written charge against Him, THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁸Then robbers were crucified along with Him, one to the right and one to the left.^u ³⁹And those walking by insulted Him, wagging their heads and saying, ⁴⁰"You destroyer and reconstructor of the temple in three days, save Yourself if You are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!" ⁴¹Similarly, the chief priests with the scribes and the elders scoffed at Him, ⁴²"He saved others but He cannot save Himself. Is He King of Israel? Let Him now come down from the cross and we will believe in Him. ⁴³He trusts in God? Let Him rescue Him now, if He wants Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"² ⁴⁴The robbers, too, who were crucified with Him, leveled the same reproach at Him.

⁴⁵From twelve o'clock, until three darkness lay on all the land; ⁴⁶and at about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice,^v "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

⁴⁷Some of the bystanders who heard it, said, "He is calling for Elijah."³ ⁴⁸And at once one of them ran, took a sponge, dipped it in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, offered it to Him to drink. ⁴⁹But the others said, "Hold on! Let us see if Elijah comes to save Him."

⁵⁰Jesus, once more crying with a loud voice, dismissed His spirit. ⁵¹And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook;

the rocks were split; ⁵²the tombs were opened and many bodies of the buried saints were raised ⁵³and after His resurrection they left their tombs, entered the holy city and appeared to many.

⁵⁴When the centurion and his men, who were watching Jesus, observed the earthquake and everything that happened, they were dreadfully frightened and said, "Truly, this was God's Son!"

⁵⁵There were also numerous women observing from a distance, those who had followed Jesus from Galilee rendering Him service, ⁵⁶including Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Josés, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

⁵⁷With the coming of evening there came a rich man from Arimathea,^w called Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and requested the body of Jesus. Then Pilate gave orders to have it relinquished. ⁵⁹When Joseph had obtained the body, he wrapped it in clean linen ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb,^x which he had hewn out in the rock. Then, rolling a large stone in front of the opening of the tomb, he went away. ⁶¹But Mary Magdalene was there and the other Mary^y sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²The next day, that is the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, "We remember, Sir, that this imposter said,^z while He was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.'

⁶⁴Give orders, therefore, to have the tomb safeguarded until the third day, so His disciples may not come and steal Him and then tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead,' and the final fraud will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "The guard is yours; go on and make it as secure as you can." ⁶⁶So they went and safeguarded the tomb, sealing the stone and setting a guard.

r) Ps. 69:21. s) Ps. 22:18.

t) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. u) Isa. 53:12. v) Ps. 22:1.

w) Arimathea was about twenty miles northwest of Jerusalem. In the O.T. the city is designated as Ramathain-Zophim or Ramah. x) Isa. 53:9. y) See note at ch. 1:16.

z) Chapters 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; cf. Jn. 2:19-22.

28 AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE Sabbath, with the dawning of the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to look at the tomb. ²And a severe earthquake occurred; for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, approaching the stone, rolled it aside and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. ⁴The sentries shook for fear of him and became like corpses. ⁵But the angel said to the women, "Have no fear! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for He is risen just as He said. Come, see the place where He lay. ⁷And go, hasten to tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead and is preceding you into Galilee; there you will see Him. See, I have told you."

⁸Hastily they left the tomb, in fear and with great joy, and ran to tell the news to His disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" Going up to Him they clasped His feet and knelt before Him. ¹⁰Jesus then said to them, "Have no fear. Go, tell My brothers to go to Galilee; and they shall see Me there."

¹¹While they were on their way some of the guard entered the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had occurred. ¹²They, deliberating in session with the elders, gave the soldiers considerable money, ¹³telling them, "Say 'His disciples came by night and stole Him while we were asleep.' ¹⁴And if this reaches the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵So the guards accepted the money and did as they were instructed, and this story has been current among the Jews until the present day.

¹⁶But the eleven disciples went away to Galilee,^a to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷And when they saw Him they worshiped Him, but some were in doubt. ¹⁸Jesus came to them and He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given Me. ¹⁹Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you. And, remember, I am with you all the days until the end of the age."^b

^a) Verses 7, 10; ch. 26:32.

^b) The word "age" is from the Greek noun *aion* which means (1) *a lifetime*, the period of an individual's existence on earth; (2) *a segment of time*, such as the present age or the age to come; (3) *a very long time*, as the age of mankind; (4) *perpetuity of time, eternity* (especially in the plural); and (5) occasionally *the world, the universe*. Concepts (1), (2) and (4) all fit the context of Christ's promise.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MARK

1 THE BEGINNING OF THE GOOD news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; ²as it is written^a in the Prophet Isaiah, "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who shall prepare Your way; ³a voice of one shouting in the desert, 'Make the Lord's way ready; make straight His paths!'"

c. A.D. 26

⁴John the Baptist appeared in the desert, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁵and all Judea and all the people of Jerusalem came out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan River upon confessing their sins.

⁶John was dressed in clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "After me comes One greater than I, the strings of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

c. A.D. 27

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth^b in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And the moment He came up from the water He saw the heavens parted and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down upon Him. ¹¹There also came a voice from heaven, "Thou art My Son, My Beloved; in Thee I am delighted."

¹²Without delay the Spirit drove

Him into the desert ¹³where He remained forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on Him.

c. A.D. 28

¹⁴After John had been arrested Jesus went to Galilee, preaching the good news from God, ¹⁵saying, "The time is completed and the kingdom of God is near; repent and believe in the good news."

¹⁶As he was passing along the Sea of Galilee He noticed Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷Jesus said^c to them, "Come after Me and I will make you become fishers of men."

¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed Him. ¹⁹Going on a little, He saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John, who were in their boat, mending the nets. ²⁰At once He called them and, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired hands, they went off after Him.

²¹They entered Capernaum^d and the next Sabbath day He went to the synagogue and taught. ²²They marveled at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes.^e

²³There was in their synagogue just then a man with an unclean spirit, who cried out, ²⁴"What business is it of Yours to bother us, Jesus You Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of

a) Isa. 40:3; cf. Mal. 3:1. b) See note at Matt. 2:23.

c) This was the second and permanent call, cf. John 1:35-51. Peter, Andrew, James, John and Nathanael (Bartholomew) may have helped Jesus on occasions prior to this.

d) See note at Matt. 4:13. e) See note at Matt. 2:4.

God." ²⁵Jesus rebuked him: "Silence! Get out of him!" ²⁶The unclean spirit, throwing him into a spasm, cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, so that they inquired among themselves, "What does this mean? A new teaching? With authority He orders even the unclean spirits and they obey Him!" ²⁸And rapidly His fame spread in every direction through that whole Galilean region.

²⁹Directly, from the synagogue they went with James and John to the house of Simon and Andrew; ³⁰but Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with fever and at once they told Him about her. ³¹He went to help her, took her by the hand and helped her rise. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

³²In the evening at sunset they brought to Him all the sick and the demon-possessed ³³until the whole city was gathered at the door. ³⁴He cured many who were ill with various diseases and cast out many demons; but since the demons knew Him, He did not permit them to speak.

³⁵Rising early in the morning long before daylight, He left and went out to a lonely spot and prayed there. ³⁶Simon and his companions searched for Him, ³⁷found Him and told Him, "They are all looking for You." ³⁸He said to them, "Let us go elsewhere into the adjoining towns so that I may preach there too, because for this purpose I came." ³⁹And He went preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons through all Galilee.

⁴⁰A leper came to Him, begging of Him on his knees, "If you are willing, You can cleanse me." ⁴¹Deeply sympathetic, He reached out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing. Be cleansed." ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. ⁴³Then and there He sent him off with the stern injunction, ⁴⁴"Be careful to tell no one, but go and show yourself to the priest and

offer what Moses has prescribed^f for your purification, as a testimony to the people." ⁴⁵But he went off and began to publish it so much and to spread the report so widely that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly, but stayed outside in lonely places. And from everywhere people came to Him.

2 SOME DAYS LATER HE RETURNED to Capernaum, and it was learned that He was at home. ²So many congregated that shortly there was no longer any room even at the door. He was preaching the word to them ³when they came and brought a paralytic to Him, carried by four men. ⁴And, being unable to get near Him on account of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him and through the opening lowered the couch on which the paralytic was lying.

⁵Observing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." ⁶But some of the scribes were sitting there with questions in their hearts, ⁷"Why does He talk this way? It is blasphemy. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" ⁸Perceiving at once in His spirit that they were reasoning that way to themselves, Jesus said to them, "Why do you question this way in your hearts? ⁹Which is easier, to tell the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your couch and walk off?' ¹⁰But to let you know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on the earth," He said to the paralytic, ¹¹"I tell you, rise, pick up your mat and go home."

¹²At once he arose, picked up his couch and went out in the presence of everyone, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like it before!" ¹³Then He went out again by the seaside, where the whole crowd came to Him, and He taught them.

¹⁴As He walked along He noticed Levi,^g the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the

f) Cf. Lev. 14:2-32. Under the Mosaic Law the priest performed some of the functions of a physician. Jesus, our great high priest before God, Heb. 4:14, is the great physician.

g) Levi is another name for Matthew. This is evident after comparing vss. 14-17 with the parallel passage at Matt. 9:9-13. No explanation is given in the N.T. as to why this man has two names, which was not uncommon among the Jews of that period, e.g., see note at ch. 2:25. Some suppose that like Simon, whom the Lord named Peter, and Saul, who later became Paul, Levi received the name Matthew after he became a Christian. He is always called Matthew in the lists of the apostles.

tax office, and said to him, "Follow Me." He arose and followed Him. ¹⁵And so it was, as He sat^h at the table at his house, that along with Jesus and His disciples, many tax collectors and sinners were seated there also; for many such were His followers. ¹⁶The scribes, who were of the Pharisees,ⁱ who observed that He dined with sinners and tax collectors remarked to His disciples, "Why does He eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷On hearing it Jesus told them, "Not the well but the sick have need of a physician. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

¹⁸John's disciples and the Pharisees were observing a fast; so they^j came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁹Jesus replied to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is in their company? So long as the bridegroom is with them they cannot fast, ²⁰but a time will come when the bridegroom^k will be taken from them, and then will be their day to fast. ²¹No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old coat, for the new piece would tear away from the old and the tear become worse. ²²Neither does one pour new wine into old wineskins, for the wine would burst the skins, with both wine and skins ruined. But new wine goes into new skins."

²³He happened on the Sabbath to pass through a wheat field and His disciples started to pick the heads of wheat. ²⁴The Pharisees said to Him, "See how they are doing what is not allowed on the Sabbath!" ²⁵He replied, "Have you never read^l what David and his men did when they were hungry? ²⁶How in the days of Abiathar, the high priest, he went in-

to the house of God and ate the presentation loaves,^m which none but the priests are allowed to eat, and shared with his companions?" ²⁷He said further to them, "The Sabbath was made for man's sake, not man for the Sabbath, ²⁸so that the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

3 AGAIN HE ENTERED THE SYNA-
gogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. ²They watched Him, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. ³He told the man with the withered hand, "Stand there in the center." ⁴Then He asked them, "Is it right to help or to hurt on the Sabbath; to save a life or to kill?" But they kept still. ⁵Looking around at them angrily because He was vexed at their callousness of heart, He said to the man, "Hold out your hand." He held it out and his hand was restored. ⁶And at once the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him with the Herodiansⁿ for the purpose of destroying Him.

⁷With His disciples Jesus retired to the seaside and a great many followed Him from Galilee and from Judea, ⁸from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond the Jordan, and from around Tyre and Sidon — a large number came to Him when they heard what He had done. ⁹He told His disciples to have a little boat ready for Him, so that the throng might not press upon Him; ¹⁰for He healed many, so that all who had ailments closed in on Him to touch Him. ¹¹And whenever the unclean spirits saw Him they fell down before Him, screaming, "You are the Son of God!" ¹²But He charged them strictly not to make Him known.

¹³Then He went up the hill, summoned those whom He wanted, and

h) In N.T. times dining custom was different from what it now is. One did not sit down at a table to eat but reclined on a couch beside a table. While leaning on one elbow he used the other hand for eating. To accord with present-day usage the Greek words for "recline," "reclining" and "reclined" are rendered "sit," "sitting," "sat" and "seated" in this translation.

i) See note at Matt. 3:7. j) "They" are the disciples of John the Baptist, Matt. 9:14.

k) Christ is pictured in the N.T. as the Bridegroom and His Church as His bride, cf. Eph. 5:25, 26; Rev. 19:7-9. In the same way the O.T. alludes to Jehovah as the Husband and Israel His wife, cf. Isa. 54:5; Jer. 31:32; Hos. 2:16-23.

l) I Sam. 21:1-6. Abiathar is called Ahimelech in I Sam. 21:1; 22:9, 11, 20 and Ahiah in I Sam. 14:3, in accord with Hebrew practice of occasionally giving more than one name to an individual.

m) This was the showbread, Exod. 25:30. n) See note at Matt. 22:16.

they came to Him. ¹⁴He appointed twelve to be with Him, that He might send them out to preach ¹⁵with power to [heal the sick and to]^o expel demons. He appointed these twelve: ¹⁶Simon whom He called Peter; ¹⁷James, the son of Zebedee and John, the brother of James, whom He called Boanerges — that is Sons of Thunder; ¹⁸Andrew and Philip; Bartholomew and Matthew; Thomas and James, the son of Alphaeus;^p Thaddeus and Simon of Cana; ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

²⁰They entered a house, and again the crowd collected so that they could not even have a meal. ²¹When His relatives learned of it, they came out to seize Him, for they said, "He is deranged." ²²But the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul^q and through the ruler of demons He expels demons." ²³So He called them to Him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan expel Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot last, ²⁵and if a household is divided against itself, that household cannot last, ²⁶and if Satan rebels against himself, he cannot stand but is about to come to an end. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man and then will loot his place.

²⁸"I assure you that all the sins that the sons of men commit and all the blasphemies that they utter are pardonable, ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will have no forgiveness forever but is guilty of an eternal sin" — ³⁰because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

³¹His mother and His brothers came and, standing outside, sent messengers to call Him. ³²A crowd was sitting around Him and they told Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are outside asking for You." ³³He answered them, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" ³⁴Looking at those sitting around

Him in a circle He said, "See! My mother and My brothers. ³⁵Whoever does the will of God, that one is My brother and sister and mother."

4 AGAIN HE BEGAN TO TEACH BY the seaside, and so huge a crowd collected around Him that He got into a boat on the lake and sat in it, while all the people stayed on shore near the water. ²He taught them many lessons in parables, and told them in His teaching, ³"Listen! A sower went out to sow ⁴and, as he sowed, some seed fell along the road, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky soil where it had little earth, and because it had no depth of soil it sprang up at once; ⁶but when the sun rose it got scorched, and because it had no root it withered. ⁷Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, so it yielded no crop. ⁸And other seed fell on the good soil and it sprang up and grew and yielded a crop — thirty, sixty, even a hundred-fold." ⁹He added, "Whoever has ears which can hear, let him listen."

¹⁰When He was by Himself, those near Him, with the Twelve, inquired about the parables ¹¹and He told them, "The secret of God's kingdom is committed to you; but to outsiders these matters all come in parables ¹²so that^a 'for all their seeing they may not perceive and for all their hearing they may not understand, so they may not turn about and be forgiven.'"

¹³He told them further, "If you do not understand this parable, how will you grasp all the parables? ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵Those along the road are where the word is sown and, as soon as it is heard, Satan comes and snatches away the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶Similarly those seeds on rocky soil — they readily and gladly receive the word, ¹⁷but it takes no root in them; they last briefly. When trouble or persecution comes on account of the word at once they stumble and

^o) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

^p) This Alphaeus, the father of James, is apparently not identical with the father of Levi (Matthew), ch. 2:14. There is no reason to suppose that Matthew and James were brothers.

^q) See note at Luke 11:15.

^r) Relationship with Christ surpasses family ties no matter how close they may be. ^s) Isa. 6:9, 10.

fall. ¹⁸Others are sown among thorns — they hear the word ¹⁹but the world's cares and the delight of wealth and the passions for other interests enter in to choke the word and it becomes fruitless. ²⁰And those sown on good soil — they are the ones who hear and accept the word and they yield thirty, sixty, even a hundredfold."

²¹He said to them, "Is a lamp brought in so that it may stand under the peck measure or under the bed? Is it not put on the stand? ²²For nothing is hidden except to be shown and nothing kept secret except to be revealed. ²³Whoever has ears which can hear, let him listen."

²⁴He further said to them: "Be careful what you hear. The measure you deal out to others will be dealt to you, with more added; ²⁵for to one who has shall be given, and one who has not shall be deprived of what he has."

²⁶And He said, "The kingdom of God is as when a man scatters seed in the soil, ²⁷then sleeps at night and rises by day while the seed sprouts and springs up, he does not know how. ²⁸The soil produces of itself first the blade, then the head, then the mature wheat in the head; ²⁹and whenever the crop is ready, he puts in the sickle because harvest has come."

³⁰He also said, "To what may we compare the kingdom of God or by what parable may we picture it? ³¹It is like a mustard seed — smaller than any seed on earth, ³²yet, when planted, it springs up and grows to be larger than any plant, producing such large branches that the birds of the air can nest under its shelter."

³³With many such parables He told them the word insofar as they could grasp it; ³⁴He spoke in parables only and explained everything to His disciples by themselves.

³⁵At evening that same day, He said to them, "Let us cross to the other side." ³⁶So, leaving the crowd, they took Him along in the boat just as He was, and other boats accompanied

Him. ³⁷A heavy squall of wind came up and the waves dashed into the boat so that the boat was filling, ³⁸while He was in the stern asleep on a pillow. They awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are sinking?" ³⁹He rose up, rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still!" Then the wind fell and there was great calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" ⁴¹They were terribly frightened and said to one another, "Who is this anyway? For even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

5 THEY ARRIVED AT THE OPPOSITE shore in the country of the Gerasenes.¹ ²And no sooner had He disembarked than there met Him a man from the tombs, with an unclean spirit. ³He made his home among the tombs and no one could ever bind him, even with chains; ⁴for several times he had been bound in fetters and chains, but the chains were shattered and the fetters smashed by him. Nobody was strong enough to control him. ⁵All the time, night and day, he remained among the tombs and in the mountains, shrieking and cutting himself with stones.

⁶When from a distance he noticed Jesus, he ran and knelt before Him, ⁷crying with a loud voice, "What business is it of Yours Jesus, Son of God Most High? I adjure You to God, do not torment me." ⁸For He was saying to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man!" ⁹And was questioning him, "What is your name?" He answered, "My name is Legion," for we are many." ¹⁰Then he urgently begged Him not to send them out of the country.

¹¹Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; ¹²and the demons besought Him, "Send us to the swine so that we may enter them!" ¹³He permitted them, and the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine. Then the herd of about

(1) Some other manuscripts read "Gadarenes," still others "Gergesenes." Gerasa was situated twenty miles due east of the Jordan River, approximately halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. u) A Roman legion was composed of 5,000 to 6,000 men.

two thousand rushed headlong down the precipice into the lake and drowned in the lake. ¹⁴Those tending them fled and told the news in town and in the countryside, and the people came to see what had happened. ¹⁵They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac, who had been possessed of the legion, sitting down, dressed and sane, and they were filled with awe. ¹⁶Those who had seen it told them what had happened to the demoniac; also about the swine. ¹⁷Then they began to implore Him to leave their shores.

¹⁸As He was embarking the former demoniac requested that he might be with Jesus, but He did not let him. ¹⁹Instead He said to him, "Go back to your family and friends and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and the mercy He has shown you." ²⁰And he went off and began to announce throughout the Decapolis^v everything that Jesus had done for him, and all were astonished.

²¹When Jesus had crossed again to the other side, a great multitude massed around Him. He was on the shore ²²when one of the synagogue directors, named Jairus, came and at sight of Him fell at His feet ²³and strongly pleaded with Him, "My daughter is at the point of death. Come, place Your hands on her, that she may recover and live." ²⁴And He went with him. A vast host followed Him and pressed upon Him.

²⁵A woman too, who for twelve years ²⁶had suffered hemorrhages and had been treated much by many physicians, spending all she had without improving but rather growing worse, ²⁷when she heard about Jesus, came in the crowd behind and touched His robe, ²⁸for she said, "If only I touch His robe, I shall be healed." ²⁹At once her hemorrhage stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

³⁰Then and there Jesus, conscious that power had gone from Him,^w

turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched My clothes?" ³¹His disciples remarked to Him, "You see the crowd pressing You on all sides and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" ³²But He looked around to see her who had done it. ³³Then the woman, afraid and trembling because she knew what had happened to her, came and fell at His feet and told Him the whole truth. ³⁴And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."

³⁵While He was still speaking there arrived those from the ruler's house who told him, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher further?" ³⁶But Jesus, overhearing the spoken message, said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Have no fear; only believe."

³⁷He permitted no one to accompany Him except Peter and James and James' brother John. ³⁸Arriving at the ruler's house He observed the bedlam — loud weeping and wailing — ³⁹and as He entered He said to them, "Why this turmoil and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." ⁴⁰They ridiculed Him; but He personally put them all out, took along the child's father and mother and those with Him, and entered the room where the child was. ⁴¹Then, taking the child's hand, He said to her, "Talitha koum," which means, "Little girl, I tell you, rise." ⁴²And instantly the little girl got up and walked around. She was twelve. They were astonished beyond all expression, ⁴³but He strictly charged them that no one should know it, and told them to give her something to eat.

6 LEAVING THERE, HE CAME TO HIS home town,^x accompanied by His disciples; ²and on the Sabbath He began to teach in the synagogue. Many, when they heard Him, were utterly amazed, saying, "Where did He get all this? What wisdom has been given Him and what miracles are these that happen by His hands? ³Is not this the

v) The Decapolis (from *dekapolei* meaning *ten cities*) refers to a group of cities that were allied against common enemies. They were situated in the region between Damascus and the Arabian Desert and are generally listed as Scythopolis, Hippos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia, Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Raphana and Damascus. w) Christ, not His robe, was the source of the power to heal. x) Nazareth. See note at Matt. 2:23.

carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Jude and Simon?^y And do not His sisters live here with us?" And they took offense on His account.

⁴Jesus told them, "No prophet is without honor except in his own country and among his relatives and in his home." ⁵And He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid hands on a few sick and healed them. ⁶And He wondered at their unbelief. So He went around the nearby villages teaching, ⁷and called the Twelve, whom He began to send out two by two, giving them authority over the unclean spirits ⁸and directing them to take nothing for the trip except only a staff — no bread, no bag, not a penny in the belt — ⁹to wear sandals and not to put on two coats.

¹⁰He further told them, "Wherever you enter a house, remain there until you leave the place. ¹¹And whatever community will neither receive you nor listen to you, when you leave there shake off the dust from under your feet for a witness against them. [Truly I tell you, it will be more endurable for Sodom^z and Gomorrah in the Judgment Day than for that city.]"^a ¹²So they went out and preached that men should repent. ¹³They expelled many demons; and many sick they anointed with oil and healed.

c. A.D. 29

¹⁴King Herod^b heard of it, for Jesus' name had become well known, and he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead and therefore these miracles are being done by him." ¹⁵Others said, "He is Elijah"; others again, "He is a prophet like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶But on hearing of Him, Herod asserted, "John, whom I beheaded, has risen from the dead." ¹⁷For Herod himself had sent to arrest John and had confined him in prison, because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for

he had married her. ¹⁸For John had told Herod, "You have no right to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹So Herodias held a grudge against him and wanted to execute him but was unable to do so; ²⁰for Herod stood in awe of John because he knew that he was an upright and holy^c man. He protected him and, on hearing him, was perplexed; yet he enjoyed listening to him.

²¹An opportune time came, when on Herod's birthday, he gave a banquet to his nobles and commanders and prominent Galileans, ²²at which Herodias' daughter came in and danced. She pleased Herod and his guests. So the king said to the girl, "Ask whatever you want and I will give it to you." ²³Then he swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give it to you up to half my kingdom." ²⁴She went out and asked her mother, "What shall I request?" "The head of John the Baptist," she replied. ²⁵She entered the hall and at once hastened to the king and made the request, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist."

²⁶Although the king was extremely sorry, yet for the sake of his oaths and his guests he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷And at once the king dispatched a guardsman with orders to bring John's head. He went, beheaded him in prison, ²⁸brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl; and the girl presented it to her mother. ²⁹And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his body and laid it in a tomb.

³⁰The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him everything they had done and taught. ³¹Then He told them, "Come away to a solitary place and rest awhile." For so many were coming and going that they did not have time even to eat. ³²So they left in a boat for a lonely spot by themselves. ³³But the people saw them leaving and many recognized them, and from all

y) James became the leader of the Jerusalem church, cf. Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18, and was the author of the epistle bearing his name. Jude also wrote a N.T. epistle. All four men named in this verse were sons of Joseph and Mary. z) See note at Luke 10:12.

a) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. b) This was Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. cf. Matt. 14:1.

c) "Holy" is from the Greek *hagios*, which means to be revered, set apart for, dedicated to, consecrated to God.

the towns they ran there on foot and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴When Jesus landed, He saw a large crowd and was moved with pity over them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things.

³⁵As the hour grew late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a solitary place and now the hour is late; ³⁶dismiss them so that they may go to surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

³⁷But He answered them, "You give them to eat." They said, "Shall we go and buy fifty dollars worth of food and feed them?" ³⁸He asked them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and find out." When they had found out, they reported, "Five, and two fish."

³⁹He then gave them all orders to sit^d on the green grass by groups, ⁴⁰and they sat in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹Taking the five loaves of bread and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He gave thanks and broke the bread and gave it to the disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish for them all. ⁴²They all ate and were fully satisfied. ⁴³They picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces of bread and fish. ⁴⁴And there were five thousand men who partook of the food.

⁴⁵Then without delay He urged His disciples to board the boat and to cross over to Bethsaida,^e ⁴⁶while He dismissed the crowd and, after He had taken leave of them, went away to the mountain to pray.

⁴⁷At nightfall the boat was in the middle of the sea and He alone on land. ⁴⁸Seeing them toiling hard at rowing because the wind was against them, He approached them around the fourth watch^f of the night walking on the sea as if He meant to pass them. ⁴⁹But ob-

serving Him walking on the sea they supposed that it was a ghost and they cried out; ⁵⁰for they all saw Him and were terrified. But, speaking to them at once, He told them, "Take courage! It is I; have no fear." ⁵¹He then climbed into the boat with them, and the wind fell. They were beside themselves with amazement; ⁵²for they failed to understand the meaning of the loaves — their hearts were dull.

⁵³After crossing the lake they landed at Gennesaret^h and docked. ⁵⁴But as soon as they disembarked the people recognized Him ⁵⁵and ran around that entire district and began to carry to Him on their couches, wherever they heard He was, all who had ailments. ⁵⁶And wherever He went, into village or town or country, they placed their sick in the market place and begged Him to let them touch if only the hem of His robe. And as many as touched Him were healed.

7 THEN THE PHARISEES AND SOME of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem, called on Him jointly, ²having noticed some of His disciples eating their food with unclean, that is, unwashed hands. ³For the Pharisees, and all the Jews who observe the traditions of the elders, do not eat without washing their hands up to the elbow, ⁴and when they come from market they do not eat without washing. And there are numerous other rules which they follow traditionally, such as washing cups and pots and bronze utensils and beds.

⁵So the Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, "Why do Your disciples behave contrary to the elders' tradition, but eat food with unclean hands?" ⁶He told them, "Suitably did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites as it is written, ⁱ 'This people honor Me

d) See note at ch. 2:15.

e) Christ, who made all things, John 1:3, had power over nature as well as human life. The three miracles of this chapter (feeding the 5,000, walking on the water, and calming the sea) are among the most impressive miracles of this kind. It is significant that the first miracle (or sign, Gk. *semeion*) He performed, changing water into wine, John 2:11, was in the realm of nature.

f) See note at ch. 8:22.

g) The first watch was from 6 to 9 p.m.; the second, 9 p.m. to midnight; the third, midnight to 3 a.m.; and the fourth, 3 to 6 a.m.

h) Gennesaret was on the northwestern shore of the sea of Galilee.

i) Isa. 29:13; cf. Isa. 58:1-3; Ezek. 33:31.

with their lips; but their hearts are estranged from Me. ⁷Vainly they worship Me, when teaching human regulations as doctrines.' ⁸You let go of God's commandments to cling to human tradition."

⁹He added, "How well you frustrate the law of God to observe your own tradition. ¹⁰For Moses said,^j 'Honor your father and your mother' and^k 'Whoever curses father or mother, let him be executed.' ¹¹But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "What you would have received from me is Corban," that is to say consecrated to God, he is exempt,' ¹²you no longer permit him to do anything for his father and mother. ¹³Thus you annul God's word through your tradition which you have handed down. And you do many things of that kind."

¹⁴Calling the people to Him again, Jesus told them, "All of you listen to Me and understand. ¹⁵Nothing entering a man from the outside can defile him, but the things that come out of the man render the person unclean. ¹⁶[If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.]"^l

¹⁷When He had gone indoors away from the crowd, His disciples questioned Him about the parable ¹⁸and He said to them, "Are you, too, so lacking in comprehension? Do you not perceive that whatever enters from the outside cannot defile a person, ¹⁹because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated?" In saying this He declared all foods to be clean. ²⁰He said further, "What comes out of the man defiles him; ²¹for from within, out of a man's heart wicked thoughts emerge — unchastity, ²²theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, vicious envy, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. ²³All these wicked things come from the inside and defile a man."

²⁴Then He arose and left there for the district of Tyre^m where He entered

a house, not wanting anyone to know it; but He could not remain hidden. ²⁵Instead, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit came as soon as she heard of Him and threw herself at His feet. ²⁶She was a Gentile, a native Syro-Phoenician, and she begged Him to expel the demon from her daughter. ²⁷He said to her, "First let the children be satisfied; for it is not fair to take the children's bread and to throw it to the house dogs."ⁿ ²⁸But she answered Him, "Yes, Lord, yet the house dogs under the table eat from the children's scraps." ²⁹He said to her, "For this thought go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter." ³⁰And when she reached home she found the child lying on the bed and the demon expelled.

³¹Returning from the district of Tyre He passed through Sidon on to the Sea of Galilee and up the center of the Decapolis^o region. ³²And they brought Him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, and begged Him to lay His hands on him. ³³Taking him by himself away from the crowd, He put His fingers into his ears and touched his tongue with saliva. ³⁴Then, looking up toward heaven, He sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." ³⁵And his ears were opened, and at once the obstruction of his tongue was loosed and he spoke clearly.

³⁶He charged them to tell no one; but the more He charged them, the more widely they made it known. ³⁷They were immeasurably astonished, and exclaimed, "How well He has done everything! He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak."

8 IN THOSE DAYS ONCE AGAIN AN IMMENSE crowd gathered and had nothing to eat. So, summoning the disciples, He told them, "I feel very sorry for these people because they have stayed with Me now for three days and

j) Exod. 20:12. k) Exod. 21:17.

l) Verse 16, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. m) See note at Matt. 11:21.

n) The Greek word rendered "house dogs" is the plural form of *kunarium*, meaning *little dog* or *house dog*, any dog that might sit under a dining table hoping for scraps of food. There is another word for "dog," *kuōn*, which denotes an unclean kind of canine. This word is used in Matt. 7:6; Luke 16:21; II Pet. 2:22. o) See note at ch. 5:20.

have nothing to eat. ³If I should send them home hungry, they would faint on the way, and some of them are from a considerable distance."

⁴His disciples answered Him, "Where in this desert can we secure bread to satisfy such a number?" ⁵He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." ⁶So He instructed the crowd to sit down on the ground and, taking the seven loaves of bread, He gave thanks, broke them, gave them to His disciples to set before the people, and they set them before the crowd. ⁷They also had a few small fish, and when He had given thanks for them He told the disciples to set them before the crowd also. ⁸So they ate and were satisfied; and they picked up the leftovers, seven baskets full. ⁹About four thousand had eaten. He then dismissed them, ¹⁰and immediately embarking with His disciples, reached the region of Dalmanutha.^p

¹¹The Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him. To test Him, they asked Him for a sign from heaven. ¹²Sighing deeply in His very soul, He said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? I assure you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³So He left them, embarked again and crossed to the other side.

¹⁴The disciples had forgotten to bring along bread, nor did they have more than a single loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵Thus He cautioned them, "Look out. Beware of the yeast^q of the Pharisees and of Herod's yeast."

¹⁶They remarked to one another, "It is because we have no bread." ¹⁷Aware of it, He said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still neither grasp nor understand? Is your heart calloused? ¹⁸Having eyes can you not see and having ears can you not hear? And do you not remember ¹⁹when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets you picked up full of leftovers?" They

said to Him, "Twelve." ²⁰"When there were seven loaves for the four thousand, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up?" They said to Him, "Seven." ²¹And He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

²²They reached Bethsaida,^r where they brought a blind man to Him and appealed to Him to touch him. ²³So, taking hold of the blind man's hand, He led him out of the village; then after putting saliva on his eyes, He put His hands on him and asked him, "Do you see anything?" ²⁴He looked up and said, "I see people, but they look like trees — walking around." ²⁵Then again Jesus placed His hands on his eyes; and he looked steadily and was restored and saw everything distinctly. ²⁶So Jesus sent him home saying, "Do not even enter the village."

²⁷Jesus and His disciples went to the villages around Caesarea Philippi,^s and on the way He asked His disciples, "Who do the people say that I am?" ²⁸They said to Him, "John the Baptist; but others say, Elijah, and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹He asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered Him, "You are the Christ."^t ³⁰And He charged them to tell no one this about Him.

³¹He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be executed, and after three days rise again.

³²He told them this without reservation. Then Peter, taking Him aside, began to remonstrate with Him; ³³but turning round and looking at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get away from Me, Satan, for you are not taking God's viewpoint, but men's."

³⁴Then, summoning the crowd as well as His disciples, He said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him say 'No' to himself and take up his cross and follow Me. ³⁵For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but

p) Dalmanutha, called Magadan in Matt. 15:39, was situated at the most western point of the Sea of Galilee. Josephus, the historian, identifies both names with Taricheae. q) Or, leaven.

r) Beth-saida was located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, where the Jordan River flows into the sea, about nine miles from Capernaum. Beth-said means *house of fishing or hunting*. It was the home of Philip, Andrew and Peter, John 1:44. s) See note at Matt. 16:13.

t) This marks a high point in the Lord's teaching ministry. Toward this conviction He had patiently trained the Twelve.

whoever loses his life on behalf of Me and the gospel will save it. ³⁶For what does it benefit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his own life? ³⁷For what will a man give in exchange for his life?

³⁸"Should anyone in this immoral and sinful generation be ashamed of Me and of My teaching, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed, too, when He comes in His Father's glory with the holy angels."

9 HE ALSO SAID TO THEM, "I ASSURE you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they have seen the kingdom of God come in power."

²Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain^u alone by themselves, and in their presence He was changed in appearance. ³His clothes became a brilliant white, whiter than any bleacher on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah and Moses, and they conversed with Jesus.

⁵Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi,^v it is good that we are here. Let us build three booths—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶For he did not know what to say, because they were awed.

⁷Then there came a cloud overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My Son, the Beloved; listen to Him." ⁸Suddenly, as they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus only. ⁹And as they were descending from the mountain He forbade them to divulge to anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man should rise from the dead. ¹⁰So they kept the matter secret among themselves, while discussing together what rising from the dead might mean.

¹¹They asked Him, "Why do the scribes maintain that Elijah must first

come?" ¹²He answered them, "Elijah is indeed to come first, to put everything in order; but how is it written of the Son of Man that He shall endure much suffering and be treated with contempt? ¹³I tell you, however, that Elijah^w has come and they have treated him as they pleased, just as it has been written of him."

¹⁴When they reached the disciples they noticed a large crowd around them and scribes disputing with them. ¹⁵On seeing Him the whole multitude was awed and, running toward Him, they greeted Him. ¹⁶He asked them, "What are you discussing with them?" ¹⁷One of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I have brought You my son, who has a dumb spirit; ¹⁸whenever it gets hold of him, it throws him down—he foams at the mouth, he grinds his teeth and becomes rigid." I spoke to Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."

¹⁹"O unbelieving generation!" He replied, "How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me." ²⁰So they brought him to Jesus. The spirit, on seeing Him, instantly threw the boy into convulsions, so that he fell on the ground and rolled over, foaming at the mouth. ²¹Then He asked his father, "How long has this gone on?" He said, "From early childhood. ²²Often it has thrown him into fire and into water to destroy him; but if You can do anything, help us; take pity on us!"

²³Jesus said to him, "'If You can do anything?' Everything is possible for the person who believes!"^x ²⁴At once the father of the boy exclaimed, "I believe. Help me because of my unbelief." ²⁵Jesus, noticing that a mob was collecting, rebuked the unclean spirit, to whom He said, "Dumb and deaf spirit, I order you: Come out of him and never again enter into him."

²⁶And, shrieking and throwing fit after fit, he came out. The boy looked like a

u) It does not seem likely that this was Mt. Tabor since Jesus was at that time northeast of the Sea of Galilee, whereas Mt. Tabor is southwest of the lake. The mountain may have been in the Anti-Lebanon range somewhere near Mt. Hermon.

v) "Rabbi," from the Hebrew word *rav* or *rab*, means *master, lord*. See note at 10:51.

w) John the Baptist, whose ministry was similar to that of Elijah, Matt. 11:13, 14.

x) What Jesus said in this situation stresses the role of believing and praying in the healing of this afflicted boy.

corpse, so that many declared that he was dead; ²⁷but Jesus, taking him by the hand, raised him and he stood up. ²⁸After He had gone indoors His disciples asked Him privately, "Why were we unable to cast it out?" ²⁹He told them, "This kind cannot be expelled except through prayer."^y

³⁰Leaving there they passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it ³¹because He was teaching His disciples, "The Son of Man will be delivered into human hands and they will execute Him and, when He is killed, He will rise again in three days." ³²But they did not understand the saying and were afraid to question Him.

³³They reached Capernaum and, when He arrived home, He asked them, "What were you arguing on the road?" ³⁴But they kept still; for on the road they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵Seating Himself He summoned the Twelve and told them, "If anyone wants to be first, let him be last of all and servant of all." ³⁶Then taking a little child, He set him in the center of their circle, and taking him in His arms, said to them, ³⁷"Whoever receives one of such children in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me does not so much receive Me as Him who sent Me."

³⁸John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone not in our company, expelling demons in Your name and we forbade him, because he was not one of us."^z ³⁹Jesus told him, "Do not forbid him; for there is no one who performs a miracle in My name who can soon speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰He who is not against us is for us; ⁴¹for whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, I assure you that he will not miss his reward."

⁴²"Whoever occasions the stumbling

of one of these little ones who believe in Me, it would be better for him if, with a millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea. ⁴³Should your hand occasion you to do wrong, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life maimed than with both hands to be thrown into hell,^a into the fire that cannot be put out. ⁴⁴[Where their worm never ceases and the fire is not put out].^b ⁴⁵In case your foot occasions you to go wrong, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁶[where their worm never ceases and their fire is not put out].^b ⁴⁷If your eye occasions you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸where their worm never ceases and the fire is not put out.

⁴⁹"For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰Salt is beneficial; but if the salt loses its saltiness, with what will it be seasoned? Have salt in yourselves and live together in peace."

10 HE LEFT THERE AND WENT TO the Judean region on the farther side of the Jordan. Again crowds flocked to Him and, as usual, He taught them. ²And there came Pharisees questioning Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?"—testing Him. ³He answered them, "What ruling did Moses give you?" ⁴They said,^c "Moses permitted the writing of a divorce certificate and to divorce her." ⁵Jesus told them, "In view of your hardheartedness he wrote you this ruling, ⁶but from the beginning, from the time of creation^d male and female He made them; ⁷Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cling to his wife, ⁸and the two shall be one flesh'; so that they are no longer

y) Some ancient manuscripts read "through prayer and fasting."

z) That this lesson on tolerance has not yet been learned has cost the kingdom of God great losses.

a) "Hell" is rendered here from the Greek noun *geenna*, from which the English word "Gehenna" is derived. Gehenna is sometimes used to denote the Valley of Hinnom, a place where human sacrifices were once made, Jer. 7:31. In this valley refuse was burned. Consequently fires were constantly going. The Israelites used the word "Gehenna" to express the eternal judgment of the wicked. Jesus employed it here and elsewhere, e.g., Matt. 5:22, to illustrate the consequence of sin. Cf. "lake of fire," Rev. 19:20.

b) Verses 44 and 46 are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. They are identical with verse 48, which all the best manuscripts carry.

c) Deut. 24:1. d) Gen. 1:27; 2:24.

two but one flesh. ⁹What God therefore has joined, let not man divide."

¹⁰When they were indoors the disciples questioned Him again on that subject, ¹¹and He told them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her, ¹²and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

¹³They brought children for Him to touch, but the disciples reprimanded them. ¹⁴When Jesus noticed that, He was indignant and told them, "Permit the children to come to Me. Do not hinder them, for to their kind belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵I assure you, whoever fails to receive the kingdom of God like a little child, will not enter it at all." ¹⁶Then taking them in His arms He blessed them while He laid His hands on them.

c. A.D. 30

¹⁷As He was setting out on His journey a man came running to Him, who knelt before Him and asked, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to become heir to eternal life?" ¹⁸Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, even God. ¹⁹You know the commands: 'Do not murder; Do not commit adultery; Do not steal; Do not witness falsely; Do not cheat; Honor your father and your mother.'"

²⁰He replied, "Teacher, I have observed all these things from my boyhood." ²¹Jesus, looking at him, prized him dearly and told him, "One thing you lack. Go and sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come and follow Me." ²²At this saying he was appalled and went away saddened, for he possessed great wealth.

²³Looking around, Jesus said to His disciples, "How difficult it is for these possessing wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁴The disciples wondered at His remark; but Jesus spoke to them once more, "Children, how difficult it is [for those who trust in

wealth]" to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁵It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶Astonished beyond words they said to themselves, "Who then can be saved?" ²⁷With His eyes upon them Jesus replied, "With men it is impossible but not with God; for everything is possible with God."

²⁸Peter began to say to Him, "Look, we have given up everything and have followed You." ²⁹Jesus said, "I assure you, there is no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields on account of Me and the gospel, ³⁰but will receive a hundred times over now in this life homes and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, along with persecutions, and in the future age eternal life. ³¹But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

³²They were on the road going up to Jerusalem with Jesus leading them, and as they followed they were in a daze and were apprehensive. Then summoning the Twelve, He began once more to tell them what was about to happen to Him, ³³"See, we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles; ³⁴and they will mock Him, spit on Him, flog Him, and execute Him, and after three days He will rise again."

³⁵Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached and said to Him, "Teacher, we want You to do for us what we ask." ³⁶And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" ³⁷They answered Him, "Grant us to be seated, one at Your right and one at Your left in Your glory." ³⁸But Jesus told them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to undergo the baptism I am baptized with?" ³⁹They replied, "We are

e) Exod. 20:12-17.

f) The words in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

g) The Greek noun *raphis* means a sewing needle, such as that commonly used in a household. Nothing is impossible with God, vs. 27.

able." Then Jesus told them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with My baptism you will be baptized; ⁴⁰but to sit at My right or left is not Mine to grant, but is for those for whom it is reserved."

⁴¹When the other ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John, ⁴²but Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know how those supposed to govern the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exert authority over them; ⁴³but this is not your way. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first among you will be everyone's slave. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many."

⁴⁶They came to Jericho and, as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a great throng, Bartimaeus,^h son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷Hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, "Jesus, son of David, take pity on me!" ⁴⁸Many ordered him to keep still; but he shouted the louder, "Son of David, take pity on me!" ⁴⁹Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Have courage! Get up, He is calling you." ⁵⁰Throwing off his coat and springing to his feet, he went to Jesus. ⁵¹In response, Jesus said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man replied, "Rabboni,ⁱ let me see again." ⁵²Jesus said to him, "Go, your faith has restored you." And instantly he recovered his sight and followed Him on the way.

11 WHEN THEY CAME NEAR JERUSALEM, at Bethphage^j and Bethany^k by the Mount of Olives, He dispatched two of His disciples, ²to whom He said, "Go to the village opposite you and, as soon as you enter it, you

will find a tethered colt which no one has ever ridden; untie and fetch it. ³If anyone says to you, 'What are you doing there?' you say, 'The Lord needs it, and He will send it back here without delay.'"

⁴They went away, found the colt tethered outside the door in the street and untied it. ⁵Some of the bystanders there remarked to them, "What are you up to, untying the colt?" ⁶So they answered just as Jesus had told them and they let them take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus, spread their clothes on it, and Jesus sat upon it. ⁸Many also spread their garments on the road, and others leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. ⁹Both those walking ahead and those behind shouted^l "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

¹¹He entered Jerusalem and went to the temple, where He observed everything and, as night was approaching, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

¹²The next morning, as they were leaving Bethany, He felt hungry ¹³and, noticing a leafy fig tree at a distance, went to see whether He might find anything on it. But on reaching it He found nothing but leaves;^m in fact, it was not the time for ripe figs. ¹⁴And He addressed it, "May none eat fruit from you forevermore." And His disciples were listening.

¹⁵They reached Jerusalem and, on entering the temple, He began to expel the sellers and the buyers that were in the temple. He upset the tables of the money-changers and the stalls of those who sold doves, ¹⁶and did not allow anyone to carry any goods through the temple." ¹⁷He taught them, "Is it not written,ⁿ 'My house

h) The prefix "bar" means son of, e.g., "Barjona" equals son of John. So Bartimaeus was the son of Timaeus.

i) "Rabboni" is a heightened and perhaps more intimate title or form of address than "Rabbi" (see note at Matt. 26:25). Rabbi, from the Hebrew word *rav* or *rab*, means master, lord. Rabboni denotes my master, my lord.

j) See note at Luke 19:29. k) See note at Matt. 21:17.

l) Ps. 118:25, 26. "Hosanna" means save now or salvation. The expression is akin to "God save the king."

m) Normally as soon as the leaves begin to bud, early figs show.

n) That is, the temple courts. o) Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11.

shall be called a house of prayer among all nations? But you have made it a den of robbers."

¹⁸The scribes and chief priests heard it and looked for ways to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, as all the people were amazed at His teaching. ¹⁹With the fall of evening, He left the city.

²⁰And when they came along the next morning they noticed the fig tree withered to the roots. ²¹Then Peter remembered and said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree You cursed is withered!" ²²Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. ²³For I assure you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and entertains no inner doubt but believes that what he says will happen, it shall be so for him.

²⁴"I tell you, therefore, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. ²⁵And whenever you stand praying and you have a grievance against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶[But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.]"^p

²⁷Once more they entered Jerusalem and, while He was walking around in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him ²⁸and asked Him, "By what authority are You doing these things or who gave You this authority to do them?" ²⁹Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; you answer Me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men? Answer Me."

³¹They argued among themselves, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ³²But if we say, 'From men — ' They were afraid of the people, for everyone considered John to be a prophet; ³³so they answered Jesus, "We do not

know." Jesus replied to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

12 HE BEGAN TO ADDRESS THEM in parables: "A man planted a vineyard, encircled it with a hedge, excavated a winepress, built a tower and leased it to tenant farmers, then went away. ²At the proper season he sent an agent^q to the workers to collect from them a share of the vineyard's yield, ³but they took and flogged him and sent him off empty-handed. ⁴Again he sent them another agent whom they wounded in the head and shamefully maltreated. ⁵Once more he sent another, whom they killed, and many others — some they flogged and some they killed.

⁶"Having still one, a son he dearly loved, he finally sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ⁷But those tenant farmers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and the inheritance will be ours.' ⁸So they took and killed him and threw him outside the vineyard. ⁹Now what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and put the tenants to death and lease the vineyard to others.

¹⁰"Have you never read this Scripture,^r 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; ¹¹this was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to our eyes?' ¹²Then they looked for ways to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the people. For they knew He spoke the parable against them.^s So they left Him and went away. ¹³And they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and of the Herodians^t to trap Him with a question. ¹⁴Coming to Him, they said, "Teacher, we know that You are sincere and not partial to anyone; for You court no human favor but teach truly the way of God. Is it lawful to pay tax to Caesar or not? ¹⁵ Shall we pay or not pay?" But knowing their hypocrisy He said

p) Verse 26, enclosed in brackets, does not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

q) See note at Matt. 13:27.

r) Ps. 118: 22, 23.

s) Compare Isa. 5:1-7 where Israel is God's vineyard.

t) See note at Matt. 22:16.

to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a coin," so I may see it." ¹⁶They brought one and He asked them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" They said "Caesar's." ¹⁷Jesus told them, "Pay Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and God what belongs to God." And they greatly wondered at Him.

¹⁸Then the Sadducees,^v who maintain that there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked, ¹⁹"Teacher, Moses wrote^w for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving behind a wife but no child, his brother should take the widow and raise offspring for his brother. ²⁰Now there were seven brothers, the first of whom took a wife and died without offspring. ²¹Then the second married her and died without leaving offspring. ²²So the third and all seven, without leaving offspring. Last of all, the woman, too, died. ²³In the resurrection then, when they rise, whose wife shall she be? For the seven were married to her."

²⁴Jesus said to them, "Are you not mistaken in this, since you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? ²⁵For when they rise from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven. ²⁶But in regard to the raising of the dead, have you not read in the book of Moses^x how at the bush God said^y to him, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? ²⁷He is not the God of the dead but of the living.^z You are much mistaken."

²⁸Then one of the scribes, having listened to the discussion and aware that He had answered them well, came forward to question Him, "Which is the chief commandment of all?" ²⁹Jesus answered him, "The chief one is,^a 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is

one Lord, ³⁰and you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole mind, and with your whole strength.

³¹"The second is this,^b 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

³²The scribe said to him, "Right, Teacher, You have said in truth that He is One and there is none beside Him, ³³and to love Him with all one's heart, with all one's mind, with all one's soul, and with all one's strength; also to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴Then Jesus, observing his intelligent response, said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one ventured any more to question Him.

³⁵As Jesus was teaching in the temple, He said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is David's son? ³⁶For David himself said through the Holy Spirit,^c 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand until I place your enemies for a footstool of your feet."'

³⁷David himself calls Him Lord; in what way then is He his son?" And the great throng listened to Him with delight.

³⁸In the course of His teaching He said to them: "Beware of the scribes, who enjoy walking around in long robes to be greeted in the market places, ³⁹to have the front seats in the synagogues and the choice places at the banquets; ⁴⁰who prey upon the properties of widows, and pray long prayers for show. They shall receive severer sentence."

⁴¹Taking a seat opposite the treasury He watched how the people put money into the treasure chest. Many of the rich put in much; ⁴²but one poor

u) Probably this coin was a denarius, the smallest silver coin in circulation. It would be worth twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency.

v) See note at Matt. 3:7.

w) Deut. 25:5, 6.

x) The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament, was considered and often referred to as The Law. These five books were also sometimes spoken of simply as "Moses." Jesus here affirms the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, its historicity and inspiration.

y) Exod. 3:1-10.

z) God has a vital relationship with living persons. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still live.

a) Deut. 6:4, 5. b) Lev. 19:18.

c) Ps. 110:1. The interrogation recorded in vss. 35-37 shows that Jesus challenges both the head and the heart.

widow came and put in two mites, that is one-quarter of a cent^d ⁴³Summoning His disciples, He told them, "I assure you that this poor widow has put in more than all those contributing to the treasury; ⁴⁴for they all contributed from their surpluses but she out of her poverty gave all she had—her whole living."

13 AS HE WAS LEAVING THE TEMPLE, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what wonderful stones and buildings these are." ²Jesus replied to him, "You see these great buildings? Not a stone shall be left on another, that shall not be torn down."

³As He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Him privately, ⁴"Tell us when this is to happen and what is the sign when all these things are to be accomplished!" ⁵So Jesus began to tell them: "Look out that no one deceives you; ⁶for many will come in My name saying, 'I am He,' and will mislead many. ⁷But when you hear about wars and rumors of wars, be not alarmed; for it must be so, but the end is not yet. ⁸For nation shall revolt against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes at various places; also famines — these are the first pains of childbirth.

⁹"Look out for yourselves; for they will deliver you to councils and you will be flogged in synagogues; you will stand before governors and kings for My sake and in order to testify to them. ¹⁰And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.

¹¹"And when they arrest you and take you to court, do not worry beforehand what you will say, say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who are speaking, but it is the Holy Spirit.

¹²"Brother will hand over brother for death, and father will hand over son; children will rise against their parents and have them put to death,

¹³and you will be hated by everyone, because of My name. But whoever perseveres to the end will be saved.

¹⁴"But when you see the desolating abomination set up where it should not be^e — let the reader take notice — then let those in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁵A person on the housetop should not go down or go inside to fetch anything out of his house, ¹⁶and one in the field should not turn back to pick up his coat.

¹⁷"Alas for the pregnant and the nursing women in those days. ¹⁸Pray that your flight may not be in winter; ¹⁹for the misery of those days will be such as never was since the beginning of God's creation until now, neither ever will be. ²⁰And unless the Lord had shortened those days not a human being would survive; but because of the elect whom He has chosen He has shortened the days.

²¹"If anyone then tells you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there!' put no faith in it; ²²for false Christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. ²³Be on your guard! I am forewarning you of it all.

²⁴"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shed her light, ²⁵the stars will be falling from heaven and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then will they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And then will He send out the angels and gather His chosen from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

²⁸"Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch grows tender and it puts out leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹Similarly, when you see these things happen, you will know that He is near, at the door. ³⁰I assure you, the present generation will not pass on until all this takes place.

³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but My sayings will not pass away.

d) The Greek word rendered "one-quarter of a cent" is *kodrantēs*, meaning *farthing*. A mite, a small copper coin worth about one-eighth of a cent, takes its name from the Greek word *lepton*, which means *small, thin, light*.

e) This is prophetic of the desecration of the temple by the Romans, who destroyed it in A.D. 70. In 167 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes offered swine on the temple altar. Cf. Dan. 9:27; 12:11.

³²But about the exact date and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Be on guard; keep wide awake [and pray!]; for you do not know the time. ³⁴It is like a man leaving his home to go abroad, who authorized his slaves⁶ and assigned to each his work, with the sentinel appointed to watch. ³⁵You, therefore, watch; for you have no idea when the Lord of the house will come—in the evening or at midnight or at the cockcrow or in the morning, ³⁶lest coming unexpectedly, He may find you sleeping. ³⁷And what I say to you, I say to everyone, Watch!"

14 THE PASSOVER AND THE FEAST of Unleavened Bread were due two days later. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way to arrest Him through treachery and execute Him, ²for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there will be a mob disturbance."

³While He was at Bethany in the home of Simon the leper as He was sitting¹ at the table, a woman¹ came with an alabaster jar of pure nard perfume, very valuable and, breaking the jar, she poured the ointment on His head. ⁴But there were some who indignantly remarked to one another, "What use is this waste of ointment? ⁵This could have been sold for over seventy-five dollars¹ and given to the poor." And they censured her.

⁶But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you embarrass her? She has treated Me nobly. ⁷For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish, you can benefit them; but you will not always have Me. ⁸She has done what she could; she has prepared My body with perfume for burial. ⁹I assure you, wherever this gospel will be preached over the whole wide world, what she has done will be told as a memorial of her."

¹⁰Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests to betray Him to them; ¹¹and when they learned of it, they were delighted and promised to pay him money. So he looked about how he might conveniently betray Him.

¹²On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was annually sacrificed, His disciples asked Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, so that You may eat the Passover?" ¹³Then He sent out two of His disciples⁸ and told them, "Go into the city and a man will meet you, carrying a water pitcher; follow him. ¹⁴And wherever he enters, say to the proprietor, 'The Teacher says, "Where is My guest room where I am to eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" ¹⁵He will show you a large upper room—furnishings and everything ready—there prepare for us."

¹⁶His disciples went out, came to the city and found it as He had told them. They prepared the Passover, ¹⁷and as evening fell He arrived with the Twelve. ¹⁸As they were sitting¹ and eating, Jesus said, "I tell you with certainty that one of you who is eating with Me will betray Me." ¹⁹They began to be greatly distressed, and they said to Him, one after another, "It is not I, is it?" ²⁰He answered them, "It is one of the Twelve who is dipping with Me in the dish. ²¹The Son of Man is going the way that has been written of Him, but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It were better for that man never to have been born."

²²As the meal proceeded, He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, gave it to them, and said,^m "Take it. This is My body." ²³Also taking the cup and giving thanks, He gave it to them and they all drank of it. ²⁴He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant,ⁿ which is poured out for many. ²⁵I assure you, I shall no more drink of the

f) The two words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. g) See note at Matt. 13:27. h) See note at ch. 2:15.

i) Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, John 12:3.

j) The text reads "three hundred denarii." A denarius would be worth about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency. k) Peter and John, Luke 22:8. l) See note at ch. 2:15.

m) Cf. 1 Cor. 11:23-29. n) Some ancient manuscripts read "new covenant."

vintage until that day when I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God."

²⁶With the singing of a hymn^o they went out to the Mount of Olives.

²⁷And Jesus said to them, "You will all turn away from Me, for it is written" 'I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep will be widely scattered.' ²⁸But after My resurrection I will precede you into Galilee."

²⁹Peter said to Him, "Even if all turn away from You, I will never!"

³⁰Jesus told him, "Truly I tell you, during this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will disown Me three times." ³¹But he asserted more insistently, "Even if I must die with You, never will I disown You." And so they all said.

³²They came to a place called Gethsemane, and He told His disciples, "Be seated here while I pray." ³³But He took along with Him Peter, James and John, and as He began to feel deeply alarmed and distressed, ³⁴He said to them, "My soul is mortally grieved; stay here and watch." ³⁵Going a little farther, He fell on the ground and prayed that, if possible, the impending hour might pass from Him. ³⁶He said, "Abba,^q Father, all things are possible with Thee. Remove this cup from Me. Not, however, what I will but what Thou wilt."

³⁷He came and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to watch for one hour? ³⁸All of you watch and pray, so that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing enough, but the flesh is weak."

³⁹He left again and prayed, uttering the same words. ⁴⁰Then He returned to find them asleep once more; for their eyes were heavy. And they did not know what excuse to give Him. ⁴¹He then came for the third time and said to them, "Sleeping and resting still? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son

of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Rise up; let us go. Look, My betrayer is near."

⁴³At once, while He was still talking, Judas, one of the Twelve, approached and with him a great mob with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests, scribes and elders. ⁴⁴Now His betrayer had given them a signal: "The One whom I kiss is the One. Seize Him and lead Him safely away." ⁴⁵So, as soon as he came, he stepped up to Him, said, "Rabbi,"^r and kissed Him. ⁴⁶Then they put their hands on Him and arrested Him.

⁴⁷One^s of those standing beside Him drew his sword, struck the high priest's slave and cut off his ear. ⁴⁸And Jesus' response to them was: "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to arrest Me? ⁴⁹Daily I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. However, this^t is happening so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled."

⁵⁰And they all forsook Him and fled. ⁵¹But a certain youth^u followed Him, wearing a linen cloth on his bare body, and when they seized him, ⁵²he left the linen cloth behind and fled from them naked.

⁵³They brought Jesus before the high priest, and all the chief priests and elders and scribes assembled. ⁵⁴And Peter followed Him from a distance until he was inside the high priest's courtyard, where he sat down with the attendants and warmed himself by the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin^v searched for sufficient evidence against Jesus to execute Him, but failed to find it; ⁵⁶for while many bore false witness against Him, their testimony did not agree. ⁵⁷Some rose up to testify falsely against Him, ⁵⁸"We heard Him say, 'I will break down this temple made by hands and in three days will build another made

o) This hymn would probably have been some such psalm as Ps. 112.

p) Zech. 13:7.

q) "Abba" (Aramaic) means *father*. Aramaic was the everyday language in Palestine in the first century.

r) That is, "Master." See note at ch. 10:51.

s) Simon Peter, John 18:10. t) Isa. 53:7, 8.

u) It is probable that this was Mark himself.

v) See note at Luke 22:66.

without hands.' " 59But even so their evidence did not agree. 60Then the high priest stood up in the center and asked Jesus, "Are not You answering at all what these are testifying against You?" 61But He kept still and never answered at all."

Again the high priest questioned Him. He said, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" 62Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty, and coming on the clouds of heaven." 63Then the high priest, tearing his clothes, said, "What further need do we have of witnesses? 64You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all^x condemned Him as deserving death. 65Some also started to spit^y at Him and to blindfold Him and to hit^z Him with the fist and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the attendants took Him and slapped His face.

66As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's maids came and saw Peter warming himself. 67She looked at him and accosted him, "You were with the Nazarene Jesus, too." 68But he denied it: "I do not know or understand at all what you are talking about." Then he went outside to the entrance, and the rooster crowed. 69Then the servant girl started again to tell the bystanders, "This fellow belongs to them." 70Again he denied it. In a little while the bystanders once more told Peter, "Surely, you are one of them; for you are a Galilean."

71Then he commenced invoking a curse on himself as he swore, "I do not know the Man you mention." 72And instantly for the second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered how Jesus had told him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will disown Me three times." As he considered that, he wept audibly.

15 AS SOON AS MORNING DAWNED the chief priests formed a con-

ference with the elders and scribes, including the entire Sanhedrin and, binding Jesus, they led Him off and handed Him over to Pilate. 2Pilate asked Him, "Are You the king of the Jews?" He answered him, "So you say." 3Then the chief priests accused Him of many things, 4but Pilate questioned Him again, "Have You no answer? See what they are charging against You." 5Still Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate wondered.

6But at the feast he used to release to them one prisoner for whom they asked, 7and there was one named Barabbas, confined with the insurrectionists, who had committed murder in the uprising. 8The shouting mob proceeded to request the usual privilege for them. 9Pilate replied to them, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" 10For he knew that out of envy the chief priests had delivered Him. 11However, the chief priests stirred up the crowd to prefer that Barabbas be released for them. 12Then Pilate came back at them again, "Then what shall I do with the One you call king of the Jews?" 13But again they shouted, "Crucify Him!" 14Pilate asked them, "Why, what wrong did He commit?" But they cried out the more loudly, "Crucify Him!"

15So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them and, after flogging Jesus, gave Him over to be crucified. 16The soldiers led Him inside the hall, that is, the Praetorium,^a where they mustered the entire cohort.^b 17They dressed Him in purple, and crowned Him with a crown of thorns, which they had twisted; 18then they began to salute Him, "Long live the king of the Jews!" 19They further hit Him on the head with a reed, and spat at Him and with bended knees did Him homage. 20After the mockery, they took the purple off Him and put on His own clothes; then they led Him out to crucify Him.

21They forced a certain passerby,

w) Isa. 53:7.

x) It does not seem likely that Joseph of Arimathea, Luke 23:50, 51, and Nicodemus, John 7:50-52, were present.

y) Isa. 50:6.

z) Cf. Isa. 52:14.

a) "Praetorium" was a name for Roman headquarters, whether in a military camp, a castle, or the governor's palace. Here it was probably Herod's palace.

b) See note at Acts 10:1.

Simon, a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus,^c who was coming from the country, to carry His cross.

²²They led Him to the place called Golgotha, which means Place of a Skull, ²³and offered Him a drink of wine, flavored with myrrh; but He refused it. ²⁴And they crucified Him, and divided His clothes, over which they cast lots to determine each one's share. ²⁵It was nine in the morning when they crucified Him. ²⁶The inscription of His accusation was written on top, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

²⁷With Him they crucified two robbers, one at His right and one at His left. ²⁸[So the Scripture was fulfilled, ⁴"He was counted with the lawless."]^e

²⁹The passers-by reviled Him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha, You who were going to destroy the temple and build it in three days! ³⁰Save Yourself! Come down from the cross!" ³¹Similarly the chief priests, as they mocked between themselves and the scribes, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. ³²Let the Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe." And those crucified with Him reproached Him too.

³³From twelve until three o'clock darkness settled over the whole country; ³⁴and at three o'clock Jesus cried with a great voice, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

³⁵Some of the bystanders, as they heard it, said, "Notice, He is calling for Elijah." ³⁶But one ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar, then fixed it to a reed and gave Him a drink, with the remark, "Hold on, let us see if Elijah comes to take Him down."

³⁷But having uttered a strong cry, Jesus died. ³⁸The temple veil was torn in two from top to bottom, ³⁹and the centurion, who stood facing Him, see-

ing how He died in that way, exclaimed, "Truly this man was God's Son!" ⁴⁰There were women also, looking on from a distance, among them Mary Magdalene, and Mary^f the mother of James, the younger, and of Joses, and Salome^g — ⁴¹the women who had been following Him and helping Him when He was in Galilee, and many others who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

⁴²When evening had come,^h since it was the day of preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable member of the Sanhedrin, who was personally awaiting the kingdom of God, came and boldly approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴But Pilate wondered whether He was already dead; so he summoned the centurion and asked him if He had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵When he had received this information from the centurion, he granted Joseph the body.

⁴⁶He bought a linen sheet in which he wrapped the body after taking it down; then he laid Him in a tomb that was carved out of a rock and rolled a stone against the opening of the tomb; ⁴⁷and Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses observed where He was laid.

16 AFTER THE SABBATH MARY Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Him. ²And very early in the morning at sunrise on the first day of the week they came to the tomb. ³They said among themselves, "Who will roll the stone from the mouth of the tomb for us?" ⁴But as they looked up, they saw that the stone — a very heavy one — had been rolled away.

⁵They entered the tomb and saw a young man sitting to the right, dressed in a white robe, and they were struck

c) Both sons became known to the church. A Rufus is mentioned in Rom. 16:13, who may have been this son of Simon the Cyrenian.

d) Isa. 53:12.

e) Verse 28, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

f) See note at Matt. 1:16.

g) Salome was Zehedee's wife, the mother of James and John, the apostles, Matt. 27:56; Mark 10:35.

h) The time was between 3 and 6 p.m.

with terror. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be terrified. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He is risen; He is not here; see the place where they laid Him. ⁷But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He precedes you into Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you."¹
⁸Hurriedly they fled from the tomb, trembling and alarmed, and they spoke to no one, for they were afraid.

⁹[After Jesus had risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary of Magdala, from whom He had expelled seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told those who had accompanied Him, grieving and weeping as they were. ¹¹When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe it. ¹²But later on He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking into the country. ¹³They went and told the others; but neither did they believe them. ¹⁴Afterward He appeared to the

Eleven as they sat¹ at the table, and chided their unbelief and hardheartedness, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

¹⁵He also told them, "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will follow those who believe: in My name they will expel demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes; and if they drink anything fatal it will not injure them in the least. They will lay hands on the sick and they will become well."

¹⁹So after the Lord had talked with them, He was received up into heaven and sat at the right hand of God. ²⁰But they went out and preached everywhere; for the Lord was working with them and was confirming the message by the signs that followed.]^k

i) Chapter 14:28.

j) See note at ch. 2:15.

k) Verses 9-20, enclosed in brackets, are not found in the majority of the most reliable manuscripts.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

LUKE

1 NOW THAT MANY HAVE PUT THEIR hands to the composition of a narrative regarding the events that have certainly taken place among us, ²transmitted as they were to us by those who were from the first eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, ³it seemed fitting for me as well, since I investigated accurately everything from its beginning, to write you in orderly fashion, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you may know the certainty of the instructions you have received.

c. 6 B.C.

⁵In the days of Herod, the king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zechariah, of the week of the priestly service^a named after Abijah, and his wife Elizabeth, of Aaron's daughters. ⁶Both lived uprightly before God, blamelessly walking in accordance with all the commandments and injunctions of the Lord. ⁷They had no child because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting up in years.

⁸Administering his priestly service before the Lord in the sequence of his series, as customary among the priests, ⁹it fell to him by lot to enter the Lord's temple for the burning of incense. ¹⁰And at the hour of incense the whole multitude of people were praying outside.

¹¹But an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense, ¹²and when Zechariah saw him, he was troubled and fear got

hold of him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Have no fear, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, whom you will call John. ¹⁴He will afford you joy and happiness and many will be glad at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great before the Lord. He will drink no wine or liquor at all, and from his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶Many of the sons of Israel will he turn to the Lord their God, ¹⁷before whom he shall go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the obstinate to the wisdom of the righteous, to prepare a people who are ready for the Lord."

¹⁸Then Zechariah said to the angel. "In what way can I be assured of this, for I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years?" ¹⁹The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to announce these glad tidings to you. ²⁰Behold! You will be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at the proper time."

²¹The people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he lingered in the temple; ²²but when he came out he could not speak to them, and they recognized that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he made signs to them and remained speechless. ²³And as soon

a) King David had assigned the priests to twenty-four divisions, each section to serve at the sanctuary for a week. The Abijah division was the eighth, 1 Chron. 24:10.

as his time of service was over, he went home.

c. 5 B.C.

²⁴After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived and hid herself five months, saying, ²⁵"In this way has the Lord treated me when He favored me to remove my humiliation among men."

²⁶In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth,^b a town of Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin named Mary^c who was engaged to Joseph, a descendant of David. ²⁸The angel, as he approached her, said, "Greetings, favored one. The Lord is with you."

²⁹But she was troubled at his message and reflected what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Have no fear, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And lo, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son and you shall call Him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³He will be king over the house of Jacob forever; there will be no end to His kingdom."

³⁴Mary asked the angel, "How will this be, since I have no husband?"

³⁵The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore that holy Offspring will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Also your cousin Elizabeth is to be mother of a son in her old age, and this is now the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing is ever impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Here I am, the Lord's bondservant. Let it be with me as you say." And the angel left her.

³⁹After those days Mary got ready and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, ⁴⁰arrived at the home of Zechariah, and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And as Elizabeth listened to Mary's greeting, the babe leaped within her. Then, filled with the Holy Spirit,

⁴²Elizabeth spoke with a loud voice, "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And how did this happen to me, that my Lord's mother should visit me? ⁴⁴Just think, when the voice of your greeting reached my ears the babe leaped within me for joy! ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed, because the things told her by the Lord will be accomplished."

⁴⁶And Mary said,^d "My soul magnifies the Lord ⁴⁷and my spirit is glad in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for He took notice of the lowliness of His bondservant. Consider, from now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹for the Almighty has done great things for me. His name is holy ⁵⁰and His mercy is to those who reverence Him through all generations. ⁵¹He exercised strength with His arm; He scattered the proud in their heart's imaginations; ⁵²He dethroned princes and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³the needy He supplied to the full with good things and the rich He sent away empty-handed. ⁵⁴He sustained Israel, His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, ⁵⁵as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever."

⁵⁶And Mary stayed with her for about three months, and returned to her home. ⁵⁷Now Elizabeth's time to give birth had come and she bore a son; ⁵⁸and her neighbors and relatives heard what great mercy the Lord had granted her, and they shared her happiness. ⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the baby and were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother demurred, "No, he must instead be called John!" ⁶¹They argued with her, "None of your relatives bears that name." ⁶²Then they motioned to his father, what he wanted him to be called ⁶³and he, requesting a writing tablet, wrote, "His name is John." This surprised them all. ⁶⁴And instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he spoke in praise of God.

⁶⁵A deep sense of awe came upon all

b) See note at Matt. 2:23.

c) See note on the four Marys in the Gospels, Matt. 1:16.

d) Mary knew the Hebrew Scriptures. That is evident from her free use of Hannah's song, I Sam. 21:1-8.

the neighbors, and these happenings became matters of conversation in the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶All who learned of it kept it in mind. They said, "What kind of child will this be?" For the Lord's hand was with him.

⁶⁷His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, ⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has looked with favor upon His people and has accomplished redemption for them. ⁶⁹He has raised up a powerful Savior for us in the house of David, His servant, ⁷⁰as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient times — ⁷¹salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. ⁷²To show the mercy that was promised our ancestors, and to remember His holy covenant, ⁷³He swore an oath to our father Abraham; ⁷⁴to grant us, being saved from our enemies, fearlessly to worship Him ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness in His presence all our days.

⁷⁶"And you, little one, will be called a prophet of the Highest; for you will go in advance of the Lord to prepare His way, ⁷⁷to bring to His people a knowledge of salvation by remission of their sins ⁷⁸through the tender mercies of our God, by which the light of dawn will beam on us from on high, ⁷⁹to shine on those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the path of peace."

⁸⁰And the child grew and was spiritually strengthened, and was in solitary places until the time of his appearing to Israel.

2 IN THOSE DAYS AN ORDER WENT out from Caesar Augustus that a census should be taken of the whole world. ²This registration first occurred while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

³They all went to be registered, each to his own city, ⁴and Joseph, too, went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, ⁵because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵to be

registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, whose pregnancy was advanced.

⁶While they were there her days were completed to give birth, ⁷and she bore her first-born Son, whom she wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸There were in the same country shepherds, staying in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they feared greatly.

¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Have no fear, for behold I announce to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people; ¹¹for today there was born for you in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this is a token for you: you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in His favor!"

¹⁵As the angels went from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem, and let us see what has happened that the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And hastily they went, found both Mary and Joseph, and saw the baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen the child they made known to others what had been told them regarding it, ¹⁸and every one who heard it marveled at the things that were reported to them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary treasured those reports and thought them over in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

²¹When eight days were completed, ²²at His circumcision the name Jesus was given Him, as named by the angel before His conception in the womb.

c) See note at Matt. 2:1.

f) The precise month of the birth of Christ is uncertain.

g) Lev. 12:3.

c. 4 B.C.

²²When the days for their purification according to the Law of Moses were completed,^h they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord,²³ as prescribed in the Law of the Lord,ⁱ "Every first-born male shall be called holy to the Lord,"²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice as mentioned in the Law of the Lord,^j "A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, Simeon by name, an upright and devout man who was looking for the consolation of Israel.^k The Holy Spirit was on him²⁶ and it was divinely communicated to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.²⁷ Moved by the Spirit he came into the temple and, when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the legal ritual for Him,²⁸ he took Him up in his arms and thanked God,²⁹ "Now let Your bond servant depart in peace, Lord, in agreement with Your word,³⁰ for my eyes have seen Your salvation,³¹ which You have prepared before all the nations,^{32a} a light for revelation to the Gentiles and a glory to Your people Israel."

³³As His father and mother were wondering about the things spoken regarding Him,³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary, "See, this child is appointed for the falling and rising up of many in Israel and for a sign that will be opposed —³⁵ And a sword shall pass through your own soul — so that the reasonings of many hearts may be revealed."

³⁶There also was Anna, a daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher, a prophetess advanced in years who had, after her girlhood, lived seven years with her husband,³⁷ and was a widow of about eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day in fastings and intercessions.³⁸ She, too, came up that same hour and gave similar thanks to the Lord and talked

about Him to all those looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything according to the Law of the Lord, they went back to Galilee to their own city, Nazareth.⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God rested upon Him.

c. A.D. 8

⁴¹Annually at the Passover Feast His parents traveled to Jerusalem.⁴² And when He was twelve they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.⁴³ When the days were ended and they returned, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem without His parents being aware of it.⁴⁴ Supposing that He was in the caravan, they traveled a day, then looked for Him among relatives and acquaintances⁴⁵ and, not finding Him, went back to Jerusalem in search of Him.⁴⁶ The third day they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers.

⁴⁸When His parents saw Him they were amazed, and His mother said to Him, "Child, why have You treated us this way? Your father and I have anxiously been looking for You." ⁴⁹He said to them, "Why were you seeking Me? Did you not know that I ought to be in My Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand the saying which He spoke to them.

⁵¹He went down with them to Nazareth and submitted Himself to them, and His mother treasured all these matters in her heart.⁵² And Jesus advanced in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and men.

c. A.D. 26

3 IN THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF TIBERIUS Caesar's reign,¹ when Pontius

h) Lev. 12:1, 2, 4.

i) Num. 8:17. "Holy" (Gk. *hagios*) equals *consecrated to*. The first-born male was to be consecrated to the Lord.

j) Lev. 12:6-8.

k) Simeon was looking for the coming of the Messiah, Israel's hope and comfort, Isa. 40:1-5; 61:1-3.

l) The reign of Tiberius began about A.D. 11-12.

Pilate was governor of Judea; Herod, tetrarch of Galilee; his brother Philip, tetrarch of Ituraea and of the Trachonitis region; and Lysanias, tetrarch of Abilene, ²Annas and Caiaphas being high priests, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the desert.

³Then he went into all the area on either side of the Jordan River, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as has been written in the book of messages of Isaiah the prophet, ^m"A voice of one shouting in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. ⁵Every ravine will be filled up and every mountain and hill will be leveled; the crooked paths will become straight and the rough ways smooth, ⁶and all people will see the salvation of God."

⁷So he said to the crowds that came to be baptized by him, "Viper brood, who forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Therefore produce fruits in keeping with your repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you that God can raise offspring to Abraham from these stones. ⁹The ax is lying ready at the root of the trees, so that every tree that fails to produce good fruit will be felled and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰The crowds asked him, "Then what should we do?" ¹¹He answered them, "He who has two tunics should share with him who has none, and he who has food should behave similarly."

¹²The tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³To them he said, "Do not collect more than your appointed rate." ¹⁴And when the soldiers asked him, "What shall we do?" he told them, "Do not extort money by intimidating or informing, but be content with your pay."

¹⁵As the people were in suspense and were all wondering in their hearts about John, whether he might perhaps be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, "I, it is true, baptize you with

water, but One mightier than I is coming after me, whose sandal-strings I am not fit to unfasten. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly clean up His threshing floor, storing the wheat in His granary and burning the chaff in fire that cannot be put out."

¹⁸With many another appeal, also, he preached to the people; ¹⁹but when Herod the tetrarch was taken to task by him regarding Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, as well as about all the evils he had practiced, ²⁰he crowned all this by confining John in prison.

²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus too was baptized and, while He was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit came down on Him, in bodily shape like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art My Beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased."

²³And Jesus Himself, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son, as was supposed, of Joseph, the son of Heli, ⁿ²⁴whose father and forefathers were Matthat, Levi, Melchi, Jannai, Joseph, ²⁵Mattathias, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, ²⁶Maath, Mattathias, Semein, Josech, Joda, ²⁷Joanan, Rhese, Zerubabel, Shealtiel, Neri, ²⁸Melchi, Addi, Cosam, Elmadam, Er, ²⁹Joshua, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, ³⁰Simeon, Judas, Joseph, Janam, Eliakim, ³¹Melea, Menna, Mattatha, Nathan, David, ³²Jesse, Obed, Boaz, Salmon, Nahshon, ³³Aminadab, Arni, Hezron, Perez, Judah, ³⁴Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Terah, Nahor, ³⁵Serug, Reu, Peleg, Eber, Shelah, ³⁶Cainan, Arphaxad, Shem, Noah, Lamech, ³⁷Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalaleel, Cainan, ³⁸Enos, Seth, Adam who was of God.

4 FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, Jesus returned from the Jordan River and for forty days was guided about in the desert by the Spirit, ²while being tested by the devil. He did not eat at all during those days and

m) Isa. 40:3-5.

n) Jesus was the grandson of Heli through Mary.

on their completion He was hungry. ⁴So the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." ⁴Jesus answered him, "It is written,^a 'Man shall not live on bread alone; [but by every expression of God].'" ⁵Then leading Him up [to a high mountain],^b the devil showed Him in an instant all the world's kingdoms and told Him, ⁶"All this authority and the splendor of them will I give You, for it has been handed over to me and I bestow it on whomever I please; ⁷so if You will worship me, it shall all be Yours." ⁸Jesus answered him, "It is written,^c 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone.'"

⁹Then he brought Him to Jerusalem and, placing Him on the summit of the temple, told Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written,^d 'He will give orders to His angels on your behalf to protect you,' ¹¹and 'They will carry you on their hands so that you may not stub your foot against a stone.'" ¹²Jesus answered him, "It is also written,^e 'You shall not test the Lord your God.'" ¹³So the devil, after bringing to completion every kind of temptation, left Him until a favorable time.

c. A.D. 28

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and His fame spread over all the surrounding country. ¹⁵He taught in their synagogues and was lauded by everyone. ¹⁶He came to Nazareth,^f where He had been brought up, and in agreement with His custom He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read. ¹⁷The book of the Prophet Isaiah was handed to Him and on opening the scroll He found the place where it was written,^g ¹⁸"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He

has sent Me to announce release to the captives and restoration of sight to the blind, to set free the downtrodden and ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."^h

²⁰Rolling up the scroll He handed it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him, ²¹and He began by telling them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²²They all remarked about Him and wondered at the gracious words that flowed from His lips. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³He said to them, "You will doubtless quote Me this proverb, 'Physician, heal Yourself.' Do in Your own hometown what we hear You did in Capernaum." ²⁴But He continued, "I assure you that no prophet is acceptable in his home town. ²⁵I tell you truly, in the days of Elijahⁱ there were many widows in Israel, when for three years and six months the heaven was closed up and a severe famine visited all the land; ²⁶but to none of them was Elijah sent except to a widow at Sarepta of Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha^j the prophet, and none of them was cured but Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸When the people in the synagogue heard this, they all felt deeply resentful. ²⁹They got up and expelled Him from the city and led Him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, to hurl Him down; ³⁰but He made His way straight through their midst and went away.

³¹He came down to Capernaum,^k a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath. ³²They were overwhelmed with His teaching, for His message had authority. ³³And in the synagogue there was a man with an unclean demon's spirit, who cried out loudly, ³⁴"Ah, what business is it of Yours to bother us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know

a) Deut. 8:3.

b) The words in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

c) Deut. 6:13; 10:20.

d) Psalms 91:11, 12.

e) Deut. 6:16.

f) See note at Matt. 2:23.

g) Isa. 61:1, 2.

h) Compare this with the message sent to the bewildered John the Baptist while he was in prison, Matt. 11:4, 5.

i) 1 Kings 17:1-16; cf. James 5:17, 18.

j) II Kings 5:1-18.

k) See note at Matt. 4:13.

who You are — The Holy One of God.”

³⁵But Jesus rebuked him, “Be still and get out of him!” Then throwing him to the floor in their midst, the demon came out of him without hurting him.

³⁶A sense of awe came over all of them and they remarked to one another, “What teaching this is! For with authority and power He gives orders to unclean spirits and they come out.”

³⁷And a report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding country.

³⁸He then went from the synagogue to Simon's home; but Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever and they consulted Him about her.

³⁹Standing over her, He rebuked the fever and it left her. And at once she arose and began to wait on them.

⁴⁰At sunset all who had any who were ill with various diseases, brought them to Him and He laid hands on all of them and cured them. ⁴¹Even demons came out of many people, shouting, “You are the Son of God.” But He rebuked them and did not allow them to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ.

⁴²At break of day He went out to a lonely spot, but the crowds were looking for Him and came to where He was and tried to keep Him from leaving them; ⁴³but He told them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well, because for this purpose I was sent.” ⁴⁴And He continued preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

5 AND AS THE PEOPLE WERE CROWD-
ing Him to hear God's message, He noticed, while standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,^z ²two boats moored near the shore, but the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. ³He stepped into one of the boats which belonged to Simon, and asked him to push out a little from the shore;

then when He had sat down He began to teach the crowd from the boat.

⁴When He had finished speaking, He told Simon, “Push out into the deep and lower your nets for a haul.”

⁵Simon replied, “Master, all night we were working hard without catching a thing; however, at Your word, I will cast the nets.” ⁶And when they did so, they enclosed such a shoal of fish that their nets started tearing. ⁷They signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, which they did, and they filled both boats until they almost sank. ⁸At the sight of it, Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees and said, “Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!”^a ⁹For amazement had gripped him and all his partners at the catch of fish they had made — ¹⁰so also with James and John, the sons of Zebedee, partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Have no fear; from now on you will be catching men.” ¹¹Then bringing the boats to shore, they left everything and followed Him.

¹²While He was in one of the towns, a man covered with leprosy saw Jesus and, falling on his face, begged of Him, “Lord, if You will, You can cleanse me.” ¹³Reaching out His hand, Jesus touched him, saying, “I will; be cleansed.” And immediately the leprosy left him. ¹⁴Jesus warned him to tell no one; but “Go, show yourself to the priest,”^b He said, “and make offerings for your purification as Moses prescribed, as evidence to the people.” ¹⁵But word about Him spread even more, and large crowds gathered to listen and to be healed of their diseases. ¹⁶Jesus, however, habitually withdrew into the desert for prayer.

¹⁷One of those days He was teaching, and Pharisees^c and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there, and the power

z) The Lake of Gennesaret is another name for the Sea of Galilee. The same body of water is also called the Sea of Tiberius, John 6:1. In O.T. times it was known as the Sea of Chinnereth, Num. 34:11; Josh. 12:3; 13:27.

a) If he had not realized it before this, Peter was now beginning to understand that Jesus was more than a mere man.

b) In O.T. times part of the priestly function was to prescribe for the sick in accord with the Law of Moses, Lev. 14.

c) See note at Matt. 3:7.

of the Lord was present so that He healed people. ¹⁸Then some men came carrying a paralytic on a couch and tried to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; ¹⁹but as they found no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles, couch and all, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰Seeing their faith, He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹The scribes^d and the Pharisees began to reason, "Who is this, speaking blasphemies? Who is able to forgive sins except God alone?"^e ²²Jesus, aware of their reasonings, said to them, "What are you deliberating in your minds? ²³Which is easier, to say: 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? ²⁴However, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, rise, pick up your couch and walk home." ²⁵At once he got up in their presence, picked up what he had been lying on and, praising God, went home. ²⁶Amazement gripped them all; they, too, praised God and, full of awe, said, "We have seen astounding things today."

²⁷Going outdoors after this, He noticed a tax collector named Levi^f sitting at the revenue office, and said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸Rising up, he left everything and followed Him. ²⁹Then Levi gave Him a great banquet at his home, at which a large group of tax collectors and others sat^g at the table together. ³⁰But the scribes and the Pharisees grumbled to His disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹Jesus answered them, "Healthy people do not need a physician, but those who are ill. ³²I have come, not to call the upright but sinners to repentance."

³³And they said to Him, "John's disciples fast and pray frequently, as

do those of the Pharisees as well; but Yours both eat and drink." ³⁴And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests be made to fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and in those days they will fast."

³⁶And He spoke this parable to them: "No one patches an old garment with a patch taken from a new one, or else he will tear the new, and also the patch from the new will not match the old. ³⁷And no one pours new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and run out and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸But new wine should be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹And no one, used to drinking old wine, wants new wine right away, for he says, 'The old is preferable.'"^h

6 ON A SABBATH,ⁱ WHILE HE WAS passing through grainfields, His disciples picked the heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands and ate them. ²But some of the Pharisees said, "Why do you practice what is not allowed on the Sabbath?" ³Jesus answered them, "Have you never read^j what David did when he and his companions were hungry, ⁴how he entered the house of God and took and ate the loaves of presentation,^k which none but the priests are allowed to eat, and he shared them with his companions?" ⁵He said further, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

⁶On another Sabbath, as He went into the synagogue and taught, a man was present whose right hand was withered, ⁷and the scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him whether He would cure him on the Sabbath, so that they might find something to accuse Him of. ⁸But He knew their thoughts and said to the man with the

d) See note at Matt. 2:4.

e) The scribes and Pharisees were right in thinking that only Deity can forgive sins, and for them Jesus was no more than a mere man. And with Jesus the healing of men's souls was more important than the healing of their bodies.

f) Levi is the Matthew of ch. 6:15. See note at Mark 2:14.

g) See note at Mark 2:15.

h) This parable is Jesus' simple way of portraying the difficult change from the restrictions of the ceremonial Law to the liberty of the Gospel of grace.

i) Some ancient manuscripts read, "On the second Sabbath after the first."

j) I Sam. 21:1-7.

k) This was the showbread, Exod. 25:30.

withered hand, "Arise, and stand here in the center." And he got up and stood there.

⁹Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it allowed to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath; to save a life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰Then, looking around at all of them, He said to the man, "Hold out your hand." This he did, and his hand was fully restored. ¹¹But, maddened with anger, they discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

¹²In those days He went up into the hills to pray and was spending the entire night in prayer to God. ¹³At daybreak He summoned His disciples and chose twelve of them whom He named apostles: ¹⁴Simon whom He also called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon called the Zealot; ¹⁶Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who turned traitor against Him.

¹⁷With them He came down and stood on a level spot with a large throng of His disciples and a vast crowd of people from all over Judea and from Jerusalem and from the borders of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and to be cured of their diseases. ¹⁸Those troubled with unclean spirits were healed also. ¹⁹And the whole crowd tried to touch Him because power issued from Him and healed every one.

²⁰Fixing His eyes on His disciples, He proceeded to say, ¹"Blessed^m are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. ²¹Blessed are you that are hungry now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you that weep now, for you will laugh. ²²Blessed are you when people hate you and exclude you and denounce and defame your name as wicked on account of the Son of Man. ²³Be glad at such a time and leap for joy, for in heaven your reward is rich.

Jesus at Prayer; He Chooses the Twelve

Their fathers treated the prophets just that way.

²⁴"Alas, however, for you who are wealthy,^a for you have enjoyed your comfort. ²⁵Alas for you who are filled up now, for you will suffer hunger. Alas for you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. ²⁶Alas when everyone praises you, for their fathers treated the false prophets just that way.

²⁷"But to you who are listening to Me I say, Love your enemies; treat well those who hate you; ²⁸bless those who curse you; pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹To him who hits you on the cheek, offer the other, and do not prevent the one who takes your coat from taking your tunic as well. ³⁰Give to everyone who asks you, and do not request your belongings back from him who took them. ³¹Treat others exactly as you would like to have them treat you.

³²"If you love only those who love you, what credit is that to you? For sinners, too, love those who love them. ³³And if you treat well those who treat you well, what credit is that to you? Sinners do that much. ³⁴And if you lend to those from whom you expect a return, what credit is that to you? Sinners lend to sinners as well, to get back an equal amount.

³⁵"But love your enemies; do good and lend without prospect of return. Then your return will be rich; you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ³⁷Do not judge and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned; pardon and you will be pardoned; ³⁸give and it will be given to you — good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will they pour into your lap. For with the yardstick you use for measuring, it in turn will be measured to you."

³⁹And He told them a parable: "Can

1) In this passage, vs. 20-49, Luke records in somewhat different words a good part of the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7.

m) The Greek word *makarioi*, rendered "blessed" here and in the beatitudes as written in Matt 5:3-11, may also be translated "happy." It is significant that Jesus teaches that some of the very things that men consider cause for sorrow will bring His disciples blessing and happiness.

n) Such a reversal of conditions is vividly illustrated in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31.

one blind person guide another? Will they not both stumble into a pit? ⁴⁰A disciple is not above his teacher; but every well-trained student will be like his teacher.

⁴¹"And why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye without being at all aware of the beam in your own eye? ⁴²How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me extract the splinter from your eye,' without noticing the beam in your own eye? Hypocrites, first extract the beam from your eye and then you can clearly see to extract the splinter from your brother's eye.

⁴³"For no good tree bears worthless fruit; neither does a worthless tree bear good fruit; ⁴⁴for each tree is known by its own fruit. Accordingly, no figs are picked from thorns, nor are grapes gathered from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵The good person expresses good from the good that is stored in his heart, and the evil person expresses evil from the evil that is stored in his heart. For from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

⁴⁶"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? ⁴⁷Whoever comes to Me and listens to My words and does them, I will show you whom he resembles. ⁴⁸He resembles a man who built a house; he dug and went down deep and set the foundation on a rock. When the flood rose, the river rushed against that house but had no power to shake it, because it was securely built. ⁴⁹But one who listens and does not do what I say resembles a man who built his house on the ground without a foundation, against which the river rushed and at once it fell, and the wreck of that house was terrible."

7 WHEN HE HAD FINISHED ALL HIS utterances in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. ²There a centurion's slave,^o who meant much to him, was ill to the point of death;

³but hearing about Jesus he sent Jewish elders to Him who begged Him to come and heal his slave. ⁴On reaching Jesus they urged Him strongly, "He deserves to have this done for him, ⁵for he loves our nation and has built us a synagogue." ⁶So Jesus went with them.

However, they were not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to tell Him, "Lord, take no further trouble; for I am not fit to have You under my roof, and for this reason ⁷I did not consider myself worthy of approaching You. Simply say the word and have my serving boy cured. ⁸For I am also a man under orders and I have soldiers under me and say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to that one, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it."

⁹Jesus marveled^p when He heard that and, turning to the crowd that followed Him, said to them, "I tell you, I have found no such faith, even in Israel."^q ¹⁰The messengers then went back to the house and found the slave healed.

¹¹Shortly afterward He visited a town called Nain, accompanied by His disciples and a large crowd. ¹²As He neared the city gate there was being carried out a dead man — an only son whose mother was a widow — and a large crowd from that city was with her. ¹³When the Lord saw her He felt sympathy for her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴Then going forward He touched the bier. The pallbearers stopped and He said, "Young man, I tell you arise." ¹⁵The lifeless one sat up and began to speak, and He presented him to his mother. ¹⁶Awe took hold of everyone; they gave God the glory and said, "A great prophet has arisen among us," and "God has cared for His people." ¹⁷This report about Jesus spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

^o) See note at Matt. 13:27. The centurion's slave was used as a domestic servant, vs. 7; cf. Matt. 8:6.

^p) The N.T. records only two instances of Jesus' marveling — at the faith of the Roman officer, vs. 6-8; cf. Matt. 8:10, and at the unbelief of the people of His home town, Nazareth, Mark 6:6.

^q) It is not unusual for those outside the place of highest privilege to display greater faith than those who should be closest to God.

¹⁸John's disciples reported all this to him. ¹⁹And John, summoning two of them, sent to ask the Lord, "Are You the Coming One, or should we look for someone else?" ²⁰When the men reached Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You with the question, 'Are You the Coming One or should we look for someone else?'"

²¹Just then He was curing many of diseases and ailments and evil spirits; He also gave sight to many who were blind. ²²And He answered them, "Go and tell John what you see and hear. The blind see; the lame walk; lepers are cleansed; the deaf hear; the dead are raised; the poor are evangelized, ²³and blessed is he who does not turn away from Me."

²⁴When John's messengers were gone, He began to address the throngs regarding John: "What did you go out to see in the desert? A reed swayed by the wind? ²⁵Really, what did you go out to see? A man elegantly dressed? Of course those who are stylishly dressed and living in luxury dwell in palaces. ²⁶Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you and far more than a prophet. ²⁷It is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare the road before You.' ²⁸I tell you no person born of woman is greater than John, and yet the least important in the kingdom of God is greater than he."^s ²⁹All the people, when they heard Him, even the tax collectors, acknowledged God as just, because they accepted John's baptism, ³⁰but the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law rejected God's purpose for them by refusing baptism at his hand.

³¹"To what then shall I compare the men of this generation? What do they resemble? ³²They are like children sitting in a market place and calling out to one another, 'We have played the flute for you and you would not dance;

we have sung you dirges and you would not weep.'³³ For John the Baptist came neither dining nor wining and you say, 'He has a demon.'³⁴ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at a man, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'³⁵ So is wisdom vindicated by all her children."^t

³⁶One of the Pharisees invited Him to dinner; so He went to the Pharisee's home and sat^u at the table. ³⁷When a woman of the town, a sinner, learned that He was dining in the Pharisee's home, she brought an alabaster flask of perfume ³⁸and, standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, began to wet His feet with her tears, then wiped them with the hair of her head, tenderly kissed His feet and anointed them with the perfume.^v ³⁹When His host, the Pharisee, saw it, he said to himself, "If this person were a prophet, He would know what kind of woman is touching Him; for she is devoted to sin."⁴⁰ Jesus answered, "Simon, I have something to tell you." He said, "Teacher, go ahead and speak."⁴¹ "Two men were in debt to a moneylender; one owed him one hundred and twenty-five dollars and the other twelve dollars and a half."⁴² As neither had anything to pay him, he generously canceled the debt of both. So which of them will love him more?" ⁴³Simon replied, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled more." He said to him, "You have judged correctly."⁴⁴ Then turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "You see this woman? As I entered your home you supplied no water for My feet but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You did not give Me a kiss, but she from the moment I came in has not stopped tenderly kissing My feet. ⁴⁶You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with perfume. ⁴⁷So I tell you, her sins, many

r) Mal. 3:1.

s) The new covenant is richer than the old.

t) Wisdom is vindicated by those who accept and practice her suggestions.

u) See note at Mark 2:15.

v) Nowhere in the N.T. is it suggested that this was Mary Magdalene.

w) The text reads five hundred denarii and fifty (denarii). A denarius would be equivalent to about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency.

as they are, are forgiven, for she has greatly loved.^x But the person who is forgiven little, loves little.”⁴⁸ And He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

⁴⁹Those at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sin?”⁵⁰But He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

8 SUBSEQUENTLY HE TRAVELED from one town and village to another, preaching and telling the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with Him,² and also certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases — Mary called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had been expelled,³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who helped support them^y out of their means.

⁴When a great throng was gathering and people resorted to Him from every town, He told them in a parable:⁵“A sower went out to sow his seed and, as he sowed, some fell along the road and was walked on, and the birds of the air ate it. ⁶Other seed fell on the bedrock and sprouted, but then withered because it lacked moisture. ⁷Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. ⁸Other seed fell on the good soil and grew up and yielded a hundredfold.” Upon telling this, He called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

⁹And His disciples asked Him the meaning of this parable,¹⁰ and He said, “It is granted you to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but I speak the rest in parables that^z seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not hear. ¹¹The parable’s meaning is this: the seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the road are people who hear; then the devil comes and carries away the word from their hearts, so that

they may not believe and be saved. ¹³Those on the bedrock are people who hear the word and welcome it gladly, but they have no root; they believe for a while and in time of trial they fall away. ¹⁴What falls among the thorns are people who listen but, as they go on, the word is choked by worries and wealth and pleasures of life, so that they never mature. ¹⁵But the seed in the good soil are those who listen to the word and retain it in a good and well-disposed heart, and steadily bear fruit.

¹⁶“No one lights a lamp and hides it under a vessel or puts it under a couch; instead, he sets it on a stand so that people who enter the room may see the light. ¹⁷For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed; nothing concealed that will not be known and brought to light. ¹⁸Look out, therefore, how you listen; for whoever has, will receive more, and from one who has nothing, what he fancies he possesses will be taken away.”

¹⁹His mother and His brothers came to Him but could not get near Him because of the crowd. ²⁰So it was told Him, “Your mother and your brothers are standing at the edge of the crowd, wanting to see you.” ²¹But He replied to them, “My mother and My brothers are those who hear and practice the word of God.”^a

²²One day He and His disciples got into a boat and He said to them, “Let us cross to the other side of the lake”; and they set sail. ²³But as they were sailing He fell asleep. And a squall of wind came down on the lake, and they were shipping water and were in jeopardy. ²⁴So they went and awakened Him, exclaiming, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And He awoke and rebuked the wind and the surging of the water, and they ceased and there was a calm. ²⁵Then He said to them, “Where is your faith?” But they, awed and

x) Whereas Simon, Jesus’ host, seems not to have shown even the ordinary courtesies to his guest, this woman demonstrated her love for Him by her deeds.

y) Some ancient manuscripts read “him.”

z) Cf. Deut. 29:3, 4; Isa. 6:9, 10; Acts 28: 26, 27.

a) Jesus taught that His family included not just His immediate relatives but all who are obedient to the Word of God. The door to closeness to Christ is the obedience of faith; all who submit themselves to the practice of the Word may be as near to Him as His own mother and brothers were.

amazed, said to one another, "Who is He, anyway, to give orders to winds and water and they obey Him?"

²⁶They landed at the country of the Gerasenes,^b which is opposite Galilee, ²⁷and as He stepped out on the land a demon-possessed man, who came from the town, met Him. He had worn no clothes for a long time, nor did he live in a house, but in the tombs. ²⁸Seeing Jesus, he cried out, threw himself in front of Him and shouted loudly, "What business is it of Yours to bother me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg of You, do not torture me." ²⁹For He had ordered the unclean spirit to leave the man. Often it had seized him and, although he was securely fastened in chains and fetters, and guarded, he would snap the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.

³⁰Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion,"^c because many demons had entered him. ³¹And they begged Him not to order them to go away into the abyss. ³²But there was a huge herd of swine grazing on the hillside, and they asked Him to give them permission to enter them; which He allowed. ³³Then the demons left the man and entered the swine and the drove rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.^d

³⁴When the herdsmen saw what had occurred they ran away and reported it in town and country. ³⁵The people came out to see what had happened and, reaching Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at Jesus' feet dressed and sane—and they were frightened. ³⁶Those who had seen how the demoniac had been healed then reported it to them; ³⁷and all the Gerasenes and the people living around them requested Him to leave them; for they were thoroughly frightened. So He got into the boat and went back.

³⁸The man whom the demons had left begged to accompany Him, but

Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Go back to your home and tell all that God has done for you." So he went and published all over the town what Jesus had done for him.

⁴⁰At His return the crowd welcomed Jesus, for they were all looking for Him. ⁴¹And a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet and requested Him to come to his home ⁴²because his only daughter, about twelve, was dying. But as He was going, the throngs pressed Him closely, ⁴³and a woman who had suffered from hemorrhages for twelve years and had spent on doctors all she had, whom no one had been able to cure, ⁴⁴came up behind Him and touched the hem of His robe. Immediately, her hemorrhage stopped. ⁴⁵Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When everyone denied it, Peter remarked, "Master, the crowds are all around and pressing you." ⁴⁶But Jesus said, "Some one has touched Me, for I am conscious of power having gone out of Me." ⁴⁷When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling, fell before Him and confessed in the presence of all the people why she had touched Him and how she had been instantly cured. ⁴⁸He said to her, "Daughter, cheer up. Your faith has healed you; go in peace."

⁴⁹While He was still speaking, someone came from the home of the ruler of the synagogue and said, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher any further." ⁵⁰But when Jesus heard it, He replied, "Have no fear; simply believe and she will be healed."

⁵¹On reaching the house He allowed no one to enter with Him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. ⁵²All the people were wailing and beating their breasts for her, but He said, "Stop wailing. She is not dead but asleep." But knowing that she was dead ⁵³they laughed at Him. ⁵⁴Grasping her hand, He

b) Some ancient manuscripts read "Gadarenes." See note at Mark 5:1.

c) A Roman legion was composed of 5,000-6,000 men.

d) The demons were homeless after all!

e) The healing of others was apparently a drain on Jesus' personal strength. It was the power of Christ, not His robe, that healed the woman.

called out, "Little girl, arise." ⁵⁵Her spirit returned and at once she arose, and He ordered that she be given something to eat. ⁵⁶Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.

9 CALLING THE TWELVE TOGETHER
He gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. ²He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staff, nor bag, nor money, nor an extra tunic. ⁴Whatever home you enter, stay there and go out from there. ⁵Where they do not welcome you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony against them." ⁶So they went out from village to village preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

⁷Now when Herod^f the tetrarch heard of all the events that were occurring, he was at a loss because it was told by some that John had risen from the dead, ⁸by others that Elijah had appeared, and by still others that one of the old prophets had come back to life. ⁹But Herod said, "John I have beheaded; now who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he endeavored to see Him.

c. A.D. 29

¹⁰The apostles came back and reported to Jesus everything they had done. Then He took them and withdrew into privacy near a town called Bethsaida,^g ¹¹but the crowds learned of it and followed Him. And, bidding them welcome, He spoke to them about the kingdom of God and healed those who needed healing.

¹²As the day began to decline, the Twelve came to Him and said, "Dismiss the multitude, so they may go into the surrounding villages and hamlets to lodge and to find food, for here we are in an isolated place." ¹³But He

told them, "You give them to eat." They replied, "We have only five loaves and two fish^h—unless we go and buy food for all these people." ¹⁴For there were about five thousand men. But He told His disciples, "Have them sitⁱ in rows of about fifty"—¹⁵which they did. They had them all sit down. ¹⁶Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven He gave thanks and broke them and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷They all ate and were completely satisfied, and the leftovers were picked up—twelve baskets full.

¹⁸When He was praying by Himself the disciples joined Him. He asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" ¹⁹They answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah, and others that one of the ancient prophets has risen." ²⁰Then He asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ of God." ²¹Then He strictly forbade them to tell this to anyone, ²²and said, "The Son of Man has to suffer and will be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes and be executed, and will rise from the dead on the third day."

²³He told them all, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross day by day and follow Me; ²⁴for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life on My account will save it. ²⁵For what will it benefit a person to gain the whole world and lose or forfeit himself? ²⁶For whoever is ashamed of Me and My teachings, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and His Father's and of the holy angels. ²⁷However, I tell you truly, some of those standing here will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."^j

²⁸About eight days after these teachings He took along Peter, John, and James, and went up the mountain to

f) This was Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. g) See note at Mark 8:22.

h) The five loaves of bread and the two fish were provided by a boy, John 6:9.

i) See note at Mark 2:15.

j) The transfiguration scene that would follow in about a week, vss. 28-36, would give Peter, James and John a glimpse of the glory of the kingdom.

pray. ²⁹And while He was praying the appearance of His face underwent a change and His garments turned a dazzling white. ³⁰And behold two men, Moses and Elijah ³¹appeared in glory and conversed with Him about His departure^k which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

³²Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but when they awoke they saw His glory and the two men standing by Him. ³³At their parting from Him Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us that we are here. Let us construct three booths, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah," not knowing what he was saying. ³⁴Even while he said it a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were awe-struck as they entered the cloud. ³⁵Then a voice came out of the cloud, that said, "This is My Son, My Chosen One,^l listen to Him." ³⁶And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. At that time they kept still and told no one what they had seen.

³⁷The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a great crowd met them ³⁸and a man shouted from the crowd, "Teacher, I beg of You to take a look at my son, for he is my only child. ³⁹A spirit seizes him and suddenly he shrieks; it convulses him till he foams at the mouth. It bruises him and hardly leaves him. ⁴⁰I entreated your disciples to expel him, but they were not able." ⁴¹Jesus replied, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long must I still be with you and endure you? Bring your son here." ⁴²And even while he was coming the demon^m threw him down and convulsed him; but Jesus rebuked the

unclean spirit, and cured the lad and presented him to his father.

⁴³And all were overwhelmed at the majesty of God. While everyone was wondering at everything He was doing, He said to His disciples. ⁴⁴"Let these teachings sink into your ear; for the Son of man is to be delivered into human hands." ⁴⁵However, they did not understand this saying; it was kept hidden from them so that they might not grasp it, and they were afraid to question Him about this saying.

⁴⁶Then there came up a discussion among them, who of them was greatest; ⁴⁷and Jesus, aware of what occupied their minds, took a child, placed it by His side, ⁴⁸and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me, receives Him who sent Me. For the lowliest among you all, he is truly great."

⁴⁹John made the remark, "Master, we saw someone expelling demons in Your name and we forbade him, because he does not follow along with us." ⁵⁰Jesus told him, "Do not forbid him; for whoever is not against you is for you."ⁿ

⁵¹When the time of His ascension was nearing completion He set His face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²And He sent messengers ahead of Him. And they went and entered a Samaritan village to prepare for His arrival. ⁵³But they would not receive Him because He was traveling with His face toward Jerusalem.^o ⁵⁴The disciples James and John, on observing this, said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them?" ⁵⁵But He turned and rebuked

k) The Greek word rendered "departure" is the accusative form of *exodos*, from which the English word "exodus" is derived. *Exodos* is sometimes employed euphemistically to denote *decease*, *death*, which is certainly the connotation here.

l) Some ancient manuscripts read "My Beloved."

m) According to Matt. 17:15 this boy was an epileptic. At the same time he was demon-possessed, for here it speaks of this. The epilepsy may have been caused by the demon. Cf. ch. 11:14; Mark 9:29.

n) One's own denomination or local church or other Christian activity must not be thought to be the only one that is faithful to the Lord.

o) The Samaritans and Jews had no dealings with one another, John 4:9. The Samaritans were still worshipping God at Shechem on Mt. Gerazim, Judg. 9:7; cf. John 4:20. Thus the people of the village in Samaria were displeased with Jesus, since He was journeying to Jerusalem, and would not receive Him.

them: "[You do not know your attitude. ⁵⁶The Son of Man did not come to destroy human lives but to save]."^p And they journeyed on to another village.

⁵⁷As they were traveling along the road someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You may go."

⁵⁸Jesus told him, "The foxes have holes and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man does not have a place to lay His head." ⁵⁹He said to another, "Follow Me." But he replied, "Allow me first to go and bury my father."

⁶⁰But He said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; you go and preach the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Another also said, "I will follow You, Sir, but first allow me to say good-by to those at my home." ⁶²Jesus told him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

10 AFTER THAT THE LORD COMMISSIONED seventy^a others, whom He sent ahead of Him two by two into every town and community that He planned to visit, ²and told them, "The harvest is rich but the workmen are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. ³Go forth. Notice that I am sending you as lambs into the midst of wolves. ⁴Carry no purse, or wallet, or sandals, neither stop to greet anyone formally along the road. ⁵Whatever home you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' ⁶If a person who is worthy of this greeting lives there, your peace will settle down on him; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay at the same house, eating and drinking what they provide; for the workman deserves his wages. Do not move from house to house.

⁸"Whatever town you enter, if they welcome you, eat what is placed be-

fore you. ⁹Heal those who are ill there, and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has approached you.' ¹⁰But whatever town you enter and they fail to welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Know this, however, that the kingdom of God has approached you.' ¹²I tell you, it will be more endurable on that Day^r for Sodom^s than for that town.

¹³"Alas for you, Chorazin!^t Alas for you, Bethsaida!^u For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon^v that were done in you, they would long since have been sitting repentant in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴But it will be more endurable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum,^w will you be lifted up to heaven? No! You will sink to hades.

¹⁶"Whoever listens to you, listens to Me, and whoever rejects you, rejects Me. But whoever rejects Me, rejects Him who sent Me."

¹⁷With joy the seventy returned and said, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." ¹⁸He said to them, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.^x ¹⁹See, I have given you the authority to step on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will at all hurt you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice because the spirits submit to you, but rejoice because your names are registered in heaven."

²¹At that time Jesus exulted in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast concealed this from the learned and intelligent and hast revealed it to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it was pleasing in Thy presence."^y

²²Everything has been handed over to Me by My Father and no one knows

p) The words in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

q) Some of the best ancient manuscripts read "seventy-two" here and in vs. 17.

r) That is, the Judgment Day.

s) The wickedness of Sodom is proverbial, Gen. 19. Frequently in Scripture Gomorrah is linked with Sodom, e.g., Gen. 18:20; Matt. 10:15; Mark 6:11; II Pet. 2:6.

t) See note at Matt. 11:21.

u) See note at Mark 8:22.

v) See note at Matt. 11:21.

w) See note at Matt. 4:13.

x) Isa. 14:12-15; Rev. 12:7-17; cf. John 12:31; 16:11.

y) As thanksgiving was a leading element in our Lord's prayers and in those of the Apostle Paul, we should not neglect it.

who the Son is except the Father, nor who the Father is, except the Son and he to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him."

²³Turning to them privately, He said, "Blessed² are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings have longed to see what you see but they did not see it, and to hear what you hear but they did not hear it."

²⁵Now a certain teacher of the Law got up to put Him to a thorough test. He asked, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶Jesus asked him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷The teacher of the Law answered, "You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole strength and your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸Jesus told him, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live."

²⁹But he, wishing to absolve himself, asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰Jesus replied, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who stripped and pummeled him and ran off, leaving him half dead. ³¹Coincidentally, a certain priest was coming down that road and, seeing him, passed on the other side. ³²In the same way, a Levite^a arrived at the spot, and passed on the other side. ³³Then a certain Samaritan^b came there as he traveled, saw him, and took pity on him. ³⁴Going to him, he bandaged his wounds, poured oil and wine into them, set him on his own donkey, took him to an inn and looked after him. ³⁵The next morning he took out and handed the innkeeper fifty cents,^c and said, 'Take care of him and whatever further expenses you incur I will refund when I come back.' ³⁶Which of these three, do you think, was really

neighbor to the one who fell among the robbers?"

³⁷He said, "The one who was merciful to him." Then Jesus told him, "You go and do the same."

³⁸During their travels He entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed Him to her home. ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who took a seat at the Lord's feet and listened to His teaching. ⁴⁰But Martha got worried about much housework so, approaching Him, she said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister left me to do the work alone? Then tell her to help me." ⁴¹But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and bothered about many matters, ⁴²when there is need of but one thing. Mary has selected the good portion which will not be taken away from her."

11 HE WAS PRAYING IN A CERTAIN place and, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray as John, too, taught his disciples." ²He said to them, "When you pray, say^d: 'Father, Thy name be held holy. Thy kingdom come. ³Daily grant us our food for the coming day. ⁴And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one indebted to us. And bring us not into temptation.'"

⁵He further said to them, "Let us say that one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶since a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a trip and I have nothing to set before him,' ⁷and the one inside should answer him, 'Do not bother me. The door is already locked and my children are in bed with me. I cannot get up and give to you.'"

⁸"I tell you, if he does not get up to give to him because he is his friend, he will rise on account of his brazen

2) Or, "Happy." See note at ch. 6:20.

a) A member of the tribe of Levi, which was chosen by God to serve Him in the tabernacle, Num. 3:12, 40:51. The Levites were substitutes, as it were, for the first-born males of Israel, who had been set apart by God to Himself, Exod. 13:2.

b) The Jews despised Samaritans. See note at ch. 9:53.

c) The text reads "two denarii." A denarius would be equivalent to twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency. But what seems hardly more than a pittance now would have been ample for a stay of two days at an inn in the first century.

d) In some ancient manuscripts words and phrases from Matt. 6:9-13 are inserted here. Luke gives the essentials of the Lord's Prayer.

insistence,^e and give him as much as he needs.”⁹ And I tell you, “Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you; ¹⁰for everyone who asks receives, everyone who seeks finds, and to everyone who knocks the door will be opened. ¹¹What father among you whose son [asks bread will give him a stone, or if he]^f requests a fish will instead hand him a snake, ¹²or if he requests an egg will hand him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, evil as you are, know enough to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.”

¹⁴He was expelling a demon that caused dumbness, and after the expulsion the dumb man spoke so that the crowds wondered; ¹⁵but some of them said, “He expels demons through Beelzebul,^g the prince of the demons.” ¹⁶Others by way of testing Him, asked Him for a sign from heaven. ¹⁷Well aware what they were thinking, He told them, “Every kingdom divided against itself comes to ruin; so does the quarreling home go down. ¹⁸And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I expel demons through Beelzebul. ¹⁹But if I expel demons through Beelzebul, through whom do your sons cast them out? They therefore shall be your judges. ²⁰But if I expel demons by means of the finger of God,^h then the kingdom of God has already reached you.

²¹“When a strong man fully armed guards his residence, his belongings are undisturbed; ²²but when one stronger than he attacks and overcomes him, he robs him of his armor on which he depended and distributes his plunder. ²³He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

²⁴“When an unclean spirit leaves a person, it crosses dry places in search of a resting place and, not finding it, says, ‘I will go back to the house I left.’ ²⁵But on his arrival he finds it swept and orderly. ²⁶He then goes and fetches seven other spirits, meaner than himself; they enter and dwell there, and that person’s final condition is worse than it was at first.”

²⁷In the course of His telling this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessedⁱ is the womb that bore You and the breasts on which You nursed.” ²⁸But He said, “More blessed still are those who hear and keep the word of God.”

²⁹As many people were crowding Him, He began to say, “This generation is an evil generation; it desires a sign, but none shall be granted it except the sign of Jonah,^j ³⁰for as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹The queen of the South^k will rise up in the judgment with the men of this age and will condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and remember, something greater than Solomon is here. ³²The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at Jonah’s preaching, and remember, something greater than Jonah is here.

³³“No one lights a lamp and puts it in a cellar or under the grain measure, but on top of a stand, so that those who come in may see the light. ³⁴Your eye is the body’s lamp. When your eye is sound your whole body is illumined; but in case it is defective, your body is darkened. ³⁵See to it, therefore, that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶If, however, your whole body is illumined, with no portion dark, then it is as perfectly lit as when a lamp illumines you with its beam.”

e) Literally the Greek word, *anaideia*, means *shamelessness, impudence*.

f) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

g) Beelzebul (or Baalzebub) was a pagan god of Ekron in Philistia, II Kings 1:2. In N.T. times Beelzebul was a name used for Satan, “the prince of the power of the air,” Eph. 2:2.

h) “The finger of God” denotes divine efficiency by the Holy Spirit, cf. Matt. 12:28.

i) Or, “Happy.” See note at ch. 6:20.

j) Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:40.

k) II Chron. 9:1-12.

³⁷During His discourse a Pharisee¹ invited Him home to dine with him, so He went in and sat^m at the table. ³⁸But the Pharisee noticed and wondered that He had not washed before the meal. ³⁹The Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside you are full of robbery and wickedness. ⁴⁰Fools! Did not He who made the outside make the inside too? ⁴¹You had better bestow in kindness what is inside and everything will be clean for you. ⁴²But alas for you Pharisees, because you tithe mint and rueⁿ and every vegetable, while disregarding justice and love for God. These things you should practice without omitting the other things.

⁴³Alas for you Pharisees, for you cherish the prominent pews in the synagogue, and the salutations in the markets. ⁴⁴Alas for you, because you are like unseen tombs over which people walk without being aware of them."

⁴⁵One of the teachers of the Law replied to Him, "Teacher, when You say this, You insult us too." ⁴⁶But He said, "Alas for you teachers of the Law as well, because you pack the people with loads that are hard to carry, while you yourselves do not touch those burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷Alas for you, because you build monuments for the prophets whom your fathers killed. ⁴⁸In that way you are consenting to your fathers' works; for they indeed killed them and you build their monuments.

⁴⁹"The wisdom of God therefore says, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' ⁵⁰so that the blood of all the prophets that has been shed from the foundation of the world may be charged against this generation, ⁵¹from Abel's blood^o to that of Zechariah,^p who was murdered between the

altar and the temple. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation.

⁵²"Alas for you, teachers of the Law, for you have taken away the key to knowledge; you yourselves have not entered, and you have prevented those who were entering."

⁵³Upon His leaving there the scribes and Pharisees began to heckle Him fiercely and to draw Him out by cross-questioning on many points, secretly ⁵⁴watching Him for the purpose of trapping Him with something from His lips.

12 MEANWHILE, WHEN COUNTLESS people were massed, so that they stepped on one another, He began to say, primarily to His disciples, "Guard yourselves against the yeast^q of the Pharisees, that is, against hypocrisy. ²Nothing is hidden that will not be shown, or secret that will not be brought to light. ³So whatever you say in the dark will be heard in the light and what you whisper in the ear within a private room will be proclaimed on the roofs.

⁴"My friends, I tell you, have no fear of those who kill the body and afterward can do nothing more; ⁵but I will show you whom to fear: fear Him who, after taking the life, has power to cast into hell." Yes, I say to you, fear Him.

⁶"Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins?^s Yet none of them is forgotten in God's presence. ⁷And the very hairs of your head are all counted. Have no fear; you are worth more than flocks of sparrows.

⁸"I tell you further, whoever acknowledges Me in the presence of people, the Son of Man will acknowledge him in the presence of God's angels. ⁹But whoever denies Me before

1) See note at Matt. 3:7 m) See note at Mark 2:15.

n) Rue is a European strong-scented herb with a somewhat bitter taste. Its seeds are used for flavoring. Rue is comparable to dill (anise), Matt. 23:23.

o) Gen. 4:1-15.

p) II Chron. 24:20-22.

q) That is, leaven.

r) The word here rendered "hell" is the accusative form of the Greek *geenna*, from which "Gehenna" is derived. See note at Mark 9:43.

s) The text reads "two assarions." An assarion was a small Roman copper coin worth one-sixteenth of a denarius. The value of a denarius would be equal to about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U. S. currency. Thus two assarions are the equivalent of approximately three cents.

men, he will be denied before the angels of God. ¹⁰Whoever will make a statement against the Son of Man, for him there is forgiveness; but for him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit there will be no forgiveness.^t

¹¹"When they bring you to synagogues and rulers and authorities, do not worry how to defend yourself or what to say, ¹²for the Holy Spirit will "ach you at the very moment what you ought to say."

¹³One of the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me." ¹⁴But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me judge or distributor of your goods?"

¹⁵He then said to the people, "Look out and be on guard against all greed, for one's life is not made up of the abundance of his possessions."

¹⁶Then He told them a parable: "The field of a certain rich man yielded abundantly, ¹⁷so he considered within himself, 'What shall I do; for I have no room to store my crops?' ¹⁸He said, 'I will do this; I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my produce and my goods, ¹⁹and I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have much wealth laid up for many a year. Take it easy; eat, drink, enjoy yourself.'"

²⁰"But God said to him, 'Fool, this night your soul will be demanded of you, and what you have gotten ready, whose is it to be?' ²¹Thus does the person fare who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich in relation to God."

²²But to His disciples He said, "For this reason I tell you, do not worry about what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear; ²³for life is more than nourishment and the body more than clothes. ²⁴Look at the ravens, how they neither sow nor har-

vest, have neither barn nor granary, and God feeds them. How far more valuable are you than the birds!

²⁵"Who of you can add one moment to his life's course^u by worrying? ²⁶So, if you cannot bring about that little, why be anxious about the rest? ²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow; they do not spin, but I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of them. ²⁸And if God so clothes the grass that is in the field today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, how much more will He clothe you, you of little faith!

²⁹"Do not be seeking what to eat and what to drink, neither be anxious; ³⁰for the people of the world desire all these things, but your Father knows that you need them. ³¹But seek His kingdom, and these things will be supplied you besides. ³²Do not fear, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.

³³"Sell what you have and give to charity; make purses for yourselves that never age—unfailing treasure in heaven where no thief approaches or moth ruins. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there too your heart will be.^v

³⁵"Keep your loins girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶be like persons who await their own master when he comes back from the wedding, so that when he arrives and knocks, they may instantly open the door for him. ³⁷Happy are those slaves^w whom the master finds on the alert when he comes. I assure you that he will gird himself, will have them sit^x at the table and will come and wait on them. ³⁸Whether he arrives in the second watch or in the third, if he finds them alert, they are fortunate. ³⁹But understand this: if the owner of the house had known at what time the thief would come, he

t) To blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is to ascribe to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit, cf. ch. 11:15. This is the only sin for which there is said to be "no forgiveness." For a man can resist God the Father and God the Son and yet in due course be turned about by the wooing of the Holy Spirit; but he cannot resist Father, Son and Spirit, going so far as to attribute to the devil the works of God by His Spirit, and be saved. Those who are concerned about having committed the "unpardonable sin" are the least likely to have been guilty of it, or they would not care. And if they have not already committed themselves to Christ as Lord and Savior, they can do so now.

u) "One moment to his life's course" could equally as well be rendered "one cubit to his stature," and some translations of the Bible read that way.

v) Compare ch. 18:18-27.

w) See note at Matt. 13:27.

x) See note at Mark 2:15.

would have watched and would not have permitted his house to be burglarized. ⁴⁰So you be ready, for the Son of Man comes at an hour you are not anticipating."

⁴¹Peter asked Him, "Lord, are You telling this parable just to us or to everyone?" ⁴²The Lord replied, "Who is indeed the faithful and thoughtful custodian whom the master appoints over his household to supply their food allowance at the proper time? ⁴³Happy is that slave whom the master finds doing so when he arrives. ⁴⁴I tell you truly, he will put him in charge of everything he has.

⁴⁵"But if that slave says to himself, 'My master is putting off his arrival,' and starts to beat the menservants and the maids, and also to eat and to drink and to get drunk, ⁴⁶that slave's master will come on an unexpected day and at an hour of which he has no idea, and will discharge him and will make him share the fate of the unfaithful.

⁴⁷"The slave who knew what his master wanted and neither got ready nor did it, will be severely lashed; ⁴⁸but he who was ignorant of it, who does what deserves flogging, will be punished lightly. For of every one to whom much is given, much will be required, and of him to whom much has been entrusted, people will demand the more.

⁴⁹"I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! ⁵⁰I have baptism to undergo and how great is My distress until it is finished! ⁵¹Do you suppose that I am here to bring peace on earth? Not at all, I tell you, but rather discord; ⁵²for from now on five will be at odds in one home, three against two and two against three — ⁵³father against son and son against father; mother against daughter and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against daughter-in-law

and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

⁵⁴And to the crowds He said, "When you see a cloud coming up in the west, at once you remark, 'A shower is coming,' and so it is. ⁵⁵And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It will be hot,' and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky; why then can you not evaluate this time?

⁵⁷"Why do not you yourselves decide what is right? ⁵⁸When you go with your opponent to the magistrate, take pains to come to a settlement with him on the way, so as to be freed from him, for fear he drags you before the judge, the judge hands you over to the jailor, and the jailor throws you in prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the last penny."²

13 JUST THEN SOME WERE PRESENT who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices, ²and He said to them in reply, "Do you suppose, because they suffered this, that those Galileans were worse sinners than all their fellow Galileans? ³Not at all, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all similarly perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the Siloam tower fell so that it killed them, do you suppose that they committed greater sin than all other dwellers in Jerusalem? ⁵Not at all, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all similarly perish."

c. A.D. 30

⁶He spoke this parable: "Someone had a fig tree that was planted in his orchard and came to look for fruit on it, but did not find any; ⁷so he said to the gardener, 'Look here! For three years now I have come to look for fruit on this fig tree and have not found any. Cut it down. Why should

y) This is simply a statement of what may happen when some in a non-Christian home are converted.

z) Quite often, as Jesus here implies, the one who opposes us may be in the right. The word "penny" is the Greek noun *lepton* which, in Mark 12:42, is translated "mites" in its plural form. *Lepton* means *small, thin, light*. Its value in the mid-twentieth century would actually be about one-eighth of a penny.

it use up the soil?' ⁸But he replied, 'Master, leave it yet for this year, till I dig around it and put in fertilizer; ⁹perhaps it will bear fruit next season -- but if not, cut it down.' ¹⁰"

¹⁰While He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath, ¹¹a woman attended who for eighteen years had suffered from a weakening spirit; she was bent double and could not straighten herself up fully. ¹²When Jesus saw her He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." ¹³And He laid hands on her, and instantly she was made erect, and she praised God.

¹⁴But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus healed on the Sabbath, said to the crowd, "There are six days when work should be done; so come to be healed on those days and not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵But the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not every one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the feeding trough and lead him away to drink? ¹⁶Ought not then this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has held bound these eighteen years, to be loosed from her bond on the Sabbath day?"

¹⁷At these words all His opponents were ashamed, while all the people were glad about all the wonderful things that were done by Him.

¹⁸Then He said, "What does the kingdom of God resemble and to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹It resembles a mustard seed which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew up into a tree and the birds of the air made their nests in its branches." ²⁰He further said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹It resembles yeast^b which a woman took and mixed in three batches of flour until it was all raised."

²²Making His way to Jerusalem, He went through towns and villages, teaching. ²³Someone asked Him, "Lord, are only a few saved?" He told them,

²⁴"Strain every nerve to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will be unable to. ²⁵After the owner of the house has gotten up and has shut the door, you will begin to stand outside and knock at the door, calling, 'Lord, open for us!' But He will reply to you: 'I neither know you, nor where you come from.' ²⁶Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank with You, and You taught in our streets.' ²⁷But He will tell you, 'I do not know from where you are. Get away from Me, all you evildoers.' ²⁸There will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown outside. ²⁹And from east and west, north and south they will come and will be sitting^c at the table of the kingdom of God. ³⁰But, mind you, there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

³¹At that time certain Pharisees approached Him, saying, "Get out of this place, for Herod intends to kill You."

³²He replied, "You go and tell that fox that I shall expel demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day^d I shall complete My work."

³³However, I must travel on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it would not do for a prophet to perish outside Jerusalem.

³⁴"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets and stones those sent to you! How often have I wanted to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing. ³⁵Behold, your home is left you destitute. I tell you that you will not see Me at all until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

14 WHEN HE ENTERED THE HOUSE of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they watched Him closely. ²For a man with dropsy was in front of Him. ³So

a) The Jews of Jesus' day, under the leadership of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, had experienced little spiritual care; their souls needed cultivation.

b) That is, leaven.

c) See note at Mark 2:15.

d) This is figurative language denoting a future date, though not in the distant future.

Jesus spoke to the teachers of the Law, and Pharisees, asking, "Is it right to heal on the Sabbath or not?" ⁴But they kept still. He then took hold of him, healed him, and let him go. ⁵He said to them, "Who of you has an ox or donkey that falls into a pit and you do not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" ⁶And they could make no reply to this.

⁷To the guests, whom He noticed selecting the choicest places, He spoke this parable: ⁸"When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit^e in the most preferable place; for one more highly esteemed by your host than yourself may have been invited by him ⁹and, as your mutual host arrives, he may say to you, 'Make room for him,' and then feeling deeply embarrassed, you proceed to take the lowest place. ¹⁰Rather, when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place so that, when your host arrives, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' You will then enjoy honor before all your fellow guests. ¹¹For whoever makes himself prominent will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be set high."

¹²He further told His host, "Whenever you give a dinner or supper, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your well-to-do neighbors; for they may invite you in their turn and so repay you. ¹³Instead, when you give a dinner, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; ¹⁴then blessing will be yours, for they have nothing to repay you, but you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

¹⁵One of the fellow guests who heard this, said to Him, "Blessed is he who will eat bread in the kingdom of God." ¹⁶But He told him, "A man gave a great supper and invited many. ¹⁷At the supper hour he sent his slave^f to tell those who were invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' ¹⁸But one by one they began making excuse. The

first told him, 'I have bought a field and I simply must go to see it; I beg of you, have me excused.' ¹⁹Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen and I am going to test them; I beg of you, have me excused.' ²⁰Another said, 'I have married a wife and on that account I cannot come.'

²¹"The slave came and reported this to his master. Then, his anger aroused, the master of the house told his slave, 'Hurry out into the streets and alleys of the city and bring in here the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame.' ²²When the slave said, 'Master, what you ordered has been done and still there is room,' ²³the master instructed the slave, 'Go out to the roads and hedges and force them to come in, so that my house may be filled; ²⁴for I tell you, none of those that were invited shall taste of my supper.'"

²⁵Great crowds accompanied Him; so He turned and told them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to Me without hating^g his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, cannot be My disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

²⁸"For who of you, wanting to build a tower, does not first sit down to figure out the expense, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Or else, when the foundation has been laid and he cannot finish it, everyone who sees it begins to say in ridicule, ³⁰"This man started to build and could not finish it.' ³¹Or what king marches against another king for war without first sitting down to consider whether with ten thousand men he will be able to cope with the enemy, who is marching against him with twenty thousand? ³²For if not, he will send a delegation requesting terms for peace while the other is still at a good distance.

³³"So with every one of you who will not part with all he has; he cannot be My disciple. ³⁴Salt is good; but

e) See note at Mark 2:15.

f) See note at Matt. 13:27.

g) The Greek verb *μισέω* is used here. It means nothing less than to hate, detest, abhor. Terms that express emotions are sometimes comparative and this must be the case in this instance. In a clash of claims Jesus must be first and everything and everyone else have a lesser claim.

when salt is tasteless, with what can it be seasoned? ³⁵It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; they throw it away. Whoever has ears to hear let him hear."

15 ALL THE TAX COLLECTORS AND sinners were crowding close to Him to hear Him, ²and the Pharisees and scribes complained, "This person welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³So He told them this parable: "Who of you with a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine alone in the wilderness to go after the lost one until he finds it? ⁵And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, ⁶and, when he gets home, summons his friends and neighbors, to whom he says, 'Be glad with me, for I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷I tell you that in such fashion there will be joy in heaven over one repentant sinner more than over ninety-nine righteous persons who stand in no need of repentance."

⁸"Or what woman with ten silver coins^b does not, at losing one of them, light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully till she finds it? ⁹And when she has found it, she summons her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Be glad with me, for I have found the lost coin.' ¹⁰I tell you that in like fashion there is joy before God's angels over one repentant sinner."

¹¹He further said, "A certain man had two sons, ¹²the younger of whom said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that is coming to me.' So he apportioned to them his property. ¹³After a few days the younger son collected all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered what he had in reckless living. ¹⁴When he had run through everything a terrible famine visited that whole land and he began to lack; ¹⁵so he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him into his fields to tend hogs. ¹⁶He

longed to have his stomach filled with bean pods which the hogs were eating, but no one gave him any. ¹⁷But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have more than they can eat, and here I am starving. ¹⁸I will rise and go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹and I no longer deserve to be called your son; take me on as one of your hired hands.'"

²⁰"So he got up and went to his father; but when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and felt deeply moved and, running, fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' ²²But the father told his slaves, 'Hurry! Fetch the choicest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; ²³bring the fatted calf too, and butcher it. Let us feast and be merry; ²⁴for this my son was dead and he has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' So they began to be merry."

²⁵"Now his older son was in the field and, as he came to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶Then calling one of the servants, he asked what it was all about. ²⁷He told him, 'Your brother has come and, because he has received him back safe and well, your father has butchered the fatted calf.' ²⁸And he was stirred with anger and would not go in. His father came out and pleaded with him, ²⁹but he replied to his father, 'See here! I have worked for you all these years without ever neglecting an order of yours, but never have you given me so much as a kid, so that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours has come, after squandering your livelihood with prostitutes, you have killed for him the fatted calf.' ³¹But he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me and all I have is yours. ³²We just had to make merry and be happy, for this

^b) The word rendered "coins" is *drachmas*. A drachma was a silver Greek coin almost equivalent in value to the Roman denarius; it would be worth about twenty cents in mid-twentieth century U. S. currency. The purchasing power of a drachma in the first century would have been sufficient to cause its loss to be a matter of concern to a housewife.

your brother was dead and he has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

16 HE ALSO TOLD THE DISCIPLES: "There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as wasting his belongings. ²So he called him and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Hand in an account of your management; for you can no longer be manager.'

³"The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my employer is about to deprive me of my managership? I have not strength to dig; I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I know what I shall do so that, when I am discharged from my management, they may welcome me in their homes.' ⁵So, calling in each one of his master's debtors, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' ⁶He replied, 'A hundred barrels¹ of oil.' The manager then said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly and write, fifty.' ⁷He then asked another, 'How much do you owe?' And he replied, 'A hundred sacks¹ of wheat.' To him he said, 'Take your bill and write eighty.'

⁸"The master commended his dishonest manager for acting shrewdly; for the sons of this world are more astute than the sons of light in their own generation. ⁹And I tell you to use unrighteous wealth so that you win friends who, when it fails, may welcome you into eternal dwellings.

¹⁰"He who is faithful in the least is faithful also in much, while he who is unreliable in the least is unreliable in much also. ¹¹Therefore if you have not been faithful in matters of unrighteous riches, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹²And if you are not reliable with what belongs to another, who will give you anything for your personal possession?

¹³"No domestic servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will

support the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."^k

¹⁴The Pharisees were listening to all this and were sneering at Him, for they were lovers of money. ¹⁵So He told them, "You claim righteousness before human eyes, but God knows your hearts. What seems outstanding to men is abhorrent in the sight of God. ¹⁶Until John there were the Law and the Prophets; since then the kingdom of God has been preached and everyone forces his way into it. ¹⁷But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for the smallest part of a letter of the Law to become invalid.

¹⁸"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery; and he who marries the divorcee commits adultery.

¹⁹"There was a rich man dressed in purple and fine linen, who enjoyed luxurious living every day. ²⁰In front of his gate a beggar named Lazarus was placed, covered with sores, ²¹and hungering to be fed crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²²The beggar died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³and, while suffering tortures in hades,¹ he looked up and from a distance saw Abraham with Lazarus in his bosom. ²⁴So he called out, 'Father Abraham, take pity on me and send Lazarus to dip his finger tip in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this fire.' ²⁵But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that you enjoyed the good things in your lifetime while Lazarus had the bad things; now he is being comforted here but you are suffering anguish. ²⁶Besides, there is a great chasm fixed between you and us, so that those who want to cross from here to you are unable; neither can they cross from your side to us.'

²⁷"He said, 'Then I plead with you, father, to send him to my father's house, ²⁸for I have five brothers; let him warn them so that they may not

i) Literally "baths." Each bath contained eight or nine gallons.

j) Literally "kors." Each kor was equal to about eleven bushels.

k) That is, riches. Cf. ch. 18:25.

l) The realm of the dead.

come to this place of torment.' ²⁹But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; they may listen to them.' ³⁰He replied, 'No, father Abraham; but should one risen from the dead go to them, they will repent.' ³¹Abraham said to him, "If they will not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

17 TO HIS DISCIPLES HE SAID, "Obstacles must inevitably come, but alas for the person who causes them! ²It would be to his advantage to have a millstone hung around his neck and to be thrown into the sea, rather than to be an obstacle to one of these little ones.

³"Be on your guard. If your brother sins, call him to task, and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴Even if he sins against you seven times a day and comes back to you seven times with the words, 'I am sorry,' forgive him."

⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Give us more faith." ⁶The Lord said, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

⁷"Who of you with a slave^m plowing or herding sheep will say to him as he comes in from the field, 'Come at once and sit' at the table? Will he not rather say to him, ⁸'Get something ready for my supper; put on your belt and wait on me while I eat and drink, and afterward you may eat and drink? ⁹Is he thankful to the slave for doing what he was assigned? ¹⁰It should be the same with you; when you have done everything that was assigned you, you should say, 'We are undeserving servants; we have simply done our duty.'"

¹¹On His way to Jerusalem He crossed between Samaria and Galilee, ¹²and as He entered a certain village

ten lepers met Him. Standing at a distance, ¹³they raised their voices, crying, "Jesus, Master, take pity on us!" ¹⁴When He saw them He told them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed.

¹⁵But one of them, when he observed that he was healed, came back, loudly praising God. ¹⁶He fell on his face at His feet, thanking Him. And he was a Samaritan.^o ¹⁷Jesus said, "Were there not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸Was no one found to return and give thanks to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹And to him He said, "Stand up and go. Your faith has saved you."

²⁰Asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them, "The kingdom of God does not come by looking for it, ²¹neither will they say, 'Look! Here it is,' or 'There it is!' for the kingdom of God is in your midst."^p

²²To His disciples He said, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but in vain. ²³They will say to you, 'Look, here He is!' or 'Look, there He is!' Do not go out or follow them; ²⁴for as the lightning flashes from one end of the sky to the other, so will the Son of Man be in His day. ²⁵But first He must undergo much suffering and be rejected by this generation.

²⁶"In the days of the Son of Man it will be just as it was in the days of Noah^q — ²⁷they ate, they drank, they married, and they were being married until the day when Noah entered the ark; and then came the deluge and destroyed them all. ²⁸It was similar, too, in Lot's^r days — they ate and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built; ²⁹but on the day when Lot went out of Sodom^a it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

m) See note at Matt. 13:27.

n) See note at Mark 2:15.

o) See note at ch. 9:53.

p) The translation "within you" is also possible. But "in your midst" or "among you" is preferable in this context.

q) Gen. 6, 7.

r) Gen. 19.

s) See note at ch. 10:12.

³⁰"It will be the same on the day when the Son of Man will be revealed. ³¹A person on the roof that day, with his belongings inside the house, must not go down to fetch them, and similarly a person in the field must not turn back. ³²Remember Lot's wife.'

³³"Whoever seeks to preserve his life for himself will lose it, and whoever loses it will preserve it alive. ³⁴I tell you, in that night two persons will be on one bed, the one will be taken and the other left; ³⁵two women will be grinding together, the one will be taken and the other left. ³⁶[Two will be in the field; the one will be taken and the other left.]"^u

³⁷In response they asked Him, "Where, Lord?" And He told them, "Where there is a corpse, there the vultures will flock."

18 HE TOLD THEM A PARABLE TO show that they must always pray and not lose courage: ²"There was a judge in a certain city with no reverence for God and no regard for man; ³and in that city there was a widow, who kept coming to him with the appeal, 'See to it that I get justice against my opponent.' ⁴For a while he would not; but later on he said to himself, 'Even though I have neither reverence for God nor regard for man, ⁵still, because this widow bothers me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she may not finally wear me down' by her continual coming."

⁶And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unfair judge says; ⁷and will not God procure justice for His own chosen, who cry to Him day and night? Will He delay long over them? ⁸I tell you, He will procure justice for them in short order. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith^w on the earth?"

⁹To those trusting in their own

righteousness and looking down on the rest, He told this parable: ¹⁰"Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

¹¹The Pharisee stood up and said this prayer to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like the rest of men — robbers, cheats, adulterers; or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I pay tithes on everything I get.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing at a distance, would not even raise his eyes toward heaven, but struck his chest and said, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner.' ¹⁴I tell you, it was he who went home forgiven, rather than the other; for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹⁵They brought Him infants to touch; but when the disciples noticed it they reproved them. ¹⁶So Jesus called them to Him and said, "Allow the little ones to come to Me, and do not forbid them; for the kingdom of God belongs to their kind. ¹⁷I assure you, unless one receives the kingdom of God like a child, he shall not enter it at all."

¹⁸One of the rulers inquired of Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One — God. ²⁰You know the commandments,^x 'Do not commit adultery; Do not commit murder; Do not steal; Do not witness falsely; Honor your father and mother.'" ²¹He replied, "All these I have observed from childhood up." ²²Hearing this, Jesus told him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and donate it to the poor and you will have riches in heaven, and come, follow Me." ²³Hearing this, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴When Jesus saw that he became sad, He said, "With what difficulty do those who have wealth enter the kingdom of God!

t) Gen. 19:26.

u) Verse 36, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

v) Literally, "strike me under the eye," "give me a black eye."

w) Literally "the faith."

x) That is, the Ten Commandments, Exod. 20:1-17. The five that Jesus cited to the rich man deal especially with man's relationship to his fellow man.

y) The Greek verb *phaneuo* means specifically to commit murder; and so the Hebrew verb, *ratsach*, in Exod. 20:13.

²⁵For it is easier for a camel^a to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶His listeners said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷But He said, "Those things that are impossible on man's part are possible with God." ²⁸Peter said, "Lo, we have left our homes and have followed You." ²⁹He told them, "I assure you, there is no one who has given up home or wife or brothers or parents or children on behalf of the kingdom of God ³⁰who will not receive many times more in this age, and in the coming age eternal life."

³¹Taking the Twelve, He told them, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem and all the writings of the Prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled; ³²for He will be handed over to the Gentiles and ridiculed and insulted and spit on, ³³and they will flog and execute Him, and on the third day He will rise again." ³⁴But they did not understand a word of it; the saying was hidden from them; they did not know what He was telling them.^b

³⁵As He was nearing Jericho a blind man was seated by the road, begging.

³⁶Hearing the crowd passing by, he inquired what it was all about, ³⁷so they informed him, "Jesus of Nazareth is coming by." ³⁸Then he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me!"

³⁹Those up front warned him to keep quiet; but he shouted the louder, "Son of David, take pity on me!" ⁴⁰So Jesus stopped and gave orders to bring him to Him. As he approached, ⁴¹Jesus asked him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me get back my sight!" ⁴²Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has saved you." ⁴³Instantly he regained his sight and followed Him, praising God.

All the people saw it and gave God praise.

19 HE ENTERED JERICHO AND, AS He was passing through it, ²there was a man named Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector and wealthy, ³who tried to see who Jesus was. But he could not on account of the crowd, because he was short. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see Him; for He was about to pass that way.

⁵When Jesus reached the spot He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for I must stay at your home today." ⁶He hurried down and heartily welcomed Him. ⁷And all who looked on complained, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." ⁸But Zacchaeus paused, and said to the Lord, "See, Lord, I will give half of my belongings to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything I will pay it back fourfold." ⁹Jesus said, pointing to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since this man, too, is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰for the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

¹¹While they were listening to these things He went on to tell a parable, because they were near Jerusalem and supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear at once. ¹²He said: "A certain nobleman went to a distant land to acquire a kingdom for himself and to return. ¹³Summoning ten of his slaves," he gave them two hundred dollars^d and told them, 'Trade with this till I come back.' ¹⁴But his townsmen hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We do not want him to be king over us.'^e

¹⁵"On his return, having acquired the kingdom, he ordered those servants to whom he had given the money

z) "Camel" is rendered properly from the Greek *kamelos*. The Syriac version uses *kamilos*, which means a *rope* or a *ship's cable*; but the Syriac is a version and not an original Greek manuscript nor a reliable Greek copy. Neither a camel nor a rope could pass through the eye of a common sewing needle. But all things are possible with God.

a) See note at Mark 10:25.

b) Here was a threefold affirmation by Luke of the apostles' inability at this time to understand Jesus. c) See note at Matt. 13:27.

d) The text reads "ten minas" (Gk. *deka mnas*). A mina was the equivalent of 100 drachmas and would be worth about twenty dollars in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency. Each of the ten slaves was given twenty dollars, vs. 16, 18, 20 — the total amount was \$200.

e) Archelaus, one of the sons of Herod, had such an experience when he went to Rome in 4 B.C. to be crowned as king of the Jews. The Jewish people did not want him as their king.

to be summoned so that he might ascertain what business they had transacted. ¹⁶Now the first one presented himself and said, 'Master, your twenty dollars has made two hundred dollars.' ¹⁷He said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were trustworthy in a very little, you will have authority over ten cities.'

¹⁸"The second also came and said, 'Master, your twenty dollars has made one hundred dollars.' ¹⁹He told this one, 'Have charge of five cities.'

²⁰"The other one came and said, 'Here is your twenty dollars, sir, which I have kept in a napkin; ²¹for I was afraid because you are a harsh man. You take up what you did not lay down and you reap what you did not sow.' ²²He told him, 'You good-for-nothing servant, I will convict you from your own mouth. You knew that I was a harsh man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow?' ²³Then why did you not put my money in the bank, so that when I came I might have gotten it with interest?' ²⁴Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the twenty dollars from him and give it to the one with two hundred dollars.' They said to him, ²⁵'Master, he has two hundred dollars.' ²⁶I tell you, to the one who has shall be given, but from one who has not shall be taken what he has. ²⁷Now for these enemies of mine, who did not want me for their king, fetch them here and execute them in my presence.'"

²⁸After this message He went on ahead of them, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹And as they neared Bethphage^f and Bethany,^g at what is called the Mount of Olives, He dispatched two of His disciples ³⁰saying to them, "Go to the village opposite you and, as you enter it, you will find a colt tied up, on which no one has ever ridden; untie it and bring it here. ³¹And if someone asks you, 'Why do you untie it?' you say, 'The Lord needs it.'"

³²The messengers went off and found it exactly as He had told them.

³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord needs it." ³⁵Then they brought it to Jesus and, throwing their coats on the colt, they placed Jesus on it.

³⁶As He rode along they spread their garments on the road. ³⁷And when He approached the place of the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole throng of disciples began to be joyful and sang praise to God with loud acclaim for all the miracles they had seen, ³⁸saying, "Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd spoke to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰And He answered them, "I tell you, if these keep silence the stones will cry out."

⁴¹When He came close to the city and viewed it, He wept^h over it ⁴²and said, "If you only knew even today how you might enjoy peace! But that is now hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For the time is coming to you when your enemies will throw up ramparts around you and will encircle you and besiege you from every direction, ⁴⁴and will level you and your children within you to the ground, and will not leave you one stone on another, because you did not understand when you were divinely visited."

⁴⁵Entering the temple He began to expel the traders, to whom ⁴⁶He said, "It is written,ⁱ 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

⁴⁷And every day He was teaching in the temple, while the chief priests, the scribes and the leaders of the people were seeking a way to destroy Him; ⁴⁸but they discovered no way to do it, for all the people hung on His words.

^f) Bethphage was situated at the foot of the Mt. of Olives between Bethany and Jerusalem. See note at Matt. 21:1.

^g) See note at Matt. 21:17.

^h) Luke alone reports that the Lord wept on this occasion. Cf. Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11.

ⁱ) Isa. 56:7; cf. Jer. 7:11.

20 ONE DAY AS HE WAS INSTRUCTING the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came up with the elders ²and said to Him, "Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who gave You this authority?" ³He replied to them, "I shall ask you a question too, and you tell Me: ⁴Was John's baptism derived from heaven or from men?"

⁵They argued among themselves, "If we say 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe in him?'" ⁶But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷So they answered that they did not know from where it came. ⁸Jesus said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

⁹He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and leased it to tenant farmers; then went away for a considerable period. ¹⁰At the harvest season he sent the workers a servant,¹ whom they should give a share of the vineyard crop; but the tenants beat him and sent him off empty-handed. ¹¹He then dispatched another servant whom they beat and abused and sent off empty-handed. ¹²Again he sent yet a third whom also they wounded and expelled. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I shall send my beloved son; surely, they will respect him.'

¹⁴"But when the tenant farmers saw him they discussed it among themselves, 'This is the heir; let us kill him, so that the inheritance may become ours.' ¹⁵Accordingly they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those tenants and will give the vineyard to others."

When they heard it they said, "May it never be!" ¹⁷But He looked at them and said, "What then does this Scripture^k mean: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief

stone of the corner?' ¹⁸Whoever falls on that stone will be crushed and he on whom it falls will be pulverized."

¹⁹The scribes and chief priests tried to get their hands on Him right then, but they were afraid of the people; for they realized that He had told this parable with them in mind. ²⁰So they watched Him and sent spies who pretended to be honest in the hope of catching Him in some saying that they might hand Him over to the governor's control and jurisdiction.

²¹They asked Him, "Teacher, we know that You are right in what You say and teach; You are partial to no one but teach the way of God sincerely. ²²Is it lawful for us to pay tribute to Caesar or not?" ²³Well aware of their trickery, He said to them, ²⁴"Show me a coin. Whose likeness and inscription does it bear?" They said, "Caesar's." ²⁵He said to them, "Then pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." ²⁶So they could not lay hold on what He said before the people and, marveling at His answer, kept quiet.

²⁷Then some of the Sadducees,¹ who deny the resurrection, came up and asked Him, ²⁸"Teacher, Moses wrote^m for us, 'When a man's married brother dies childless, the brother shall take the woman and raise children for his brother.' ²⁹Now there were seven brothers, the first of whom took a wife and died childless. ³⁰The second also took her, ³¹and the third, and so did all seven of them, and they died childless. ³²At last the woman died too. ³³Whose wife then will she be in the resurrection? For all seven were married to her."

³⁴Jesus said to them, "The sons of this world marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵but those who are considered worthy of attaining yonder world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage; ³⁶for they cannot die again but are like the angels and as sons of the resurrection they are God's sons. ³⁷But that the

j) See note at Matt. 13:27.

k) Ps. 118:22. The Apostle Peter later quoted these important words, Acts 4:11; I Pet. 2:7, 8.

l) See note at Matt. 3:7.

m) Deut. 25:5, 6.

dead are raised Moses too made known in the passageⁿ about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'³⁸ He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for to Him they are all alive."

³⁹Some of the scribes remarked, "Teacher, You have spoken well."

⁴⁰For they did not dare to ask Him any more questions. ⁴¹But He said to them, "How can people say that Christ is David's son, ⁴²when David himself says in the book of Psalms,^o 'The Lord said to my Lord, Be seated at My right ⁴³until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' ⁴⁴So David calls Him Lord; then how is He his son?"

⁴⁵And in the hearing of all the people He said to the disciples, ⁴⁶"Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and love salutations in public places and front seats in the synagogues and choice places at banquets, ⁴⁷who make away with widows' houses and pray long for appearance' sake. They will receive a severer sentence."

21 LOOKING UP, HE SAW THE wealthy dropping their donations into the treasury. ²He saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins^p ³and remarked, I tell you truly that this poor widow has put in more than all the rest; ⁴for they all gave from their plenty, but she from her poverty has thrown in her entire livelihood."

⁵And as some were talking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts,^q He said, ⁶"As for these things that you see, the time is coming when not one stone will be left on another without being torn down." ⁷They asked Him, "Teacher, when will this happen, and what sign is there to indicate when it is about to happen?" ⁸And He said, "Be careful not to be misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,'

and 'The time is near.' Do not go out after them. ⁹And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be alarmed; for these things must first occur, but the end will not come at once."

¹⁰Then He told them: "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹there will be severe earthquakes and plagues and famines in various places; horrors, too, and great signs from heaven. ¹²Previous to all that they will arrest and persecute you, delivering you to synagogues and prisons and having you brought before kings and governors on account of My name. ¹³These occasions will give you opportunities for testifying. ¹⁴So make up your mind not to prepare your defense; ¹⁵for I will grant you eloquence and wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."

¹⁶"You will also be betrayed by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends, and some of you will be executed. ¹⁷You will be hated by everyone for confessing Me, ¹⁸but not a hair of your head will be lost.^r ¹⁹In your steadfastness you will gain possession of your souls."

²⁰"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then be assured that her ruin is pending. ²¹Then those in Judea should flee to the mountains, and those inside the city should escape, while those in the country should not enter her; ²²for those are the days of vengeance in fulfillment of all that has been written."

²³"Alas for those who are pregnant and for those who are nursing children in those days, for terrible misery will be on the earth and anger will visit this people. ²⁴They will fall by the edge of the sword and will be carried off as prisoners to all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles until the period of the Gentiles is completed."

²⁵"There will also be signs in sun, moon and stars, with distress on earth

n) Exod. 3:1-14.

o) Ps. 110:1, which clearly intimates Christ's divine and human nature.

p) These copper coins were mites, worth about one-eighth of a cent each. See note at Mark 12:42.

q) Votive gifts are offerings made in fulfillment of a vow, gifts consecrated by a pledge of devotion.

r) Cf. Ps. 121:7.

among the nations, bewilderment at the roaring of sea and waves, ²⁶men swooning from dread and apprehension about events that are about to take place in the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then will they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud^a with great power and glory. ²⁸But when these things begin to occur, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your deliverance is near."

²⁹He told them a parable: "Observe the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰When they are fully budding, you know by looking at them that summer is in the offing. ³¹Similarly when you notice these things taking place, be assured that the kingdom of God is near. ³²I assure you that all this will happen before this generation^t passes away. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

³⁴"Be on your guard, so that your hearts are not overloaded with dissipation, drunkenness and worldly cares, and that day takes you by surprise like a trap; ³⁵for it will come upon all the inhabitants of the globe. ³⁶But you be vigilant and pray unceasingly so that you may have strength to escape all those impending events and to stand in the presence of the Son of Man."^u

³⁷During the day He taught in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed in the open at what is called the Mount of Olives. ³⁸Early in the morning all the people resorted to Him in the temple to listen to Him.

22 THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED

Bread, called the Passover, was drawing near, ²and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way to kill Him; for they were afraid of the people. ³Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, who was counted among the Twelve, ⁴and he went off to confer with the chief priests and officers how

he might deliver Him to them. ⁵They were delighted, and agreed to give him money. ⁶He consented and looked for a chance to betray Him to them away from the crowd.

⁷Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be sacrificed; ⁸so He sent Peter and John with instructions, "Go and get the Passover ready for us to eat."⁹They asked Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?" ¹⁰He replied, "As you enter the city, a man will meet you, carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house he enters, ¹¹and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher sends you word, 'Where is the guest hall in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" ¹²He will show you a large upper room all furnished; there make ready."¹³So they went and found everything just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover Supper.

¹⁴When the hour came, He and His disciples sat^v together at the table, ¹⁵and He said to them, "I have longingly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶for I tell you, I shall never eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

¹⁷Taking the cup in His hands, He gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸for I tell you, I shall from now on never again drink the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹And taking the bread, He gave thanks, broke and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body [given up for your sakes; do this in My memory."²⁰Similarly He gave the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new Covenant in My blood, poured out on your behalf]*. ²¹However, the hand of My betrayer is with Me at the table; ²²for the Son of man goes, indeed, as was determined, but alas for that man by whom He is betrayed."²³And they

s) Compare Acts 1:9-11, where Christ's ascension and His personal return to the earth are mentioned.

t) The word "generation" is translated from the Greek *genea* which means (1) *generation*, i.e., contemporaries living on earth or the span of an individual's lifetime; (2) *race*; and (3) *family*.
u) To stand in Christ's presence without fear of condemnation, because of trust in Him.

v) See note at Mark 2:15.

w) Here Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. Cf. 1 Cor. 11:23-26.
x) The latter part of vs. 19 and all of vs. 20 which are enclosed in brackets do not appear in some of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

started to inquire among themselves who of them might possibly be going to do this.

²⁴There also was a controversy among them, who of them should be considered most important. ²⁵But He told them, "The kings of the nations lord it over them and their authorities are called benefactors. ²⁶But you are not to be that way. Instead, the most prominent among you must be as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷For who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the waiter? Is it not the one who sits at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.^y

²⁸"You have been standing by Me through My trials ²⁹and, just as My Father has assigned to Me a kingdom, so I assign to you ³⁰that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will be seated on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked permission to sift all of you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you return to Me, strengthen your brothers."

³³Peter told Him, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison and to death for You."

³⁴But He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today before you have denied three times that you know Me."

³⁵And He said to them, "When I sent you out without purse or bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" They answered, "Nothing." ³⁶Then He told them, "But now he who has a purse, take it, and a bag too, and he who has no sword, sell your coat and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you that what is written^z has to be accomplished in Me, 'He was classed among criminals'; for what is written about Me is reaching conclusion." ³⁸They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." He said to them, "It is enough."

³⁹He went out as usual to the Mount

of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. ⁴⁰When He reached the place, He told them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation"; ⁴¹then He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down and prayed, ⁴²"Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done." ⁴³[And an angel from heaven appeared to Him to strengthen Him, ⁴⁴and in agony He prayed yet more intensely, and His sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.]^a

⁴⁵Arising from prayer and going to the disciples, He found them asleep from sorrow, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise up and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

⁴⁷While He was still speaking, there was a mob headed by one of the Twelve named Judas, who approached Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" ⁴⁹When those with Him saw what was coming, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰And one^b of them struck the slave^c of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But Jesus said, "Enough of this!" And touching the ear, He healed him.

⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the temple officers and the elders who came to arrest Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as against a robber? ⁵³When I was daily in the temple with you, you never put out a hand against Me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness."

⁵⁴They arrested Him, led Him away and took Him inside the house of the high priest, while Peter followed from a distance. ⁵⁵When they kindled a fire in the center of the courtyard and sat around it, Peter sat in their circle. ⁵⁶Then a maid noticed him seated by the fire, took a good look at him and said, "This fellow was with Him too." ⁵⁷But he denied, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him!" ⁵⁸A little later another

y) For example, Jesus had washed the feet of the Twelve, John 13:1-17.

z) Isa. 53:12.

a) Verses 43 and 44, enclosed in brackets, do not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

b) This was Simon Peter, John 18:10.

c) See note at Matt. 13:27.

looked at him and said, "Yes, you are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" ⁵⁹About an hour had gone by when another insisted, "Unquestionably this fellow was with Him, for he is a Galilean also." ⁶⁰But Peter said, "Man, I cannot make out what you are talking about!" And instantly, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹Then the Lord, turning round, looked at Peter and Peter remembered the Lord's warning, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows tonight you will disown Me three times." ⁶²And going clear outside, he wept bitterly.^d

⁶³The men who were holding Jesus in custody ridiculed Him while flogging Him; ⁶⁴they blindfolded Him, inquiring, "Prophesy! Who struck You?" ⁶⁵And they made many more insulting remarks to Him.

⁶⁶With break of day the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, got together and had Him brought into their Sanhedrin.^e ⁶⁷They said, "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "You will not believe if I tell you; ⁶⁸neither will you answer if I question you. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of God Almighty." ⁷⁰They all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." ⁷¹They said, "What need do we still have of testimony? We have personally heard it from His own lips."

23 THEN THEY ROSE UP IN A BODY and conducted Him to Pilate. ²And they started to accuse Him, "We found this fellow perverting our nation and forbidding them to pay taxes to Caesar, claiming that He Himself is Messiah, a king."

³And Pilate asked Him, "Are You the king of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." ⁴Then Pilate told the chief priests and the crowd, "I find nothing criminal in this man." ⁵But they strongly insisted, "He stirs up the people by teaching all over Judea, beginning from Galilee and coming to this place."

⁶Hearing that, Pilate asked if the man were a Galilean and, ⁷having learned that He came under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him back to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem during those days.

⁸Herod was very pleased to see Jesus, for he had wanted for a long time to see Him, for he had been hearing about Him, and he hoped to see Him perform some miracles; ⁹but though he questioned Him at length, Jesus never answered him.^f ¹⁰Meanwhile the chief priests and scribes stood there accusing Him with all their might. ¹¹Then Herod, with his soldiers, made light of Him and mockingly put resplendent attire on Him, then sent Him back to Pilate. ¹²On that day Herod and Pilate became friends, for they had previously been enemies.

¹³Pilate then summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴to whom he spoke: "You brought me this man as inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined Him in your presence and have found the man not guilty of any of your accusations against Him; ¹⁵neither, in fact, has Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Observe that He has done nothing deserving death; ¹⁶so, after a scourging I will let Him go." ¹⁷[For he had to release them one convict at the feast.]^g ¹⁸But they all shouted as one voice, "Away with Him! Release Barabbas for us!" ¹⁹He had been thrown in prison on account of a

d) In contrast with Judas, who suffered remorse at his betrayal of Christ and then hanged himself, Peter truly repented of his denial of the Lord Jesus. His tears were the first sign of repentance. See John 21:15-19.

e) The Sanhedrin, composed of seventy-one members, was the highest Jewish council under the jurisdiction of the Roman procurators. Its powers of administration of the government and justice were extensive throughout all Judea. It had its own police force, with power of life and death, though apparently no authority to execute the death penalty, which action had to be submitted to the review of the Roman authorities. The seventy regular members of the Sanhedrin, or council (corresponding to the seventy elders of Moses' time), had to be Israelites whose descent was unquestionable. The seventy-first member, the Sanhedrin's president, was the high priest.

f) Isa. 53:7.

g) Verse 17, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

riot that had occurred in the city, and for murder. ²⁰Again Pilate, because he wanted to release Jesus, called out to them; ²¹but they roared, "Crucify, crucify Him!" ²²For the third time he said to them, "What wrong, then, has He done? I find nothing in Him that deserves death; so after a scourging I will let Him go."

²³But with loud voices they urged their demand that He be crucified, and their shoutings won the day. ²⁴Pilate pronounced sentence, that what they asked should be done. ²⁵He released the one they wanted, who had been thrown in prison for riot and murder, and handed Jesus over to their wishes. ²⁶And as they led Him away, they took hold of Simon, a Cyrenian,¹ who was coming from the country, and laid the cross on him to carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷A vast host of people followed Him and women too, who beat their breasts and bewailed Him. ²⁸Turning to them Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me; instead, weep for yourselves and for your children; ²⁹for be sure the time is coming when they will say, 'Happy are the childless, the wombs that never gave birth and the breasts that never nursed babies.' ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains,¹ 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Hide us!' ³¹For if they do this to the green wood, what will happen to the dry?"^k

³²Two others, criminals, were also led away with Him to be crucified. ³³And when they reached the place called The Skull,¹ there they crucified Him and the criminals, one at His right and the other at His left. ³⁴And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided His clothes among themselves by casting lots.

³⁵And the people stood staring,

while the leaders sneered, "Others He saved; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ of God, His Chosen!" ³⁶The soldiers, too, ridiculed Him, coming up and offering Him vinegar, ³⁷saying, "If You are the king of the Jews, save Yourself!" ³⁸For there was an inscription above Him, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹One of the criminals that were hanged reviled Him, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" ⁴⁰But the other reproved him and told him, "Do you not fear God, when you are suffering the same punishment? ⁴¹We, however, are suffering justly; we are getting what we deserve for our misdeeds, but He has done nothing amiss." ⁴²Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." ⁴³Jesus said to him, "I assure you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

⁴⁴It was then about twelve o'clock, and darkness came over the whole land, which lasted until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵due to the sun's eclipse. And the veil^m of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶With a loud voice Jesus cried, "Father, into Thy hands I entrust My spirit!" And with these words He died.

⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had happened, he praised God, saying, "Truly this man was innocent." ⁴⁸And when all the crowds that had gathered for this spectacle saw what had occurred, they went back, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹All His acquaintances too, and the women who had come along with Him from Galilee, observed it all, standing at a distance.

⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the council, a good and upright man, ⁵¹who had not voted for the council's plan and action; a native of Arimathea, one of the Judean towns, he lived in expectation of the kingdom of God. ⁵²He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus;

h) Pilate, who as governor was the supreme judge of the Jewish subjects in Jerusalem, had no right to condemn Jesus on the charges that had been made against Him, and he knew it.

i) See note at Matt. 27:32.

j) Rev. 6:16; cf. Hos. 10:8.

k) Here, Jesus used what was evidently a current proverb, meaning that if the Romans had mistreated and condemned Him to death (the green tree — i.e., an innocent person), what would they later do to the guilty (the dry tree)?

l) This place is generally known as Calvary, from the Latin word *calvaria* meaning skull.

m) This was the curtain that hung in the temple between the Holy of holies and the holy place.

⁵³which he took down and wrapped in linen, then laid in a rock-hewn tomb where nobody had yet been laid.

⁵⁴It was preparation day with the Sabbath drawing near. ⁵⁵And the women, who had accompanied Him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶Then they went back to prepare spices and perfumes, and rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.ⁿ

24 ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE week at early dawn they went to the tomb taking the spices they had prepared. ²They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³and going inside they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴They were greatly perplexed about this when, lo, two men stood by them in dazzling clothing. ⁵Frightened, the women bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but He has risen! Remember how He told^o you while He was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and rise again on the third day."

⁸Then they recalled His sayings ⁹and, returning from the tomb, they told everything to the Eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰They were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna,^p and Mary,^q the mother of James; they and the rest of the women told these things to the apostles. ¹¹But these reports seemed nonsense to them; they did not believe the women. ¹²[Peter got up, though, and ran to the tomb and, stooping down, saw the linen clothes lying by themselves; then he went away wondering at what had happened.]^r

¹³That same day two of them were walking to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and they were talking to each other

about all these occurrences. ¹⁵During their conversation and discussion, Jesus Himself caught up with them and walked along with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. ¹⁷He said to them, "What are these things you are discussing as you walk?" Looking downcast, they stopped, ¹⁸and one of them, named Cleopas, answered Him, "Are You the lone visitor in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there during the past few days?" ¹⁹He asked, "What things?" They said to Him, "About Jesus of Nazareth, who was a mighty prophet in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how the chief priests and our leaders gave Him over to be sentenced to death and had Him crucified. ²¹But we had hopes that He was the one who would deliver Israel. Moreover, three days have already passed since all those events occurred.

²²"Some of our women, though, astounded us. Early this morning they went to the tomb ²³and, not finding the body, came back to tell us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said that He is alive. ²⁴Some of our group then went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

²⁵Jesus said to them, "O fools, with hearts so slow to believe everything the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Did not Christ have to suffer all this and enter into His glory?" ²⁷Then, beginning at Moses^s and through all the Prophets He explained to them in all the Scriptures what referred to Himself.

²⁸They drew near to the village to which they were going, and He behaved as if He were going on, ²⁹but they urged Him, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is already declining." So He went in to stay with them. ³⁰And as He sat^t at the table with them, He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and handed

n) Exod. 20:8-11.

o) Chapter 9:22.

p) Joanna was the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, ch. 8:3.

q) See note on the four Marys of the Gospels, Matt. 1:16.

r) Verse 12, enclosed in brackets, does not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

s) That is, from Genesis through the whole Old Testament. This is one of the most important of all passages relating to Bible study because it shows that Christ is at the center of the Scriptures.

t) See note at Mark 2:15.

it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. And He vanished from their sight.

³²They said to one another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He was talking to us on the road and opening the Scriptures to us?" ³³Rising at once, they went back to Jerusalem and found the Eleven and their friends all congregated, ³⁴saying, "The Lord is risen indeed and appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they related their own experience on the road and how they had recognized Him in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶While they were talking of those things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace to you."

³⁷They were startled and terrified, imagining that they saw a ghost; ³⁸but He asked them, "Why are you disturbed and why are such doubts arising in your hearts?" ³⁹Look at My hands and My feet. It is I Myself. Touch Me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see Me have." ⁴⁰[And when He said this, He showed them His hands and feet.]^u

⁴¹Since they still were unable to believe for sheer joy, and marveled, He asked them, "Do you have any food on

hand?" ⁴²And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and He took and ate it.

⁴⁴Then He said to them, "These are My teachings which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms about Me must take place." ⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He said to them, "So it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance, leading to forgiveness of sins, should be preached in His name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem.

⁴⁸"You are witnesses of these things, ⁴⁹and I will send out upon you what was promised by My Father.^v But you wait here in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰Then He conducted them out as far as Bethany^w and, raising His hands, He blessed them. ⁵¹While He blessed them He was parted from them and taken up into heaven.

⁵²They worshiped Him and went back to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³And they were constantly in the temple, praising God.^x

u) Verse 40, enclosed in brackets, does not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

v) That is, the Holy Spirit who now takes charge.

w) Bethany is at the foot of the Mt. of Olives. Thus Acts 1:12 is in accord with the statement here.

x) Luke continues his record of Christ's ministry in The Acts where he tells of the coming of the Holy Spirit, the beginnings of the church, and its early witness.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

JOHN

1 IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE Word,^a and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²This is the One who was in the beginning with God. ³Through Him everything came into being and without Him nothing that exists came into being. ⁴In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. ⁵The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man named John, sent from God. ⁷He came to be a witness to testify regarding the Light, so that everyone might believe through him. ⁸He was not himself the Light, but he came in order to testify regarding the Light.

⁹The true Light that illumines every person was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world and the world came into being through Him, yet the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own home and His own people did not receive Him. ¹²But to those who did receive Him He granted authority to become God's children, that is, to those who believe in His name, ¹³who owe their birth neither to human blood, nor to physical urge, nor to human design, but to God. ¹⁴And the Word became man and lived for a time among us, and we viewed His glory—such glory as an only son receives from his father—abounding in grace and truth.

c. A.D. 26

¹⁵John testified about Him and cried out, "This was the One of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because He was before me.'" ¹⁶For from His abundance all of us have received more and more grace; ¹⁷for while the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the begotten Son who abides at the Father's side has made Him known.

¹⁹And this is John's testimony when the Jews sent priests and Levites^b from Jerusalem to inquire of him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He admitted without denial and frankly confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Elijah?" He said, "No, I am not." "Are you the prophet?"^c He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may have an answer for those who sent us? What have you to say about yourself?"

²³He said, "I am the voice of one shouting in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."^d ²⁴Now the messengers were from the Pharisees^e ²⁵and they asked him, "Then why do you baptize, if you are neither the Christ nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water, ²⁷but there is One who stands among you, whom you do not recognize, the

a) Greek Logos meaning Word. Christ is the Word of God, that is, He is not only a divine messenger but the exact expression in Person, life and speech of God Himself, Heb. 1:3. What God is, Christ is.

b) See note at Luke 10:32.

c) Deut. 18:15; John 6:14; 7:40.

d) Isa. 40:3.

e) See note at Matt. 3:7.

One who will come after me and whose sandal-strings I am not fit to untie."

²⁸These things occurred at Bethany^f beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

c. A.D. 27

²⁹The next day he saw Jesus approaching him and said, "There is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰He is the One of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who ranks ahead of me, for He was before me.' ³¹I did not recognize Him; but I have come to baptize with water, so that He may be made known to Israel."

³²John testified further, "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and remain on Him, ³³and although I did not know Him, He who sent me to baptize with water told me Himself, 'On whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴And I did see it and I testify that He is the Son of God."

³⁵Again the following day John was standing with two of his disciples,^g ³⁶when he looked at Jesus as He was walking along, and he said, "There is the Lamb of God." ³⁷Hearing him say this, the two disciples followed Jesus. ³⁸Then Jesus turned and, noticing that they were following Him, said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which means Teacher) where are You staying?" ³⁹He told them, "Come and see." They went and saw where He was staying and remained with Him that day—it was then about ten in the morning.

⁴⁰Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who listened to John and who followed Him. ⁴¹He first found his own brother, Simon, and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means the Christ), ⁴²and brought him to Jesus. Looking

at him Jesus said, "You are Simon, the son of John; you will be called Cephas"^h (which means Peter).

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee and found Philip, to whom He said, "Follow Me." ⁴⁴Philip came from Bethsaida,ⁱ the town of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael^j and told him, "We have found the One of whom Moses wrote in the Law as did the Prophets also, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip replied, "Come and see."

⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael approaching Him and said of him, "There, truly, is an Israelite without deceit in him." ⁴⁸Nathanael asked Him, "How do you know me?" Jesus replied, "I saw you under the fig tree before ever Philip called you." ⁴⁹Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the king of Israel." ⁵⁰Jesus further replied to him, "Do you believe because I told you I had seen you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than that." ⁵¹He then said to him, "Truly I assure you all, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

2 ON THE THIRD DAY THERE WAS A wedding at Cana in Galilee, at which Jesus' mother was present, ²and Jesus, with His disciples, was invited to the wedding. ³When the wine gave out, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They are out of wine." ⁴Jesus said to her, "Woman,^k what right do you have to tell Me? My hour is not yet here." ⁵His mother told the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

⁶Now there were six stone water jars standing there for the Jewish rites of purifying; each would hold from twenty to thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. ⁸Again

f) See note at Matt. 21:17.

g) John and Andrew.
h) *Képhas*, from an Aramaic word meaning rock which is equivalent to the Greek *Petros*, that is Peter.

i) See note at Mark 8:22.

j) Nathanael is called Bartholomew in Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13.

k) As a form of address "Woman" was a title of respect in that day. Jesus spoke the same word to His mother at the cross, John 19:26.

He told them, "Now take some out and carry it to the table steward." They carried it ⁹and when the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), ¹⁰he called the bridegroom and told him, "Everyone serves the good wine first and the poorer when men have drunk freely; but you have retained the good wine until now."

¹¹Jesus performed this earliest of His signs in Cana of Galilee, thereby displaying His greatness. And His disciples believed in Him.

¹²Following this He and His mother and brothers and His disciples went down to Capernaum¹ and stayed there for a few days.

¹³The Jewish Passover was near, so Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴There He found seated in the temple dealers in cattle, sheep, and pigeons; also money-changers; ¹⁵so, making a whip out of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, as well as the sheep and cattle, poured out the money-changers' coins and overturned the tables. ¹⁶And to the pigeon dealers He said, "Take these outside; do not make My Father's house a house of business."

¹⁷His disciples recollected that it was written,^m "Passion for Thy house will consume me."

¹⁸The Jews then said to Him, "What signⁿ will You show us for Your doing these things?" ¹⁹Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will rebuild it." ²⁰Then the Jews remarked, "This temple has been in process of building for forty-six years, and will You rebuild it in three days?"^o ²¹But He was speaking about His bodily temple; ²²so, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples recollected that He had said this; they believed the

Scripture and the message which Jesus spoke.

²³While He was at Jerusalem during the Passover Feast, many who observed the signs which He did believed in His name. ²⁴But Jesus would not entrust Himself to them, because He understood them all ²⁵and did not need any one's evidence about people, for He knew what was in the human heart.

3 AMONG THE PHARISEES THERE was a man named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, ²who visited Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can work the signs You work unless God is with him."

³Jesus answered him, "Truly I assure you, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?" ⁵Jesus replied, "Truly I assure you, unless one's birth is through water and the Spirit^p he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh^q and what is born of the Spirit is spirit."

⁷"Do not be surprised because I told you, 'All of you need to be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it pleases and, though you hear the sound of it, you neither know whence it comes nor where it goes. It is the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit." In response, ⁹Nicodemus asked Him, "How is that possible?" ¹⁰Jesus replied, "You are a teacher of Israel and ignorant of this? ¹¹I truly assure you that we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen; but you do not accept our evidence. ¹²If I told you earthly things and you

1) See note at Matt. 4:13.

m) Ps. 69:9.

n) The Greek word *semeion* means a sign or a distinguishing mark by which a person or thing is known; a token; a miracle. The words "sign" and "miracle" are used interchangeably in the New Testament. The sign that the Jews wanted from Jesus was as an evidence of His divine authority and hence a proof of His messiahship.

o) Herod began to rebuild the temple in 19 B.C. This remark was made in about A.D. 27.

p) Water as a token of repentance on our part; the Spirit for the new birth — this is God's part. Water is also a symbol for the Word of God, Eph. 5:26.

q) The usual meaning of the word "flesh" in the N.T. is the whole human being apart from the influences of the Holy Spirit.

do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

¹³"No one has gone up to heaven except He who came down from heaven, the Son of Man [whose home is heaven].^r ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have life eternal.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son,^s so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

¹⁸"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the verdict, that the light has come into the world, and people have loved darkness more than light because their deeds were wicked. ²⁰For every one who practices evil hates the light and keeps away from the light, in order that his activities might not be exposed. ²¹But one who practices the truth wants light on it, so that it will be perfectly clear that he is working in union with God."

²²After this, Jesus and His disciples came into the Judean district, where He remained with them and baptized. ²³John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim,^t for there was plenty of water there and a continual stream of people came and were baptized. ²⁴For as yet John had not been put into prison.

²⁵A dispute then arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew about purification; ²⁶so they came to John and told him, "Rabbi, the One who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, whom you gave testimony to —

He is baptizing and everyone is flocking to Him."

²⁷John replied, "No man is able to lay claim to anything unless it has been given him from heaven. ²⁸You bear me out that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but 'I am sent ahead of Him.' ²⁹The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. But the bridegroom's friend, who stands near and listens to him, is very happy over the bridegroom's voice; so this joy of mine is complete. ³⁰He must increase and I must diminish.

³¹"He who comes from above is above everyone, while one who originates from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks from an earthly standpoint. He who comes from heaven is higher than they all. ³²He testifies to what He has seen and heard, yet nobody accepts His testimony. ³³Whoever does accept His testimony attests that God is true; ³⁴for He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God grants the Spirit in unlimited measure. ³⁵The Father loves the Son and has committed everything into His hands. ³⁶He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who disobeys the Son will not see life but God's wrath remains upon him."

c. A.D. 28

4 WHEN THE LORD KNEW THAT THE Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John" (although Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples did), ²He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. ³He found it necessary to pass through Samaria ⁴and arrived at a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the tract of land^u that Jacob had presented to his son Joseph. ⁵And Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, wearied by His travel, sat down just as He was by the well. It was about six in the evening.

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw

^r) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

^s) Christ is the unique Son of God, eternally One with the Father and the Spirit, yet truly man in His perfect humanity.

^t) The precise locations of Aenon and Salim have not yet been identified. The context suggests that they were in the Jordan Valley. According to at least one lexicographer "Aenon" means *fountain or spring*.

^u) Gen. 33:18, 19; cf. 50:22.

water, to whom Jesus said, "Let Me have a drink." ⁸For His disciples had gone off into the town to buy food. ⁹The Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is this that You, a Jew, should ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.^v

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew God's gift and who really asked you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have requested Him and He would have given you living water." ¹¹The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have no rope and bucket, and the well is deep. Where do You get that living water?" ¹²You surely are not superior to our father Jacob, who gave us the well; and he and his sons and his cattle drank from it?" ¹³Jesus answered her, "Whoever drinks from this water will be thirsty again; ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I shall give him will never thirst again, but the water I shall give him will become a well of water within him that bubbles up for eternal life."

¹⁵The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not get thirsty nor have to come all the way here to draw water." ¹⁶He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come back here." ¹⁷The woman replied, "I do not have a husband." Jesus said to her, "You say correctly, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸for you have had five husbands and the one you are now living with is not your husband; in saying this you told the truth." ¹⁹The woman said^w to Him, "I perceive, Sir, that You are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and You say that Jerusalem is the proper place to worship."

²¹Jesus said to her, "Believe Me, woman, the time has come when you will worship the Father neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation comes

from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming — and is now — when genuine worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is looking for such as His worshipers. ²⁴God is a Spirit and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

²⁵The woman said to Him, "I know that the Messiah, the One who is called Christ, is coming, and when He comes, He will make everything plain to us." ²⁶Jesus told her, "I who am talking to you, am He."

²⁷Upon this His disciples came and were astonished that He was talking with a woman; however, no one asked, "What are You seeking?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" ²⁸Then the woman left her pitcher and, going off to town, told the people, ²⁹"Come, see a man who told me everything I have done! Is not He the Christ?"

³⁰They went out from town and were going to Him. ³¹Meanwhile, the disciples urged Him, "Rabbi, eat."

³²But He said to them, "I have nourishment of which you have no idea." ³³So the disciples said to one another, "Surely, no one has brought Him anything to eat?" ³⁴Jesus said to them, "My nourishment is that I do the will of Him who sent Me and completely do His work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'Four months more and the harvest will be here'? Look, I tell you; raise your eyes and look at the fields, how they are white for harvest. ³⁶Already the reaper receives his wage and gathers the crop for life eternal, so that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For the saying, 'One sows and another reaps,' is verified here; ³⁸I sent you to reap a crop on which you have not worked; others toiled and you step in to benefit from their work."

³⁹Numerous Samaritans from that town believed^x in Him on account of the woman's testimony, "He told me

v) See note at Luke 9:53.

w) When the conversation probed her life, the woman suddenly changed the subject. But Jesus used her attempted diversion to lead her to see who He was.

x) *Pisteuo*, the N.T. word for believing in Christ, is related to the Greek noun *pistis*, meaning faith. To have saving faith in Christ is to trust Him personally as one's Lord and Savior. It is significant that in John's Gospel the noun "faith" is never used, but the verb "believe" (*pisteuo*) is employed ninety times, more than in the other three Gospels together. The purpose of John's Gospel is to lead men to believe in Jesus Christ, ch. 20:31. Thus it is the good news concerning active, living faith in Him.

everything I did." ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans met Him they invited Him to stay with them, and He remained there two days. ⁴¹A good many more believed on account of His message, ⁴²and said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of your story; for we have heard Him ourselves and we know that He truly is the Savior of the world."

⁴³At the end of the two days He left there and went to Galilee; ⁴⁴for Jesus Himself affirmed, "A prophet has no honor in his native town." ⁴⁵So, on His arrival in Galilee the Galileans, because they had seen everything He had done at the feast in Jerusalem, welcomed Him, for they also had attended the feast.

⁴⁶Jesus went once more to Cana in Galilee, where He had changed the water into wine, and there a courtier, whose son lay ill in Capernaum, ⁴⁷when he learned that Jesus had come to Galilee from Judea, came to Him and begged Him to come down and heal his son, who was at the point of death. ⁴⁸Jesus then said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe at all." ⁴⁹The courtier replied, "Sir, do come down before my boy dies." ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." The man believed what Jesus told him and went his way. ⁵¹But while he was going down to Capernaum, his slaves^y met him and announced that his boy had recovered; ⁵²so he asked them at what time he began to improve. They told him, "Yesterday at seven o'clock the fever left him." ⁵³Then the father knew that it was the very hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son lives." And he and his entire household became believers.

⁵⁴This, then, was the second sign Jesus performed when He came from Judea into Galilee.

5 LATER ON THERE WAS A FEAST^z OF the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ²Now there is in Jerusalem,

by the sheepgate, a bathing pool called in Hebrew, Bethzath, with five entrances³ in which a crowd of invalids lay— blind, lame and paralyzed [waiting for the stirring of the water. ⁴For at intervals an angel descended into the pool and stirred the water. Whoever got in first after the agitation of the pool enjoyed healing, no matter what ailment he suffered].^a

⁵One man there had suffered from an infirmity for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus noticed him lying there, He asked him, knowing he had been there for a long time, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷The invalid replied, "I have no one, Sir, to put me into the bathing pool right after it has been disturbed; while I am going another gets in ahead of me." ⁸Jesus told him, "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." ⁹Instantly the man was well; he picked up his mat and walked. Now that was on the Sabbath day.

¹⁰So the Jews said to the healed man, "This is the Sabbath and you have no right to carry your mat." ¹¹He told them, "The one who healed me, He Himself said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'" ¹²They questioned him, "Who is the person who told you to pick it up and walk?" ¹³But the healed man did not know who it was; for Jesus had withdrawn because there was a crowd in the place. ¹⁴Afterward Jesus came across him in the temple and said to him, "You are now enjoying health; stop sinning or something worse will happen to you." ¹⁵The man went off and told the Jews it was Jesus who had healed him.

¹⁶For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus because He did these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷But He answered them, "My Father works till now and so I work." ¹⁸For this the Jews were more eager than ever to kill Him, since He not only broke the Sabbath but also called God His own Father and thus made Himself equal to God. ¹⁹Then Jesus replied to them, "I truly assure

y) See note at Matt. 13:27.

z) If this was a Passover Feast our Lord's ministry lasted three years and three months, cf. chs. 2:13; 6:4; 13:1.

a) The manuscript evidence for the words in vss. 3 and 4 that are enclosed in brackets is so slight that it is virtually certain that they were not in the original Greek text.

you that, the Son is not able to do anything by Himself, but only what He sees the Father doing; whatever He does, the Son does in the same way.²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows Him everything that He Himself does, and He will show Him still greater deeds than these, so that you will marvel;²¹ for just as the Father raises the dead and makes them live, so the Son makes alive whom He wills.²² The Father does not even sentence anyone but has given all judgment to the Son,²³ so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

²⁴ Truly I assure you that he who listens to My message and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life; he comes under no sentence but has passed over from death into life.²⁵ Truly I assure you, the hour is coming — and it is here — when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.^b ²⁶ For as the Father has life in Himself,²⁷ so has He granted the Son to have life in Himself and has given Him authority to act as judge because He is the Son of Man.^c ²⁸ Do not be astonished about this, for the time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear His voice²⁹ and will come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have practiced evil to the resurrection of condemnation.

³⁰ I can do nothing independently; I judge as I am informed and My judgment is fair; for I am not looking out for My will but for the will of Him who sent Me.³¹ If I testify about Myself, My testimony is not accepted as true; ³² but another is testifying about Me and I know that His testimony concerning Me is true.³³ You sent messengers to John and he bore witness to the truth.³⁴ However, I do not rest My claim on human testimony; I only say this in order that you may be saved.³⁵ He was a lamp, shining and

burning, and for a while you were willing to be happy in his light;³⁶ but I have a greater witness than John, for the works which My Father has given Me to accomplish — the activities in which I am engaged — these are My evidence that the Father has sent Me.³⁷ And the Father who sent Me has Himself testified on My behalf; only His voice you never yet heard, neither have you seen His form,³⁸ nor do you even have His message living within you, because you do not believe the One whom He sent.

³⁹ You investigate the Scriptures, because you suppose that you have eternal life in them, and yet they bear witness to Me;⁴⁰ yet you do not want to come to Me in order to have life.⁴¹ I reach for no human fame;⁴² but I know you, that you do not have love for God in you.⁴³ I have come in My Father's name and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him.⁴⁴ How can you believe when you welcome praise from one another and do not seek praise from the only God?

⁴⁵ Do not imagine that I shall accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, in whom you are hoping.⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses you would believe Me, since He wrote about Me.⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My teachings?^d

c. A.D. 29

6 LATER ON JESUS WENT TO THE other side of the Sea of Galilee or Sea of Tiberias.^d ² A great multitude followed Him, because they saw the signs He performed for the sick.³ But Jesus went up the mountain and there sat down with His disciples.⁴ The Passover, the Jewish feast, was near.

⁵ Looking up and observing that a vast host was coming to Him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where shall we buy food, so that they may eat?" ⁶ But He said this to test him, for He knew

b) Eternal life for the believer begins at his new birth, ch. 3:3, 16, 36. The resurrection of the believer's body is a consequence of his possessing the new life in Christ.

c) See note at ch. 3:16.

d) See note at Luke 5:1.

what He was going to do. ⁷Philip replied, "Fifty dollars' worth^e of bread would not suffice for each to receive even a little." ⁸Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, one of His disciples, told Him, ⁹"There is a lad here with five barley cakes and two fish; but what are these for so many?" ¹⁰Jesus said, "Have the people sit^f down." Now there was plenty of grass in the place, so the men, numbering about five thousand, sat down.

¹¹Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and had them served to those who were seated, and the same with the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹²When they were satisfied, He told His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that are left over, in order that nothing may be wasted." ¹³So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with pieces from the five barley cakes left over by those who had eaten.

¹⁴When the people saw the sign He performed, they said, "This surely is the prophet^g who is to come into the world." ¹⁵Then Jesus, aware that they intended to come and seize Him in order to make Him king, withdrew again into a mountain by Himself alone.

¹⁶As evening fell, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷boarded a boat and crossed the sea toward Capernaum. Darkness had overtaken them and Jesus had not yet come to them, ¹⁸while the sea was mounting under a strong wind. ¹⁹They had sailed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the sea and getting close to the vessel, and they were afraid. ²⁰But He said to them, "It is I; have no fear." ²¹Then they were quite ready to take Him into the boat and at once the boat was at the shore to which they were sailing.^h

²²The next day the crowd that was standing on the other side of the sea realized that there was only the vessel which the disciples had used and that Jesus had not gone along with them into the boat, but the disciples had left by themselves. ²³However, craft from Tiberias did land near the place at which they had eaten after the Lord's thanksgiving. ²⁴So when the crowd noticed that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they themselves embarked in little boats and sailed for Capernaum in search of Jesus. ²⁵When they found Him across the sea, they asked Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?" ²⁶Jesus answered them, "Truly I assure you, you are not looking for Me because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled up. ²⁷Do not work for the food that spoils but for the food that lasts to life eternal, such as the Son of Man will furnish you; for God the Father has placed His seal of approval on Him."

²⁸Then they said to Him, "What should we do to accomplish the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus replied, "This is God's work, that you believe in Him whom He sent." ³⁰They then said to Him, "What sign then will You work, so that we may see and believe You; what work will You do?" ³¹Our ancestors ate manna in the desert as it is written,ⁱ 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'^j ³²Then Jesus told them, "Truly I assure you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the real, heavenly food; ³³for what comes down from heaven and furnishes life to the world, that is the Bread of God."^k

³⁴Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread all the time." ³⁵Jesus replied, "I am the Bread of life. He who comes to Me will never hunger

e) The text reads "two hundred denarii's worth." A denarius would be worth about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency.

f) See note at Mark 2:15.

g) Deut. 18:15; John 1:21; 7:40.

h) No miracle is intimated. However, observe that with Jesus aboard they sailed smoothly, cf. vs. 18.

i) As always, it proved difficult to trust in Him, however they might be convinced of His miraculous power. Very humanly they wanted to be saved, not by faith but by works. Yet it is characteristic of human nature to expect to do something for salvation - to earn it as a reward for works whereas it can be received only by divine grace through believing. See v. 29; Eph. 2:8, 9.

j) Deut. 8:3; cf. Exod. 16:4-22.

k) That is, Christ Himself as the truth and the life.

and he who believes in Me will never thirst. ³⁶But as I told you, you have seen Me and yet you will not believe. ³⁷Every one whom the Father has given Me will come to Me, and I will certainly not cast out anyone who comes to Me; ³⁸for I came down from heaven, not to do My will but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He gave Me I shall lose nothing but shall raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰For this is My Father's will, that every one who sees the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I shall raise him up at the last day."

⁴¹The Jews were grumbling about Him for saying, "I am the Bread that came down from heaven." ⁴²They remarked, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? Now how can He say, 'I have come down from heaven?'" ⁴³Jesus replied to them, "Stop grumbling one to another. ⁴⁴No one is able to come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

⁴⁵"It is written^l in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Every one who has listened to and has learned from My Father comes to Me. ⁴⁶This does not mean that anyone has seen the Father except Him who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷Truly I assure you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸I am the Bread of life. ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert and they died. ⁵⁰This is the Bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone who eats of it may not die. ⁵¹I am the living Bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

⁵²Then the Jews argued with each other, "How can this person give us His flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Truly I assure you, unless you

eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood^m has eternal life and I shall raise him up on the last day; ⁵⁵for My flesh is genuine food and My blood is genuine drink. ⁵⁶He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me and I in him. ⁵⁷Just as the life-giving Father sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who feasts on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸This is the Bread that came down from heaven, not such as your fathers ate and then died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

⁵⁹These sayings He uttered as He was teaching in a Capernaum synagogue. ⁶⁰Therefore many of His disciples who were listening said, "This is a difficult message. Who can bear to listen to it?" ⁶¹Aware within Himself that His disciples were grumbling about it, Jesus said to them: "This gives offense to you? ⁶²Suppose you should see the Son of Man ascending to where He was previously? ⁶³The Spirit is the life-giver; the flesh does not benefit at all. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life, ⁶⁴but there are some of you who fail to believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the unbelievers and who would be His betrayer. ⁶⁵He further said, "For this reason I have told you that no one is able to come to Me unless it is granted him by the Father."

⁶⁶From then on many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him. ⁶⁷Then Jesus said to the Twelve, "You do not want to leave too?" ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹and we have believed and have grown certain that You are the Holy One of God." ⁷⁰Jesus answered them, "Have I not chosen you twelve? Yet one of you is a devil." ⁷¹He meant Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, for he, although one of the Twelve, was going to betray Him.

l) Isa. 54:13.

m) The Christian is to be completely joined with Christ in thought, word, and deed so that Christ lives His life in him, cf. Gal. 2:20.

7 FOLLOWING THIS JESUS WENT about Galilee; for He did not want to go around in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. ²However, the Jewish Feast of Boothsⁿ was near, ³so His brothers told Him, "Get away from here and go off to Judea, so that Your disciples will see the works You do; ⁴for no one who seeks to be in the limelight does things where they are not observed. Since You do these things, show Yourself to the world." ⁵For his brothers had no faith in Him either.

⁶Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet arrived, but your time is always opportune. ⁷The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me because I testify about it, that its works are wicked. ⁸You go up to the feast; I am not going up to this feast yet, for My time is not yet completed."

⁹With these remarks to them He remained in Galilee. ¹⁰But after His brothers had gone up to the feast then He went also, not publicly but privately.

¹¹At the feast the Jews were looking for Him and inquired: "Where is He?"

¹²There was considerable dispute about Him also among the crowd, some saying, "He is good," and others, "No, but He misleads the people." ¹³No one, however, expressed himself openly about Him, because of fear of the Jews.

¹⁴By the time the feast was half over, Jesus went up to the temple and began to teach. ¹⁵Then the Jews were astonished; they said, "How does this person know the Scriptures without an education?" ¹⁶Jesus replied to them, "My teaching is not Mine but His who sent Me. ¹⁷If anyone wills to do His will he will understand^o the teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak from Myself. ¹⁸He who speaks from himself seeks his own honor; but he who seeks the honor of him who

sent him is sincere and in him there is no unrighteousness. ¹⁹Has not Moses given you the Law? Yet none of you practices the Law. Why are you seeking to kill Me?"

²⁰The crowd replied, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill You?" ²¹Jesus answered them, "I have done a single deed and you all marvel about it. ²²Because Moses established circumcision among you — though it did not come from Moses but from previous ancestors — you circumcise a person even on the Sabbath. ²³If a person receives circumcision on the Sabbath so as to prevent Moses' Law from being broken, are you enraged at Me for making a man entirely well on the Sabbath?" ²⁴Do not judge superficially, but judge fairly."

²⁵Then some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Is not He the one they seek to kill? ²⁶Here He stands talking in public and nothing is said to Him. The rulers surely have not discovered that He is the Christ! ²⁷But we know where this person is from. When the Messiah comes no one will know where He is from."

²⁸So Jesus called out as He taught in the temple, "Do you know Me and do you know where I am from? I have not come self-appointed; but He who sent Me is true. You do not know Him. ²⁹I know Him because I am from His presence and He is the One who sent Me."

³⁰So they^a were seeking to arrest Him, but no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come. ³¹Besides, many of the people believed in Him and said, "When the Christ comes, will He perform more signs than this one did?"

³²The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about Him, so the chief priests and the Pharisees dispatched officers to arrest Him. ³³Then Jesus said, "I will be with you a little

n) The Feast of Booths is identical with the Feast of Tabernacles, Lev. 23:34; Deut. 16:16. It was so named because, during its celebration, the Israelites lived in booths or tents. From the occasion of vs. 2 until the Feast of Dedication, ch. 10:22, Jesus conducted His final Judean ministry.

o) This means that whoever is willing to find out God's will and to act on it, will surely know the reality of Jesus' teaching about Himself and His work. Here Jesus faces man with the necessity of submitting his human will to the will of God, cf. 1 John 2:17.

p) Cf. ch. 5:5-16. q) The Jewish leaders.

while longer and then I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴You will look for Me without finding Me and where I am, you will not be able to come."

³⁵The Jews talked among themselves, "Where is He intending to go, so we cannot find Him? He surely does not plan to visit the Dispersion among the Greeks and to teach the Greeks?" ³⁶What does He mean by saying, 'You will seek Me and will not find Me,' and 'Where I am you cannot come'?"

³⁷On the final and most important day of the feast, Jesus stood and called out, "Whoever is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, just as the Scripture says,^r streams of water will flow from his innermost being." ³⁹He said this concerning the Spirit whom those who believe in Him were about to receive. For as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

⁴⁰When they listened to these teachings there were those in the crowd who said, "This really is the prophet."^s ⁴¹Others said, "This is the Christ." Others questioned, "But the Christ does not come from Galilee, does He?" ⁴²Does not the Scripture say that the Christ comes from the offspring of David and from Bethlehem,^t the town where David lived?" ⁴³So, on account of Him there was disagreement among the people ⁴⁴and some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

⁴⁵When the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees returned, they were asked, "Why did you fail to bring Him?" ⁴⁶The officers replied, "No man ever spoke as this man speaks." ⁴⁷The Pharisees replied, "Surely you are not misled too?" ⁴⁸Have any of the authorities believed in Him? Or of the Pharisees? ⁴⁹But this crowd that does not know the Law — they are accursed."

⁵⁰Nicodemus, one of their number who had previously called on Him, said to them, ⁵¹"Our Law does not

condemn a person without giving him a hearing and finding out what he is doing, does it?" ⁵²They replied to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Investigate and see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee."

⁵³[Each went to his own home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

8 EARLY IN THE MORNING HE WENT ²back to the temple and when all the people came to Him, He sat down and taught them.

³The scribes" and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery and, placing her in the center, ⁴they said to Him (they were talking to test Him so they might trump up a charge against Him), "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of adultery. ⁵Now Moses ordered in the Law to stone such as she, so what do You say?"

⁶But Jesus stooped down and wrote with His finger on the ground; ⁷and when they kept on questioning Him He raised Himself and told them, "Let the sinless one among you throw the first stone at her." ⁸Stooping down again, He wrote with His finger on the ground. ⁹But they, on hearing it, went away conscience-stricken, one after the other, beginning from the oldest to the last, until Jesus was left alone with the woman as she stood there.

¹⁰Jesus raised Himself and asked her, "Woman, where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?" She said, ¹¹"No one, Lord." So Jesus told her, "Then I do not condemn you either. Go, and from now on do not sin any more."^v

¹²Then Jesus spoke to them again, "I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." ¹³So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are witnessing concerning Yourself; Your testimony is not valid." ¹⁴Jesus answered them, "Even if I do testify

^r Isa. 58:11.

^s Deut. 18:15; chs. 1:21; 6:14.

^t See note at Matt. 2:1.

^u See note at Matt. 2:4.

^v The episode recorded in ch. 7:53-8:11 is not found in any of the important ancient manuscripts. In some less authoritative manuscripts it appears either here or at the end of John's Gospel, or, with certain variations in the text, following Luke 21:38. Yet the incident is so in accord with Jesus' character that the church has been reluctant to dispense with it.

concerning Myself, My testimony is valid, for I know from where I come and where I go; but you neither know where I am from nor where I am going. ¹⁵You judge by human standards; I judge no one. ¹⁶And in case I do judge, My judgment is true, for I am not alone, but the One who sent Me is with Me. ¹⁷It is written in your Law that the evidence of two persons is valid; ¹⁸I am a witness concerning Myself, and My Father who sent Me witnesses concerning Me."

¹⁹Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus replied, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you know Me, you would know My Father as well."

²⁰These words He uttered in the treasury, as He taught in the temple, but no one got hold of Him, for His hour had not yet come.

²¹Once more He told them, "I go away and you will look for Me; but you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come." ²²Therefore the Jews said, "He is not going to kill Himself, is He, because He says, 'Where I am going you cannot come?'" ²³He further said to them, "You are from below and I am from above. You are from this world; I am not from this world, ²⁴so I told you that you would die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am He,^w you will die in your sins.^x"

²⁵They said to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus replied, "I am exactly what I tell you. ²⁶I have much to say and to judge about you, but He who sent Me is reliable and what I have learned from Him I tell the world."

²⁷They did not perceive that He was speaking to them about the Father, ²⁸so Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am He and that I do nothing of My own accord, but tell things just as the Father has taught Me. ²⁹He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do what pleases Him."

³⁰As He said these things many be-

lieved in Him. ³¹Therefore Jesus said to the Jews who had come to believe in Him, "If you adhere to My teaching, you will truly be My disciples; ³²you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."

³³They replied to Him, "We are Abraham's progeny, and we have never been slaves to anyone. What do You mean by, 'You will become freemen?'"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly I assure you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵But the slave does not forever stay in the home; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son liberates you, then you are really free. ³⁷I know that you are Abraham's offspring; but you look for means to kill Me, for you have no use for My teaching. ³⁸I tell of what I have seen at the Father's side, and you behave as you have learned from your father."

³⁹They retorted, "Abraham is our father"; to which Jesus replied, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did; ⁴⁰but here you are seeking to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which He learned from God. Abraham did not act that way. ⁴¹You are doing your father's works." They said to Him, "We are not born illegitimately; God is our one Father." ⁴²"If God were your Father," Jesus rejoined, "you would love Me, for I came and am here from God; neither did I come of My own accord, but He sent Me. ⁴³Why do you not understand My language? Because you cannot bear to listen to My message. ⁴⁴You have the devil for your father and you wish to practice the desires of your father; he was a murderer from the beginning and he could not stay in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie he talks naturally; for he is a liar and its father; ⁴⁵but because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶Who of you convicts Me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? ⁴⁷He who is from God listens to the words of God. Because you are not from God you do not listen."

w) The Redeemer-Messiah.

x) Such unbelief would deprive them of eternal fellowship with Christ.

⁴⁸"Do we not say rightly," the Jews replied to Him, "that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹Jesus answered, "I have no demon, but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. ⁵⁰I do not desire My own glory; there is One who investigates that and who judges. ⁵¹With assurance I tell you, anyone who observes My teaching will never see death."

⁵²"Now we know that You have a demon. Both Abraham and the prophets died and You say, 'If anyone observes My teaching he will never see death.' ⁵³You are not superior to our father Abraham, who died, are You? And the prophets died. Whom do You make Yourself?" ⁵⁴Jesus replied, "If I should ascribe glory to Myself, My glory would be worthless. My Father, whom you call 'our God,' ascribes glory to Me. ⁵⁵You do not know Him, but I know Him, and if I said, 'I do not know Him,' I would be a prevaricator like yourselves. But I know Him and observe His word."

⁵⁶"Your father Abraham was extremely happy in the prospect of seeing My day,^y and he did see it and rejoiced." ⁵⁷Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸Jesus said to them, "Truly I assure you, before Abraham's birth I am."

⁵⁹Then they picked up stones to hurl at Him; but Jesus concealed Himself and passed out of the temple.

9 AS HE WENT ON HIS WAY, HE noticed a man who had been blind from his birth, ²and his disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this fellow or his parents, that he was born blind?"^z ³Jesus answered, "This has not happened because he has sinned or his parents, but that in him God's works should be displayed. ⁴As long as daytime lasts we must do the works of the One who sent Me; night approaches when no one can work.

⁵While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

⁶When He had said this, He spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva, daubed the mud on the blind man's eyes ⁷and told him, "Go out and wash them in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and returned enjoying sight.

⁸Then the neighbors and those who had seen him before as he begged, remarked, "Is not he the one who sat and begged?" ⁹Some said, "Yes, he is the one." Others said, "No, but he looks like him." He himself said, "I am the one." ¹⁰They asked him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He replied, "A man by the name of Jesus made some mud and daubed my eyes and told me to go to Siloam and wash; so I went and washed and I was able to see." ¹²They asked him, "Where is He?" "I do not know," he said.

¹³They brought the man who previously had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴The day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened his eyes was the Sabbath. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees asked once more how he came to see; but he told them, "He applied mud to my eyes, and I washed them and I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees then remarked, "This man is not from God; for He does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a sinful man perform signs?" So there was disagreement among them.

¹⁷Then they asked the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸The Jews, however, did not believe that he had been blind and had gained his sight until they summoned his parents ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How is it that he now sees?" ²⁰His parents replied, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know

y) Abraham saw this by faith in the promises of God. In this passage moral rather than genealogical relationship is under discussion.

z) Man's fall through sinning, Gen. 3, was responsible for whatever suffering the world knows. However, whereas God sometimes chastens His own people, suffering is not always chastisement for sin. Verse 3 makes this clear.

how he now sees, neither do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age; he will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that every confessor of Christ should be debarred from the synagogue. ²³For that reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they summoned the man who previously was blind and told him, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He then replied, "Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that I was blind and now I see." ²⁶They asked him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have already told you and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You too do not want to become His disciples, do you?" ²⁸They abused him and said, "You are His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples." ²⁹We know that God spoke through Moses; but this fellow—we do not know where He hails from."

³⁰The man replied to them, "This is the marvel of it: you do not know where He hails from, yet He opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not respond to sinners, but He does hear one who reveres Him and does His will. ³²Through the ages this has never been heard of, that someone opened the eyes of one born blind. ³³If He were not from God, He could do nothing."

³⁴They retorted, "You, altogether born in sins—would you teach us?" And they expelled him.

³⁵Jesus learned that they had expelled him and, having found him, said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "Who is He, Sir, so that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷Jesus told him, "You have looked at Him; in fact, He is talking with you now." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe!" and worshiped Him.

³⁹Jesus said, further, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the sightless may see, and those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰Certain of the Pharisees near Him asked Him, when they heard that, "We too are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind you would be blameless; but since you claim to have sight, your sin remains."

10 "TRULY I ASSURE YOU, HE WHO does not enter the sheepfold through the door but climbs up from elsewhere is a thief and a robber, ²but he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³To him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep listen to his voice; he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has led out all that belong to him, he walks ahead of them and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger but will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers."

⁶Jesus used this figure of speech for them, but they did not catch the meaning of what He said to them. ⁷So Jesus spoke again, "Truly I assure you, I am the door for the sheep. ⁸All who came before Me are thieves and robbers,^c but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the Door. Whoever comes in through Me will be saved; he will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief's only purpose in coming is to steal, to slaughter and destroy. I have come so they may have life and have it abundantly."

¹¹"I am the Good Shepherd.^d The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired man, who is not the shepherd, who does not own the sheep, deserts the sheep and runs when he sees the wolf coming; then the wolf tears and scatters them. ¹³The hired man runs away because he is a hired man and does not care about the sheep."

¹⁴"I am the Good Shepherd and I

a) As loyal disciples of Moses they would enforce the Law of the Sabbath as they interpreted and enlarged it.

b) Some ancient manuscripts read "Son of God."

c) Not God's prophets but pretenders.

d) Jesus identifies Himself with the shepherd of Ps. 23 and thus affirms His Deity.

know My own. My own in turn know Me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life on behalf of the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep also that are not in this fold; those I must lead as well, and they will listen to My call, so that there will be one flock, one Shepherd.

¹⁷"For this reason My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life in order that I may take it up again. ¹⁸No one snatches it from Me, but I voluntarily lay it down. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again. I received this command from My Father."

¹⁹ Once more a disagreement arose among the Jews due to these teachings.

²⁰Many of them said, "He has a demon; He is out of His mind. Why do you listen to Him?" ²¹Others said, "These are not the remarks of a demoniac. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"

²²The Feast of Dedication came in Jerusalem. ²³It was winter and Jesus walked inside the temple in Solomon's cloister. ²⁴So the Jews encircled Him and asked Him, "How long will You keep our minds in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly!" ²⁵Jesus replied to them, "I have told you and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name bear Me witness, ²⁶but you do not believe because you do not belong to My sheep. ²⁷My sheep listen to My call; I know them and they follow Me. ²⁸I give them eternal life and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹My Father, who gave them to Me, is mightier than all and no one can wrest them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰I and the Father are One."

³¹Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Him. ³²Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good deeds from the Father; for which of them would you stone Me?" ³³The Jews re-

plied, "We would not stone You for a good act but for blasphemy, because You, a human being, make Yourself God." ³⁴Jesus answered them, "Is it not written^e in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? ³⁵If it calls them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken^h), ³⁶do you say to One whom the Father dedicated and sent into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, 'I am God's Son'? ³⁷If I do not accomplish My Father's work, do not believe Me; ³⁸but if I do, then, though you do not believe Me, believe the things done, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me and I am in the Father."

³⁹Then they tried again to get hold of Him, but ⁴⁰He escaped from their hands and went once more to the place beyond the Jordan, where John first had baptized, and there He stayed. ⁴¹Many came to Him and said, "While John did no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." ⁴²And many there believed in Him.

c. A.D. 30

11 A MAN BY THE NAME OF Lazarus, of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha, was ill. (²The Mary, whose brother Lazarus was ill, was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped His feet with her hair.) ³So the sisters sent Him a message: "Lord, the one you love is ill." ⁴Hearing it, Jesus said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, so that through it the Son of God may be glorified."

⁵Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶Therefore, when He heard that he was ill, He stayed at the place where He was two more days ⁷and after that He said to the disciples, "Let us go back into Judea." ⁸The disciples told Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone

e) Although Jesus did not fit the expectations of the religious leaders He was indeed the Christ, the Messiah, and He came according to O.T. prophecy.

f) Our Lord here refers to more than moral unity, and they caught the allusion to His Deity. None but He could truly say this.

g) Ps. 82:6; cf. Exod. 22:28.

h) Here Jesus asserts the full reliability of Scripture.

You, and You are going back there?"
⁹Jesus replied, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If one walks during the day he does not stumble, for he sees the world's light; ¹⁰but if he walks during the night, he stumbles because in him there is no light."

¹¹He said this to them and then added, "Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am setting out to wake him up."

¹²The disciples remarked to Him, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will recover." ¹³Jesus had spoken of his death; but they supposed that He had spoken about the repose of sleep. ¹⁴Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead; ¹⁵and for your sakes I am glad I was not present so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

¹⁶Thomas, called the Twin, then said to his fellow disciples, "Let us go too, so that we may die with Him."

¹⁷When Jesus arrived, He found that Lazarus had already been buried for four days. ¹⁸Now Bethany is near Jerusalem, about two miles distant, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had gone out to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰As soon, then, as Martha learned that Jesus had come, she went to meet Him; but Mary was sitting in the house.

²¹Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died, ²²and I know that even now whatever You ask of God, He will grant You." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

²⁴Martha replied, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; ¹He who believes in Me will live even when he dies, ²⁶and no one who lives and believes in Me will ever die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She responded, "Yes, Lord, I have faith that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

²⁸When she had said this she went off and called her sister Mary privately, saying, "The Teacher is here and He

is calling you." ²⁹Hurriedly Mary arose when she heard it and went to Him. ³⁰Jesus had not yet entered the village; He was still at the place where Martha had met Him.

³¹When the Jews who were with her in the house to comfort her noticed that Mary got up quickly and left, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

³²Mary, however, when she arrived at the place where Jesus was and saw Him, fell at His feet with the words, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³Then Jesus, when He saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping also, was deeply moved in spirit and disquieted.³

³⁴He asked, "Where have you laid him?" They told Him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵Jesus wept. ³⁶The Jews then remarked, "Notice how He loved him." ³⁷But some of them said, "Could not He who opened the blind man's eyes have prevented this man's death?"

³⁸Again deeply moved inwardly, Jesus approached the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by now there is an odor, for it is four days since his death." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you will believe you will see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they removed the stone.

Then Jesus raised His eyes upward and said, "Father, I thank Thee for having heard Me, ⁴²and I know that Thou dost always hear Me; but on account of the people around here I said this, so that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

⁴³When He had said this He called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴Out came the one who had died, feet and hands tied with graveclothes and his face wrapped in a towel. Jesus told them, "Unbind him and let him go."

⁴⁵Then many of the Jews, who had

i) Without a risen Christ there would be no resurrection for any man.

j) Death is an enemy which Christ came to conquer, I Cor. 15:55-57. Ultimately death and its realm are doomed, Rev. 20:14.

come to Mary and had seen what He had done, believed in Him; ⁴⁶but some of them went off to the Pharisees and informed them of Jesus' activities. ⁴⁷So the chief priests and the Pharisees summoned the Sanhedrin^k and said, "What shall we do? For this man performs numerous signs. ⁴⁸If we let Him go on this way, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come to take away from us our holy place and our nation." ⁴⁹But one of them, Caiaphas, the high priest that year,^l said to them, "You do not know anything; ⁵⁰you do not reason out that it is better for you to have one person die on behalf of the people, rather than to have the whole nation ruined."

⁵¹He said this not of his own initiative but, being the high priest that year, he foretold how Jesus was to die for the nation, ⁵²and not alone for the nation, but to gather into one all the scattered children of God.

⁵³From that day on, therefore, they laid plans to kill Him. ⁵⁴So Jesus no longer went around openly among the Jews but withdrew to the country near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim,^m and there He stayed with the disciples.

⁵⁵The Jews' Passover was approaching, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem to consecrate themselves for the Passover, ⁵⁶and they looked for Jesus and remarked, as they were standing together in the temple, "What do you think? Is He not coming to the feast?" ⁵⁷The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that, if anyone knew where He was, he should report it so that they might arrest Him.

12 SIX DAYS BEFORE THE PASSOVER
Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ²There they prepared

a supper for Himⁿ and Martha served the meal, while Lazarus was among those sitting^o at the table with Him.

³Then Mary, taking a pound of costly perfume made of purest nard, anointed the feet of Jesus and dried His feet with her hair. So the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (who was to betray Him) said, ⁵"Why was not this perfume sold for seventy-five dollars^p and the money donated to the poor?" ⁶He did not say this because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief; he had charge of the money-bag and pilfered the collections. ⁷Then Jesus said, "Let her alone. Let her keep it for the day of My burial. ⁸For you always will have the poor with you, but you will not always have Me."

⁹When a great crowd of Jews learned that He was there, they came not merely on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰But the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus also; ¹¹for many of the Jews went away on his account believing in Jesus.

¹²The next day a large crowd of people who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem; ¹³so they took palm branches and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna!^q Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel." ¹⁴And, finding a young donkey, Jesus rode it, as it is written,^r ¹⁵"Have no fear, daughter of Zion! Behold, your king is coming, seated on an ass's colt." ¹⁶At first His disciples did not understand this, but when Jesus had been glorified they remembered that this had been written of Him and that they had done this to Him.

¹⁷The people who were with Him

k) See note at Luke 22:66.

l) Caiaphas was the high priest A.D. 18-36.

m) Ephraim was situated about seventeen miles northeast of Jerusalem.

n) At the home of Simon, the leper, Mark 14:3.

o) See note at Mark 2:15.

p) The text reads "three hundred denarii." A denarius would be the equivalent of about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency, so that the figure of seventy-five dollars is substantially correct.

q) "Hosanna" means *save now or salvation*. The expression is somewhat similar to "God save the king." The people were quoting from Ps. 118:25, 26. Although they greeted Jesus as the Messiah, even the disciples did not seem to catch the real significance.

r) Zech. 9:9.

when He called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead bore witness about it,¹⁸ and for that reason the crowd went out to meet Him; for they heard that He had performed this sign.¹⁹ Then the Pharisees said among themselves, "You see how you are getting nowhere. Look, the world has gone after Him."

²⁰Among those going up to worship at the feast were certain Greeks ²¹who came to Philip of Bethsaida* of Galilee and said to him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus."²² Philip came and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.²³ Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.²⁴ Truly I assure you, unless a grain of wheat drops into the earth and dies, it remains single, but if it dies, it produces a rich yield.²⁵ The one who loves his life will lose it, but the one who hates his life in this world will preserve it to eternal life.²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; then where I am, there also will My servant be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷"Now My soul is disturbed, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this reason I came to this hour.²⁸ Father, glorify Thy name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."²⁹ The people that stood and listened said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spoke to Him."³⁰ Jesus replied, "This voice did not come for My sake but for yours.³¹ Now is this world's sentence; now the ruler of this world will be expelled;³² and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw everyone^c to Myself."³³ This He said signifying what kind of death He was to die.

³⁴The crowd answered Him, "We have learned from the Law that the Christ remains forever, and how can You say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"³⁵ So Jesus told them, "For a little while

the Light still shines among you; walk while you have the Light, so that darkness may not overtake you. One who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.³⁶ While you have the Light, put faith in the Light so you may become sons of the Light."

After saying this Jesus went away and hid Himself from them.³⁷ In spite of all the signs that He had done in their presence, they put no faith in Him,³⁸ in order that the saying^u of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, for again Isaiah said,^v ⁴⁰"He has blinded their eyes and has calloused their hearts, so that they may neither see with their eyes nor understand with their hearts and repent and I should heal them."⁴¹ Isaiah said this, for he saw His glory and spoke of Him.^w

⁴²Nevertheless even many of the leaders believed in Him but, because of the Pharisees, failed to confess it so that they might not be put out of the synagogue;⁴³ for they preferred men's esteem to divine approval.

⁴⁴But Jesus called out in a loud voice, "He who believes in Me does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me,⁴⁵ and he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.⁴⁶ I am a light which has come into the world, so that no one who believes in Me may remain in the dark.⁴⁷ And if anyone hears My teachings and fails to observe them, I pass no sentence on him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.⁴⁸ He who rejects Me and does not accept My teachings has his judge: My spoken word will judge him on the last day.⁴⁹ For I have not spoken of My own accord, but the Father who sent Me, He has given Me a command what I should say and what I should speak.⁵⁰ I know too, that His command is eternal life; so what I say is just what the Father has told Me to say."

s) See note at Mark 8:22. t) Gentile as well as Jew.

u) Isa. 53:1. v) Isa. 6:9, 10.

w) Here the reference is to Isaiah's great vision of the glory of the Lord, Isa. 6:1-8.

13 BEFORE THE PASSOVER FEAST Jesus, aware that the time had come for Him to leave this world to go to the Father, showed His own who were in the world that He loved them to the end. ²At supper time, when the devil had already put the purpose into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, ³Jesus, conscious that the Father had placed everything into His hands and that He came from God and was going to God, ⁴rose from the table, laid aside His robe and, taking a towel, girded Himself. ⁵Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them with the towel with which He was girded.

⁶So He came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, "Lord, You are going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered him, "Just now you do not understand what I do, but you will know later on." ⁸Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you, you are not sharing with Me." ⁹Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "A bathed person does not need to be washed, except his feet, but is completely cleansed; and you are cleansed, but not all of you." ¹¹For He knew who His betrayer would be; so He said, "Not all of you are cleansed."

¹²After washing their feet and taking His garment, He sat^x at the table again and said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, because I am. ¹⁴Then if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you surely ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example so that you might do just as I did to you. ¹⁶I assure you with all truth, a slave^y is not superior to his master nor one who is sent to the one who sent him. ¹⁷If you know

these teachings, blessed are you if you practice them.

¹⁸"I am not speaking of you all; I know those I have chosen; but the Scripture^z is to be fulfilled, 'The one eating my bread has raised his heel against me.' ¹⁹Right now I tell you this, before it occurs, so that when it does occur you may believe that I am He. ²⁰With assurance I tell you that he who welcomes whom I send, welcomes Me, and he who welcomes Me, welcomes the One who sent Me."

²¹When Jesus had said this He was inwardly disturbed and testified, "Most assuredly I tell you that one of you will betray Me." ²²The disciples looked at each other, undecided as to whom He referred. ²³One of His disciples, whom Jesus loved,^a was sitting^x next to Jesus; ²⁴so Simon Peter nodded to him, "Ask whom He means." ²⁵Then he, leaning closer to Jesus' side, asked Him, "Lord, who is it?" ²⁶Jesus replied, "The one to whom I give the bit of bread after I have dipped it." So He took and dipped the mouthful and gave it to Judas Iscariot, Simon's son. ²⁷And after the mouthful, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." ²⁸But none of those at the table knew why He told him that. ²⁹Some had an idea, since Judas had charge of the money-bag, that Jesus said to him, "Buy what we need for the feast," or, "Give something to the poor." ³⁰Then at once, after taking the bit of bread, he went out. It was then night.

³¹When he had left, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and in Him God is glorified. ³²If God is glorified in Him, then God will in Himself glorify Him and will glorify Him at once. ³³Little children,^b I am with you but a little longer. You will be looking for Me and, as I told the Jews so I tell you now, where I go you cannot come. ³⁴I give you a new command,^c 'Love one another.' Just as I

x) See note at Mark 2:15.

y) See note at Matt. 13:27.

z) Ps. 41:9.

a) This probably refers to John himself, cf. ch. 20:20-24.

b) "Little children" is a term that was dear to John, cf. 1 John 2:1, 12, 28.

c) From the Lord's command that His followers should love one another, exemplified by the washing of the feet, comes the name Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday. "Maundy" is from the Latin verb *mandare* meaning to command.

have loved you, so you should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will recognize that you are My disciples, if you love one another."

³⁶Simon Peter asked Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus replied, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but later on you will follow Me." ³⁷Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for You."^d ³⁸Jesus replied, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly I assure you, the rooster will not crow until you have denied Me three times.

14 "LET NOT YOUR HEARTS BE troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father's house are many dwelling places. If this were not so, I would have told you. For I am going away to prepare a place for you. ³And when I have gone and have prepared a place for you, I will come again and take you to Myself so that where I am, you also will be. ⁴And where I am going, you know the way."

⁵Thomas remarked to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going. How do we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷Had you recognized Me, you would have known My Father as well. From now on you do know Him; yes, you have seen Him."

⁸Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us." ⁹Jesus replied, "How long have I been with you without your knowing Me, Philip? He who has looked on Me has seen the Father. What do you mean by saying, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I give to you all, I do not speak just from Myself; the Father who dwells in Me carries on His works. ¹¹Believe Me that I am in the

Father and the Father in Me, and if not, then believe on account of the works themselves. ¹²Truly I assure you, the one who believes in Me will himself do the works I do, and do greater things than these, for I go to the Father. ¹³And I will bring about whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴I will do whatever you ask in My name.

¹⁵"If you love Me, keep My commands, ¹⁶and I shall ask the Father and He will give you another Helper^e to stay with you forever, ¹⁷the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, because it neither perceives nor understands Him. You know Him, for He remains with you and will be with you.

¹⁸"I shall not leave you as orphans; I shall come to you. ¹⁹In a little while the world will no longer see Me; but you will see Me, for I live and you, too, will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me and I in you. ²¹He who has My orders and observes them loves Me, and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father. I, too, shall love him and show Myself to him."

²²Judas, not Iscariot, asked Him, "Lord, how does it happen that You are going to show Yourself to us and not to the world?" ²³Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word and My Father will love him and We shall visit him and make Our dwelling with him. ²⁴The one who does not love Me does not keep My word — though the word you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

²⁵"I have been telling you this while I am still with you; ²⁶but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you everything and will remind you of all that I have told you.

²⁷"Peace I bequeath to you; My peace I give to you. I do not give you

d) Peter was sincere but too self-reliant.

e) The Greek noun *paracletos*, from which the English word "paraclete" is formed, means advocate, comforter, consoler, counselor, helper, intercessor. The Greek word is used in the N.T. to signify the Holy Spirit, who fulfils for the believer all the offices mentioned above.

gifts such as the world gives. Do not allow your hearts to be disturbed or intimidated. ²⁸You heard how I told you: 'I am going away,' and 'I am coming to you.' If you loved Me, you would be glad that I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

²⁹I have now told you this before it takes place so that when it does happen you may have faith. ³⁰I shall not talk over many things with you any more; for the world's ruler comes. He has no claim on Me; ³¹but I act as I do in order that the world may learn that I love the Father and act in full agreement with His orders. Rise. Let us go from here.^f

15 "I AM THE TRUE VINE AND MY Father is the Vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that bears no fruit He prunes away, and whatever bears fruit He prunes so that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in Me and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself without staying on the vine, so you cannot without remaining in Me. ⁵I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who remains in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.

⁶"Whoever does not remain in Me is thrown away as a branch and withers; people gather such branches, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, then you may ask what you wish and it will be done for you.

⁸"My Father is honored in this, that you produce much fruit; then you will be My disciples. ⁹Just as the Father has loved Me so I have loved you; continue in this love of Mine. ¹⁰You will remain in My love if you keep My commands, just as I keep My Father's commands and remain in His love.

¹¹"I have talked these matters over

with you so that My joy may be in you and your joy be made complete.

¹²This is My command, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are My friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I no longer call you slaves,^g for a slave does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends because I have acquainted you with everything I heard from My Father. ¹⁶You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and appointed you to go out and produce fruit and that your fruit should be permanent, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may grant you. ¹⁷This is My command to you: 'Love one another.'^h

¹⁸"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me first. ¹⁹If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own;ⁱ but because you are not of the world and I have selected you from the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰Remember what I said to you: a slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me they will persecute you; if they observed My word, they will observe yours; ²¹but they will do all this to you on account of My name, for they do not know the One who sent Me.

²²"Had I not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty; but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³He who hates Me hates My Father as well. ²⁴Had I not accomplished the works among them which no other ever accomplished, they would not be guilty; but now they have seen and have hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵But they have done this so that the saying^j in their Law might be fulfilled: 'They hated Me without just cause.'

²⁶"When the Helper^k comes, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who comes from the

f) It appears that our Lord and the Eleven left the upper room in Jerusalem at this point. They may have passed through a vineyard as He told the parable of the vine and its branches.

g) See note at Matt. 13:27.

h) Verse 12.

i) Full commitment to Christ brings the opposition of the world.

j) Ps. 35:19; 69:4.

k) Ch. 14:16.

Father, He will testify regarding Me; ²⁷but you too will testify, for you were with Me from the beginning.

16 "I HAVE TALKED THESE MATTERS over with you so that you may not be led astray. ²They will exclude you from the synagogue; in fact the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think that he is rendering service to God. ³And they will do these things because they know neither the Father nor Me. ⁴But I have told you these things in order that, when the time comes, you may remember that I told them to you.

"I did not tell you this from the beginning, for I was with you; ⁵but now I am going to Him who sent Me. Yet none of you asks Me, 'Where are you going?'" ⁶Instead, your hearts are filled with sorrow because I told these things to you. ⁷However, I tell you the truth: My going is for your benefit; for if I do not leave, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, then I will send Him to you. ⁸When He comes He will convict the world regarding sin and righteousness and judgment^m — ⁹regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see Me no more; ¹¹and regarding judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

¹²"I have still many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of Truth comes, however, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own account but will say whatever He hears, and He will make known to you what is to take place. ¹⁴He will glorify Me, for He will take from what is Mine and will declare it to you. ¹⁵Everything the Father has is Mine; therefore I said, He will take from what is Mine and declare it to you.

¹⁶"Just a little while and you will see Me no longer; then again a little while and you will see Me." ¹⁷Then the disciples said to one another, "What does He mean by saying to us, 'A little while and you will not see Me, and again a little while and you will see Me,' and 'I am going to the Father?'" ¹⁸So they said, "What does He mean by a little while? We have no idea what He is talking about."

¹⁹Jesus knew that they wanted to ask Him, and said to them, "You are questioning among yourselves about My saying, 'A little while and you will not see Me, and again a little while and you will see Me?'" ²⁰Truly I assure you, you will be weeping and moaning while the world feels glad; you will be grieved, but your grief will turn to joy.ⁿ ²¹The mother in childbirth has anguish because her time has come, but when she has borne the child she no longer remembers her affliction, because a human being has been born into the world. ²²So you have grief at present, but I shall see you again and your hearts will be glad, and no one will be able to deprive you of that joy.

²³"At that time you will question Me about nothing. Truly I assure you whatever you ask the Father, He will grant you in My name. ²⁴Thus far you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

²⁵"I have told you these things in figures of speech; a time approaches when I shall no longer talk to you in figures of speech but shall plainly inform you about the Father. ²⁶At that time you will pray in My name, and I do not say that I shall make request of the Father on your behalf, ²⁷for the Father Himself loves you, since you have loved Me and have believed that I came from the Father. ²⁸I did come from the Father and have entered

l) Earlier Simon Peter asked this same question, ch. 13:36, but evidently on the occasion recorded here the apostles' minds were so filled with sorrow, vs. 6, that they could not think clearly about other things.

m) Those who are acquainted with the Gospel face the inescapable decision of either accepting or rejecting Christ.

n) The apostles' grief would become joy after the Lord's resurrection and His appearances to them.

the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

²⁹His disciples said, "Now You are speaking plainly and not in figures of speech; ³⁰now we know that You know everything and do not need anyone to tell You. From this we believe that You came from God."

³¹Jesus replied, "You believe just now? ³²The hour is coming and it has arrived when you will be scattered each to his place and you will leave Me alone; but I am not alone, for the Father is with Me. ³³I have talked over these things with you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble; but have courage! I have overcome the world."^o

17 JESUS SAID THIS, TIEN RAISED His eyes toward heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Thy Son, so that the Son may glorify Thee, ^{2a}as Thou hast given Him authority over all mankind so that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast granted Him.

³And this is eternal life, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. ⁴I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have completed the task Thou gavest Me to do; ⁵ now glorify Thou Me, Father, with Thine own glory which I had in Thy presence before the world existed.

⁶"I have made Thy name known to the persons whom Thou gavest Me from the world; they were Thine and Thou gavest them to Me and they have kept Thy word. ⁷Now they have realized that all whom Thou hast given Me are from Thee; ⁸ for I have given them the words Thou gavest Me, and they have accepted them and have really understood that I came from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.

⁹"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom Thou hast granted Me, for they belong to Thee. ¹⁰Yes, all who are Mine are

Thine, and Thine are Mine, and in them I am glorified. ¹¹My presence in the world is over, but these are in the world while I am coming to Thee. Holy Father, preserve in Thy name those whom Thou hast given Me, so that they may be one as We are. ¹²While I was with them I preserved and guarded them in Thy name which Thou gavest Me, and none of them perished except the son of perdition, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I am coming to Thee and say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have My joy made complete in their hearts.

¹⁴"I have given them Thy word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵I do not pray that Thou wilt take them out of the world but that Thou wilt preserve them from the evil one. ¹⁶As I am not of the world, so they are not of the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them by the truth. Thy word is truth.

¹⁸"As Thou hast sent Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world, ¹⁹and on their behalf I consecrate Myself, so that they, too, may be consecrated by truth.

²⁰"I am not praying only for them, but also for those who will believe in Me through their message, ²¹so that all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, so they may be in Us, and so that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." ²²I have given them the glory which Thou hast given to Me, so that they may be one as We are one, ²³I in them and Thou in Me, so that they may be completed into one, that the world may recognize that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.

²⁴"Father, I would have those whom Thou hast given Me, to be with Me where I am, so they may see My glory which Thou hast given to Me, for Thou lovest Me before the founding of the world.

^o) It seems evident that the conversations recorded in chs. 15 and 16 and the prayer of ch. 17 were spoken between the departure from the upper room in Jerusalem and the arrival at the Garden of Gethsemane, Cf. ch. 14:31; 18:1.

^p) Here the Lord Jesus says that unity among believers on the exalted pattern of the unity of the Godhead leads the world to believe that the Father has sent Him.

²⁵"Righteous Father, the world does not know Thee but I know Thee, and these know that Thou hast sent Me. ²⁶I have made known and will make known to them Thy name, so that Thy love for Me as well as I Myself may be in them."

18 HAVING UTTERED THESE WORDS, Jesus went out with His disciples across the Kidron Brook to a garden which He and His disciples entered. ²But Judas, His betrayer, knew the spot; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³So Judas, getting a detachment^g of soldiers and some attendants^r from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with torches, lamps, and weapons.

⁴Then Jesus, aware of everything that would befall Him, went out and asked them, "For whom are you looking?" ⁵They replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus told them, "I am He." And Judas, His betrayer, was standing with them.

⁶When He said to them, "I am He," they went backward and fell to the ground. ⁷Once more He asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁸Jesus replied, "I told you that I am He, so if you are after Me, let these others go." ⁹This took place so that the word^h He had spoken might be fulfilled, "I did not lose any of those whom Thou hast given Me."

¹⁰Then Simon Peter, since he had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave,ⁱ severing his right ear — the slave's name was Malchus. ¹¹But Jesus said to Peter, "Sheathe your sword. The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

¹²Then the detachment of soldiers and the commander,^u together with the Jewish attendants, took hold of Jesus, bound Him ¹³and conducted Him first

to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year—¹⁴the Caiaphas who advised the Jews that one man's death would benefit the people.

¹⁵Simon Peter followed Jesus with another disciple;^v and as that disciple was acquainted with the high priest, he entered, along with Jesus, the high priest's courtyard, ¹⁶while Peter stood outside by the door. Then that other disciple, the high priest's acquaintance, came out to speak to the slave-girl who was in charge of the door, and brought in Peter.

¹⁷The girl in charge of the door then said to Peter, "Are you not one of that man's disciples too?" He replied, "I am not." ¹⁸The slaves had made a fire of charcoal and were standing by it and were warming themselves, for it was cold. And Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

¹⁹Meanwhile the high priest asked Jesus regarding His disciples and about His teaching. ²⁰Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have been teaching right along in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews gather, and I said nothing in secret. ²¹Why do you ask Me? Ask those who heard what I told them; they know what I said."

²²When Jesus said this, one of the attendants standing by slapped Him in the face, saying, "Is this the way to answer the high priest?" ²³Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, give evidence of the wrong; but if properly, why do you hit Me?" ²⁴Then Annas sent Him bound to the high priest, Caiaphas.

²⁵Simon Peter was standing and warming himself, so they said to him. "Are not you a disciple of His?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." ²⁶One of the high priest's slaves, a relative of

g) The Greek word translated "detachment" is the one usually used for a Roman cohort of about 600 men, one-tenth of a legion. However, it may, as in this case, refer to less than a full cohort.

r) These were officers of the temple guard.

s) John 17:12.

t) See note at Matt. 13:27.

u) The literal meaning of the Greek word *chiliarchos*, rendered "commander" here, is a *leader of 1000 soldiers*; later it came to denote a commander of a cohort, which consisted of 600 men or less.

v) This is an allusion to John himself.

the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did not I see you in the garden with Him?" ²⁷Then Peter again denied it, and instantly the rooster crowed.

²⁸Then they conducted Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium.^w It was early morning and they themselves did not enter the palace, so that they might not be defiled but might eat the Passover. ²⁹So Pilate went out to them and asked, "What charge do you bring against this man?" ³⁰They answered him, "If He were not a criminal, we would not have committed Him to you."^x ³¹Pilate told them, "You take Him and sentence Him according to your Law." The Jews said to him, "We have no right to execute anyone." ³²This happened so that the saying^y of Jesus might be fulfilled that He had spoken showing what sort of death He was to die.

³³Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again and summoned Jesus, whom he asked, "Are You the king of the Jews?" ³⁴Jesus replied, "Do you say this of your own accord or have others told you about Me?" ³⁵Pilate answered Him, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed You over to me. What have You done?"

³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would have struggled to prevent My being delivered to the Jews. But as things now stand My kingdom is not of this world." ³⁷Pilate then said to Him, "You are a king, then?" Jesus replied, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose was I born and for this I entered the world, that I might testify to the truth. Everyone who loves the truth listens to My voice." ³⁸Pilate remarked to Him, "What is truth?"

When he had said this he went outside again to the Jews and told them, "I do not find Him guilty at all; ³⁹but it is your custom to have me set one free for you at the Passover. Do you

want me, therefore, to liberate for you the king of the Jews?" ⁴⁰Then they shouted again, "Not this fellow, but Barabbas." Yet Barabbas was a robber.

19 THEREUPON PILATE TOOK JESUS and had Him flogged. ²And the soldiers wove together a crown of thorns and set it down on His head. They also dressed Him in a purple robe, ³came up to Him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they slapped Him in the face.

⁴Once more Pilate came out and addressed them, "See! I am bringing Him out to you, so you may know that I do not find Him guilty." ⁵Then Jesus came outside, wearing the thorny crown and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!"

⁶When the chief priests and their attendants saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and do the crucifying, for I find no guilt in Him!" ⁷The Jews replied, "We have a Law and by that Law He ought to die, for He made Himself God's Son."

⁸At hearing that word, Pilate was still more alarmed. ⁹Again he entered the Praetorium and asked Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰Pilate said to Him, "You do not talk to me? Do You not know that I have power to liberate You and I have power to crucify You?" ¹¹Jesus replied, "You have no power whatever of your own, but only what is granted you from above. For this reason the one who betrayed Me has greater sin than you have."

¹²From then on Pilate kept seeking to set Him free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you liberate Him, you are no friend of Caesar's. Whoever makes himself king rebels against Caesar."

¹³On hearing their words, Pilate led Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement,^z or in Hebrew, Gabbatha.^a ¹⁴It

w) The Roman headquarters - in this case the palace that Herod had built.

x) This was not a legal charge but rather a confession that they had none.

y) Chs. 3:14; 12:32, 33; cf. Matt. 20:17-19.

z) Greek *Lithostrotos* which denotes a stone pavement or a mosaic.

a) This is an Aramaic word, Aramaic being a form of Hebrew used by many of the Jews at that time.

was the day of preparation for the Passover, about six in the morning. He said to the Jews, "This is your king." ¹⁵Then they cried out, "Away, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king except Caesar." ¹⁶Then he handed Him over to be crucified. So they took Jesus.

¹⁷And He went out carrying^b His cross to the place called Skull, that is in Hebrew, Golgotha, ¹⁸where they crucified Him; and with Him two others, one on each side, with Jesus in the center. ¹⁹Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. It was written, JESUS, THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰Many of the Jews read the title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

²¹Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate: "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that He said, 'I am the King of the Jews.'" ²²Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

²³When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His clothes and divided them in four parts, a part for each soldier; the tunic, too, but as it was seamless, woven all the way from top to bottom, ²⁴they said to each other, "Let us not tear it but draw lots whose it will be." They did this so that the Scripture^c might be fulfilled, "They divided my clothes among themselves and for my clothing they cast lots." So then the soldiers did this.

²⁵By the cross of Jesus stood His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary^d the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.^e ²⁶Then Jesus, seeing His moth-

er and the disciple^f whom He loved standing there, said to His mother, "Woman, there is your son." ²⁷Then to the disciple He said, "There is your mother." And from that moment the disciple took her to his home.

²⁸After this, since Jesus knew that everything was already completed, in order that the Scripture^g might be fulfilled, He said, "I am thirsty." ²⁹A vessel full of vinegar stood there, so they put a sponge soaked in vinegar on hyssop and held it to His mouth. ³⁰When Jesus had taken the vinegar, He said, "It is finished!" Then, bowing His head, He yielded up His spirit.

³¹Now since it was preparation day, the Jews, in order not to have the bodies remain on the cross over the Sabbath, which was a specially important day, requested Pilate to have the legs broken and their bodies removed. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him; ³³but when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴However, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear and instantly blood and water came out.

³⁵He^h who saw it has testified and his testimony is true—he knows that he tells the truth—in order that you may believe. ³⁶For these things happened so that the Scriptureⁱ might be carried out, "Not a bone of His shall be broken." ³⁷And once more another Scripture^j says, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced."

³⁸After this, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, but secretly so for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he might remove the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission; so he went and removed His body. ³⁹Nicodemus,

b) At first Jesus carried the cross; then Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry it for Him, Matt. 27:32.

c) Ps. 22:18.

d) See note on the four Marys at Matt. 1:16.

e) Salome, the wife of Zebedee and the mother of James and John, was there also, Matt. 27:56.

f) The "disciple whom Jesus loved," here and in chs. 20:2; 21:7, 20, was John. See note at ch. 13:23.

g) Ps. 69:21.

h) This was John, who appears to have been the only one of the Twelve who was at the cross.

i) Concerning the Paschal lamb, which was typical of Christ, it was commanded that not a bone of it should be broken, Exod. 12:46; cf. Ps. 34:20; I Cor. 5:7.

j) Zech. 12:10; cf. Rev. 1:7.

who had earlier called on Him at night, also came and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰Then they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in the linen clothes, as was the Jewish custom for burial.

⁴¹Now there was near the place where He was crucified a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which none had ever yet been laid; ⁴²there they laid Jesus, because it was the Jews' preparation day and the tomb was close by.

20 EARLY ON THE FIRST DAY OF the week, when it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone was removed from the tomb. ²Then she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him."

³Then Peter and the other disciple went and made their way to the tomb.

⁴The two came running together; but the other disciple ran ahead, faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first.^k ⁵When he stooped down, he saw the linen clothes lying; however, he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came behind him, entered the tomb and saw the linen clothes lying, ⁷and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen clothes but wrapped by itself in its particular place. ⁸Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first entered also and saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the Scripture that He must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples went home again.

¹¹But Mary^l stood outside the tomb, weeping. While she was weeping, she stooped down to look into the tomb ¹²and saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the

feet where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³They said to her, "Woman, why are you crying?" She told them, "Because they have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have placed Him."

¹⁴On saying this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not recognize Him. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you crying? Whom do you seek?" Supposing that He was the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him off, tell me where You put Him and I will remove Him." ¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Mary!" Turning completely around, she said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni," (which means Teacher).

¹⁷Jesus told her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and tell them that I am going to ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." ¹⁸Mary Magdalene came, bringing the disciples news, "I have seen the Lord and He told me this."

¹⁹When it was evening that same first day of the week and, out of fear of the Jews the doors were shut where the disciples met, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace to you." ²⁰Upon saying this He showed them His hands and side. Then the disciples were glad to see the Lord. ²¹Then He said to them again, "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent Me forth, so I send you." ²²When He had said this, He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain those of anyone, they are retained."^m

²⁴But Thomas, called the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came; ²⁵so the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he replied, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the mark of the nails

k) John was younger than Peter; Peter was more impetuous than John.

l) Mary Magdalene, vs. 1.

m) In witnessing to Christ and proclaiming the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit Christ's disciples may be instrumental in bringing deliverance from sin. Since others aside from the apostles were present on this occasion, Luke 24:33, the church as a whole is included in this commission.

and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later His disciples were again indoors and Thomas with them. Though the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace to you." ²⁷He then spoke to Thomas, "Reach your finger here and see My hands; reach and thrust your hand into My side; do not be faithless, but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "You have believed because you have seen Me. Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe."

³⁰Jesus did many other signs also in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, you may have life through His name.

21 AFTER THIS JESUS SHOWED Himself again to the disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias,ⁿ and this was the way He appeared. ²There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called the Twin, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of His disciples. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said, "We are coming with you." So they went off and got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. ⁴Day had already dawned when Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples, however, did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Then Jesus said to them, "Boys, have you caught anything?" They answered Him, "No." ⁶He told them, "Cast the net to the right of the boat and you will find some." So they cast the net and could not draw it up any more because of the great number of fish.

⁷The disciple whom Jesus loved then said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" So Simon Peter, hearing, "It is the Lord," wrapped his work jacket around him (for he was stripped) and flung himself into the sea. ⁸The rest of the disciples came with the boat — for they were near shore, only about a hundred yards away — hauling in the net of fish.

⁹When they got out on land they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." ¹¹Simon Peter got in the boat and hauled the net to shore; it was filled with a hundred and fifty-three large fish, and though there were so many, the net did not tear.

¹²Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?" for they knew it was the Lord.^o ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and also the fish. ¹⁴This was the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after rising from the dead.

¹⁵When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these do?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You as a dear friend." He told him, "Feed My lambs." ¹⁶For the second time Jesus asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He replied, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You as a dear friend." Jesus told him, "Tend My sheep." ¹⁷The third time He asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me as a dear friend?"^p Peter was distressed because He asked him for the third time, "Do you love Me?" and said to Him, "Lord, You know everything, You know that I love You as a dear friend." Jesus told him, "Feed My

n) See note at Luke 5:1.

o) The apostles knew that it was the Lord whom they saw, but still it must have been hard for them to believe their own eyes. Notice that, although the Lord was now in His resurrection body, His body was so like that in which they were used to seeing Him that they were able to recognize Him.

p) Two different Greek words for "love" are used in vs. 15-17: (1) *agapao*, denoting a very deep love, even divine love in ch. 14:21; and (2) *phileo*, signifying the love of friend for friend. The first and second time that the Lord Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Do you love Me?" *agapao* is the verb. In both instances Peter used the lesser word in his reply, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You as a dear friend." The third time that Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" the verb *phileo* is employed. The distressed disciple acknowledged to the Lord that He knew all things and therefore knew that His apostle's love for Him was of the *phileo* kind.

sheep. ¹⁸Truly I assure you, when you were young you girded yourself and went about where you wished; but when you grow old, you will hold out your hands and another will gird you and take you where you do not want to go."

¹⁹He said this to indicate by what kind of death he would glorify God. After saying this to him, He added, "Follow Me." ²⁰Peter turned around and saw following him the disciple^a whom Jesus loved, who at the supper had leaned close to Jesus' side and said, "Lord, who is the one who will betray You?" ²¹Noticing him, Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" ²²Jesus told him, "If I want him to remain

until I come, what is it to you? You follow Me."

²³The word then went out among the brothers that that disciple would not die; however, Jesus did not say, "He will not die," but, "If I want him to remain till I come, what is it to you?"

²⁴This is the disciple who testifies to these facts and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true.

²⁵There are, besides, many other things that Jesus did, but if they were all described in detail, I suppose the world itself would not have room for the books that would be written.

q) This is John. See vs. 24 and note at ch. 19:26.

ACTS

OF THE APOSTLES

c. A.D. 62-63

1 THE FORMER NARRATIVE I COMPOSED, O Theophilus, regarding all that Jesus began to do and to teach ²until the day of His ascension, after giving His orders through the Holy Spirit^a to the apostles, whom He had chosen ³and to whom He showed Himself alive after His suffering by many convincing proofs for forty days, appearing to them and discussing the kingdom of God.

⁴And as He met with them, He charged them, "Do not leave Jerusalem but await what the Father promised, which you have heard from Me; ⁵for whereas John baptized with water, after a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶So those who were meeting together asked Him, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He said to them, "It is not your affair to know times or seasons which the Father has placed under His own authority; ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the remotest end of the earth."

c. A.D. 30

⁹Upon saying this and while they were looking on, He was taken up and

a cloud carried Him up from their view. ¹⁰And as they kept gazing intently toward heaven as He was going away from them, two men in white clothing were standing by them, ¹¹who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing into heaven? This very Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come again in the same manner in which you have seen Him going to heaven."

¹²Then they went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's walk.^b

¹³And when they arrived they went up to the upper room where they were staying — Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All these engaged constantly and with one mind in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.^c

¹⁵In those days Peter arose among the brothers — there was a gathering of about a hundred and twenty persons — ¹⁶and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit foretold through the lips of David concerning Judas, who became guide to those who arrested Jesus; ¹⁷for he was counted with us

a) The saving work of Christ has been done; now the Holy Spirit will take charge. Throughout this book He is seen as directing believers in Christ.

b) In Josh. 3:4 it is shown that the distance which was to separate the Israelites from the ark of the covenant when they crossed the Jordan River was 2,000 cubits. This was thought to have been the distance between the tents of the people and the tabernacle in the wilderness and was as far as the Israelites were permitted to walk on the Sabbath day. A cubit equals about eighteen inches; thus 2,000 cubits would be 3,000 feet or a little more than half a mile.

c) Mary's other sons did not believe before the resurrection of Christ, her oldest Son, John 7:5.

and got his allotted share in this ministry.¹⁸ (Now this man bought a field from the wages of crime, and, falling headlong, he burst asunder and all his intestines gushed out,¹⁹ and it became known to the whole population of Jerusalem, so that they named that field in their own dialect, Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

²⁰For in the book of Psalms it is written, "Let his dwelling be desolate and may no one live in it," and, "Let another take his office."²¹ So then, of the men who accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out with us,²² beginning from the baptism of John and on to the day when He was taken up from us — one of these must be our fellow witness of His resurrection."²³

And they put up two names, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias,²⁴ and they prayed, "You, Lord, knower of all hearts, make clear which one of these two You have selected²⁵ to take the position of this ministry and apostolate from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias and he was added to the Eleven apostles.

2 WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST had fully come, they were all together in one place,² when suddenly there came a roaring from heaven like the driving of a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ There appeared to them tongues like flames that were distributed and that settled on each one of them.⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign languages as the Spirit granted them expression.

⁵Now there were devout Jews staying at Jerusalem from every nation under heaven,⁶ and when this sound was heard the crowd collected and were

confused, for each one heard them speak in his native language.⁷ Astonished and amazed, they said, "Are not all those who are speaking Galileans?"⁸ How is it, then, that we each hear them in our native speech in which we were born?⁹ Parthians, Medes, Elamites, dwellers of Mesopotamia, of Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia,¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,¹¹ Cretans and Arabs — we hear them telling in our own languages the excellencies of God."¹² They were all amazed and at a loss, remarking to one another, "What does this mean?"¹³ But others said sneeringly, "They had too much new wine."

¹⁴Then Peter arose together with the Eleven, and raising his voice, he addressed them: "Men of Judea and all you who dwell in Jerusalem, you should all understand this, so take note of what I say.¹⁵ These men are not drunk as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning;¹⁶ but this is what was spoken¹⁷ through the Prophet Joel: "It will be in the last days, says God, that I shall pour out My Spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will see visions; your elders shall dream dreams,¹⁸ and on My bond servants and My bondmaids I shall in those days pour out My Spirit and they will prophesy."¹⁹ I shall present wonders, too, in heaven above and signs on the earth below — blood and fire, and smoky mist.²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before that great and conspicuous day of the Lord arrives.²¹ And it will be that whoever will call on the Lord's name will be saved."

²²"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man divinely accredited to you through mighty works and wonders and signs

d) Ps. 69:25.

e) Here in vss. 21, 22 are apostolic qualifications that could be met in the first century only.

f) This was not a babbling in unknown tongues; their own languages were used by the worshippers.

g) Joel 2:28-31.

h) To prophesy is to declare the Word of God. It is not confined only to prediction.

which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know, ²³this Person you killed by nailing Him to the cross through the hands of lawless men, for He was delivered up in the determined will and foreknowledge of God — ²⁴Him God raised up by setting Him free from the pangs of death; for He could not be held in its grip. ²⁵For David says,¹ having Him in view, 'I saw the Lord constantly before me; for He is at my right hand that I may not be disquieted. ²⁶For this my heart is gladdened and my tongue is jubilant; my flesh too will still have rest in hope; ²⁷because Thou wilt not abandon my soul to the realm of the dead, neither wilt Thou permit Thy holy one to see corruption. ²⁸Thou hast acquainted me with the ways of life; Thou wilt fill me with good cheer in Thy presence.'

²⁹'Brothers, I may speak plainly to you about the patriarch David, that he died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Therefore, being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹he was looking ahead and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that He would not be abandoned to the realm of the dead; neither would His flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus has God raised up; of this we all are witnesses.

³³'So, lifted high at the right hand of God and receiving from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, He has poured out what you both see and hear. ³⁴For David did not ascend to heaven; but he says,¹ 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand ³⁵until I place Thy enemies for a footstool of Thy feet.'

³⁶'Without a shadow of doubt, then, let the whole house of Israel know that God made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.'

³⁷As they were listening, they were moved to the depths of their hearts; so they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what should we

do?" ³⁸Peter responded, "Repent and be baptized, each of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; ³⁹for the promise is to you and to your children and to all those far away, as many as the Lord our God may call."

⁴⁰With many other words he charged them earnestly and warned them: "Be saved from this crooked generation." ⁴¹Then those who welcomed his message were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

⁴²And they persevered in the apostles' teaching and in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers. ⁴³But awe fell on every soul, as many wonders and signs took place in Jerusalem through the apostles.

c. A.D. 30-31

⁴⁴The believers all met together and had everything jointly; ⁴⁵they sold their property and their belongings, and distributed them to all, as anyone might have need. ⁴⁶Daily they frequented the temple together and ate their meals at home together. So they received nourishment, ⁴⁷praising God with happy and sincere hearts, and enjoying the good will of all the people, while daily the Lord added to the group those who were being saved.

3 NOW PETER AND JOHN WENT UP to the temple for the three o'clock hour of prayer ²and a man, lame from his birth, was being carried, whom every day they placed at the temple gate called Beautiful to beg alms from those frequenting the temple.

³When he saw Peter and John at the point of entering the temple, he asked for charity; ⁴but Peter fixed his eyes on him, and so did John, and said, "Look at us." ⁵So he watched them closely, expecting to get something from them; ⁶but Peter said, "I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene,^k walk."

i) Ps. 16:8-11. This is a Messianic Psalm.

j) Ps. 110:1.

k) On Christ's authority.

7And gripping him by the right hand, he raised him up.

8Instantly his feet and ankles grew firm, he leaped up and stood, and began to walk and entered the temple¹ with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

9When the people all saw him walking around and praising God,¹⁰ and recognized him as the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, they were completely overcome with awe and amazement at his experience. ¹¹And as he kept clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran crowding toward them at the place called Solomon's Portico. ¹²And Peter, when he noticed it, addressed the people:

"Men of Israel, why are you surprised at this? And why are you staring at us as if we had made him walk through our own power or piety? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and disowned before Pilate, when he had decided to set Him free. ¹⁴But you denied the Holy and Righteous One and requested that a murderer be granted you. ¹⁵You killed the Prince of Life, whom God raised from the dead—of this we are witnesses. ¹⁶By faith in His name this person, whom you see and recognize, has been strengthened, and faith in Him gave him this perfect health you all observe.

¹⁷"Now I know, brothers, that you behaved ignorantly just as your leaders did; ¹⁸but God has thus fulfilled what He made known beforehand through the lips of all the prophets, that His Christ^m was to suffer. ¹⁹Repent and turn about, so that your sins may be wiped away and that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰and so that He may send the Christ, who has been ap-

pointed for you, Jesus, ²¹whom heaven had to receive until the times of universal restoration of which God spoke through the ages by the lips of His holy prophets. ²²In fact Moses said,ⁿ 'The Lord God will raise up from among your brothers a prophet like me. Listen to everything he will tell you; ²³and every soul that will not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

²⁴"So all the prophets that have spoken successively, from Samuel down, have announced these times of ours. ²⁵You are the heirs of the prophets and of the covenant that God established with our fathers when He said^o to Abraham, 'Through your posterity all the families on earth will be blessed.'

²⁶"When God raised up His Servant, He sent Him to you to bless you, as each of you turns from his evil ways."

4 WHILE THEY^p WERE SPEAKING TO the people, the priests, the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees^q approached them, ²chagrined because they taught the people and preached in the case of Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³They seized them and, as it was already evening, they put them in custody until the next day. ⁴But many of those who had heard the message believed, and their number grew to about five thousand.

⁵The next day their rulers, as well as the elders and scribes,^r gathered at Jerusalem ⁶with Annas^s the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and as many as belonged to the high priest's family, ⁷and placing them in the center, they inquired, "Through what power or by what name have you done this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, ⁹if today we are being called

1) The temple courts. Only the priests entered the sanctuary.

m) That is, Messiah, the Anointed One.

n) Deut. 18:15.

o) Gen. 12:3.

p) John must have spoken also, although no words of his are recorded here.

q) See note at Matt. 3:7.

r) See note at Matt. 2:4.

s) Annas had been high priest A.D. 7-14, but then was deposed by the Roman governor. The title still clung to him even though his son-in-law, Caiaphas, was then the high priest, Matt. 26:3; John 11:49.

to account for a good deed to a cripple, by what means he has been cured, ¹⁰then you and all the people of Israel should know that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, through Him this man stands before you in sound health. ¹¹He is 'The stone despised by you the builders, which became the head of the corner.' ¹²And there is salvation through no one else; for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

¹³As they observed the fearlessness of speech on the part of Peter and John and understood that they were men without schooling or skill, they marveled and recognized them as having been with Jesus. ¹⁴Besides, looking at the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against it. ¹⁵Ordering them to withdraw outside the Sanhedrin, they consulted together, ¹⁶"What shall we do to these men? For that a notable sign has occurred through them is obvious to all the people of Jerusalem and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷However, so that this will not be spread further among the people, let us strongly warn them to speak no more to any person about this name."

¹⁸So they summoned them and gave orders not to refer to or to teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John replied to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God is for you to judge; ²⁰as for us, we cannot refrain from telling what we have seen and heard."

²¹They threatened them still further and then freed them, as they saw no way to punish them, because of the people; for they were all praising God for what had happened. ²²For the man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was over forty years old.

²³After their release they went to their own companions and related to them everything that the chief priests and elders had said. ²⁴Then those who heard it unitedly raised their voices to God and said: "Sovereign Lord, who hast made the heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them, ²⁵and who through the Holy Spirit said^y by the lips of our forefather David Thy servant, 'Why do the Gentiles rage and the people devise vain things?' ²⁶The kings of the earth got ready and the rulers mustered themselves against the Lord and against His Anointed'; ²⁷for they have actually gathered in this city against Thy holy Servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint—Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸all doing what Thy hand and Thy purpose preordained to take place. ²⁹And now, Lord, notice their threats and endow Thy bond servants" with fearlessness to speak Thy word ³⁰as Thou reachest out Thy hand to heal and to work signs and wonders through the name of Thy holy Servant Jesus."

c. A.D. 31-32

³¹And when they had prayed, their meeting place shook and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and fearlessly they gave utterance to God's message. ³²The host of believers were one in heart and soul; no one claimed his belongings just for himself,^{*} but everything was theirs in common. ³³And with great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and grace rested liberally on all of them. ³⁴Not one among them suffered need; for those who owned fields or houses sold them, brought the proceeds of the sale ³⁵and deposited the money at the feet of the apostles. Then it was distributed to each according to his need.

³⁶Joseph, a Cyprian Levite^y who was called Barnabas by the apostles,

r) Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42. u) See note at Luke 22:66.

v) Ps. 2:1, 2. w) See note at Matt. 13:27.

x) Christianity has its inescapable social outreach. Men are saved individually, but when they are saved they must live and serve in the communion (fellowship) of the saints. The sharing in the Early Church was not imposed, but was a voluntary expression of the believers' unity in Christ. In this instance the expectancy of Christ's early return gave stimulus to liberality.

y) See note at Luke 10:32.

which translated means Son of Consolation, to whom a field belonged, ³⁷ sold it and brought the proceeds, which he deposited at the apostles' feet.

5 BUT A MAN NAMED ANANIAS, WITH Sapphira his wife, sold some real estate, ² retained with his wife's knowledge some of the price, and brought a portion which he laid at the apostles' feet. ³ Then Peter said to him, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit^z and misappropriate some of the field's price? ⁴ Could you not have kept the field for your own or, after the sale, have done with your proceeds as you pleased? Why did you devise such a thing? You did not lie to men but to God."

⁵ Listening to these words Ananias fell down and died,^a and great awe came over all who learned of it. ⁶ The young men then arose, wrapped his body, and carried it out for burial.

⁷ About three hours had passed when his wife came in, ignorant of what had occurred, ⁸ and Peter asked her, "Tell me, did you sell the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." ⁹ Peter then asked her, "How did you agree together to test the Lord's Spirit? The fact of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." ¹⁰ Instantly she fell at his feet and died; so the young men found her dead when they came in, carried her out, and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great awe fell upon the whole church and on all who learned of this.

¹² Many signs and wonders continued to be done among the people by means of the apostles, and they all met unitedly in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ None of the outsiders dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴ Moreover, throngs of men and women who believed in the Lord were increasingly added. ¹⁵ They went so far as to bring out their sick into

the streets and to lay them on rugs and mats so that, as Peter passed by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Even from towns outside Jerusalem the crowd came streaming in to bring the sick and those troubled with unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

¹⁷ But the high priest and all those who were with him, and the Sadducean party arose, full of jealousy, ¹⁸ and seized the apostles and put them in the public jail. ¹⁹ But an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors at night, led them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, take your stand in the temple and tell the people all about this new life."

²¹ Obediently they went into the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now the high priest and his party summoned the Sanhedrin, even the whole senate^b of the Israelites, and sent to the prison to bring the men. ²² But when the attendants arrived they failed to find them in jail and went back and reported, ²³ "We found the prison securely locked and the sentries posted at the doors, but on opening them we found no one inside."

²⁴ When the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests heard this report, they were completely at a loss what had happened to them. ²⁵ Someone came and announced to them, "The men you put in jail are standing in the temple teaching the people." ²⁶ Then the captain went out with his officers and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid the people might stone them.

²⁷ They brought them before the Sanhedrin, and the high priest asked them, ²⁸ "Did we not strictly forbid you to teach in this name? And here you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and you want to bring upon us this man's blood."

²⁹ Then Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised

z) The dealings of all believers in Christ, in the affairs of the church and elsewhere also, are with the Holy Spirit.

a) The verb rendered "died" is from the Greek *ekysucho* meaning to breathe one's last, an expression used by medical writers of that day. Its use points to Luke, the physician, as the writer of The Acts.

b) This was another name for the Sanhedrin and was used when it met in full session.

Jesus, whom you put to death by hanging Him on a cross. ³¹God exalted Him to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to grant to Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins. ³²And not only are we witnesses to these facts, but so is the Holy Spirit whom God bestows on those who obey Him."

c. A.D. 32-33

³³As they listened they grew furious and determined to destroy them. ³⁴Then a Pharisee^c named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law who enjoyed the respect of all the people, arose in the Sanhedrin and ordered the men to be put outside for a few moments. ³⁵Then he addressed them, "Men of Israel, be careful what you intend to do to these men; ³⁶for in earlier days Theudas^d appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men adhered to him; but he was killed and all his supporters were dispersed, and they came to nothing. ³⁷After him Judas^e the Galilean led an uprising at the time of the census, and raised a popular following, and he perished, too, and all his adherents were scattered. ³⁸So I advise you in this case to keep away from these men and leave them alone; for should this plan or movement be merely human, then it will go to pieces; ³⁹but if its source is God, then you will be unable to crush them. You might even find yourselves to be fighting against God."

⁴⁰Persuaded by him, they called in the apostles, had them flogged, warned them not to talk in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹Then they went out from the presence of the Sanhedrin happy indeed for being thought worthy

to suffer disgrace for His name. ⁴²They never stopped for a single day to teach and to preach Christ Jesus in the temple and at home.^f

6 IN THOSE DAYS, AS THE NUMBER of disciples kept growing, there rose a complaint on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against those who spoke Hebrew because their widows were overlooked in the daily charities. ²So the Twelve summoned the assembly of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should neglect the teaching of God's word to wait on tables; ³therefore, brothers, look around for seven men among you of good reputation and full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we shall appoint for this duty, ⁴while we continue to devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word."

⁵The suggestion pleased the entire assembly and they selected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they presented to the apostles who, with prayer, laid hands on them.

⁷So the word of God kept on spreading. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly and even a large group of priests obeyed the faith.

⁸And Stephen, full of grace and power, did notable wonders and signs among the people; ⁹but some from the so-called Synagogue of the Freedmen^g and of the people of Cyrene and Alexandria, and of Cilicia^h and Asia, undertook debating with Stephen ¹⁰and could not successfully meet the wisdom and the Spirit by whom he spoke.

c) See note at Matt. 3:7.

d) Theudas is thought by some to have been one of the insurrectionists who led bands of men against Herod the Great. He was among the last of these, coming against the king in about 6 B.C. A man of lofty pretensions, Theudas died violently.

e) Judas the Galilean was also known as Judas the Gaulonite. He believed that the census under Caesar Augustus, taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria in about 5 B.C., Luke 2:1, 2, would bring the Jewish people to a place of rigid servitude to Rome. He was able to get some of his countrymen to join the revolt, but he lost his life and his followers soon disbanded.

f) Distinctive Christian teaching would probably have died within a century had not the Christian home become a Christian school, for the synagogues were closed to Christian children and pagan schools were subversive of Christianity.

g) Freedmen, sometimes called Libertines, are said to have been Jews whose fathers had been captured by the Romans and had afterward been set free. They built their own synagogue in Jerusalem.

h) Perhaps Saul of Tarsus in Cilicia, who later became Paul the apostle, was among them, cf. chs. 7:59; 13:9.

c. A.D. 36-37

¹¹Then they instigated men to say, "We have heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God." ¹²Thus they stirred up the people, as well as the elders and the scribes; they attacked and grabbed him and brought him to the Sanhedrin. ¹³They also produced false witnesses who said, "This man never quits uttering statements against the holy place and the Law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus the Nazarene will demolish this place and will change the customs that were handed down to us by Moses."

¹⁵And all those seated in the Sanhedrin gazed at him and saw that his face shone like the face of an angel.

7 THE HIGH PRIEST ASKED, "ARE these statements correct?" ²Then he said, "Brothers and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia previous to his settling in Haran,¹ ³and told¹ him, 'Get away from your country and your relations and come to the land I will show you.' ⁴Then Abraham went out from the Chaldean country and settled in Haran; and from there, after his father's death, God transferred him to this land where you now live. ⁵He gave him no heritable property in it, no, not a foot of it, but promised to give it for a possession to him and his offspring after him, though at the time he had no child. ⁶But God spoke as follows:¹ 'Your offspring will be aliens in a foreign land and the people of that land will subject and ill-treat them four hundred years.' ⁷And the nation whom they serve,' God said, 'I shall judge, and afterward they will come out and worship Me in this place.'

⁸"He also gave him the covenant of circumcision, and he became the father

of Isaac and circumcised him the eighth day; Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

⁹"The patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt, but God was with him. ¹⁰He rescued him out of all his troubles and granted him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over Egypt and over his entire household.

¹¹"Then a famine and great distress came over all Egypt and Canaan, so that our fathers failed to find nourishment; ¹²but when Jacob learned that there was wheat in Egypt, he sent our fathers there on the first trip. ¹³And on their second trip Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family was made known to Pharaoh.

¹⁴"Joseph then sent and invited his father Jacob and the whole family, comprising seventy-five souls. ¹⁵So Jacob came down to Egypt, where he and our fathers died, ¹⁶and they were removed to Shechem^m and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought from the sons of Hamor at Shechem for a sum of money."

¹⁷But as the promised time approached, which God had announced to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt ¹⁸until another king, who knew nothing about Joseph, took the throne of Egypt. ¹⁹He took advantage of our race and ill-treated our fathers, making them expose their infants, so that they might not survive.

²⁰"In that period Moses was born, beautiful in God's sight, and was nurtured in his parental home three months. ²¹And when he was exposed, the daughter of Pharaoh adopted him and brought him up to be her own son. ²²So Moses was educated in all

i) Haran was located about 125 miles east of the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea and 200 miles northeast of Nineveh. It was not far from the source of the Euphrates River.

j) Gen. 12:1.

k) Gen. 15:13, 14.

l) The Exodus occurred a good four centuries after that promise. For the actual sojourn in Egypt four generations and four centuries seem to be used interchangeably, cf. Gen. 15:13, 16.

m) Shechem (now Nablus) is situated in Palestine west of the Jordan River and about 30 miles due north of Jerusalem.

n) Jacob was buried in the Machpelah cave purchased by Abraham at Mamre, Gen. 50:13; Joseph at Shechem, Josh. 24:32.

the science and learning of the Egyptians, and had ability in speech and in deeds. ²³When he was forty years old he resolved to look after his brothers, the Israelites ²⁴and, seeing one treated unfairly, he defended him and avenged the wronged person by slaying the Egyptian; ²⁵for he supposed his brothers would understand that God would grant them deliverance through him; but they failed to understand.

²⁶"The next day he appeared to them,^o as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you mistreating each other?' ²⁷But the one who was mistreating his neighbor pushed him away with the words, 'Who appointed you ruler and judge over us?' ²⁸You want to kill me, perhaps, in the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' ²⁹At this remark Moses fled and became an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰"And at the completion of forty years there appeared to him in the Mount Sinai wilderness an angel in the flame of a burning thornbush. ³¹When Moses saw it he marveled at the sight, and as he approached to look at it closely, the Lord's voice came saying,^p ³²'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' Moses was so frightened that he did not dare to look.

³³"The Lord said^q to him, 'Untie the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴I have certainly observed the ill-treatment of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. So come now, I will send you into Egypt.'

³⁵"This Moses whom they disowned by saying, 'Who has appointed you a ruler and judge?' him God sent both

to be a ruler and to be a redeemer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶It was he who led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

³⁷"This is the same Moses who told^r the Israelites, 'God will raise up from your brothers a prophet like me.'³⁸This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our forefathers; he received the living messages to impart to us. ³⁹To him our fathers did not want to submit; they pushed him aside and in their hearts turned back to Egypt, ⁴⁰saying^s to Aaron, 'Make us gods that will go before us; for this Moses who led us out of Egypt, we do not know what has befallen him.'⁴¹They made a calf in those days and brought sacrifice to the image, and rejoiced in the works of their hands.

⁴²"But God turned and abandoned them to worship the host of heaven, as it is written^t in the book of the prophets, 'O house of Israel, did you offer Me victims and sacrifices for forty years in the wilderness? ⁴³You carried Moloch's tent and your god Romphan's star-idol^u figures you made to worship them. So I shall deport you beyond Babylon.'

⁴⁴"In the wilderness our fathers had the tent of testimony, just as He who spoke to Moses commanded him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. ⁴⁵And our fathers received it and brought it in with Joshua into the territory of the nations, whom God drove out before our fathers. This tent remained until the time of David, ⁴⁶who found favor before God and prayed that he might provide a house for the God of Jacob. ⁴⁷But Solomon built Him a house. ⁴⁸However, the Most High does not dwell in a build

o) Two Hebrews.

p) Exod. 3:6.

q) Exod. 3:5.

r) Deut. 18:15.

s) Exod. 32:1.

t) Amos 5:25, 26.

u) Moloch was the idol of the Ammonites; Romphan (or Rephan), the Syrians' idol Saturn.

ing made with human hands, just as the prophet says,^v ⁴⁹Heaven is My throne but the earth a footstool for My feet. What sort of house will you build Me, says the Lord, or what is My resting place? ⁵⁰Has not My hand made all these things?^w

⁵¹"You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ear, you have always resisted the Holy Spirit, the same as your fathers did!" ⁵²Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? Yes, they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One whom now you have betrayed and murdered — ⁵³you who received the Law through the mediation of angels and have not kept it."

⁵⁴As they heard this they were enraged in their hearts and gnashed their teeth at him; ⁵⁵but he, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand, ⁵⁶and said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at God's right hand." ⁵⁷But they, shouting loudly and holding their hands to their ears, rushed upon him in a body ⁵⁸and threw him out of the city and stoned him.^x And the witnesses placed their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹So they stoned Stephen as he called upon the Lord, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Falling on his knees, he called out loudly, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And with these words he fell asleep in death.

8 SAUL WAS ALTOGETHER AGREED to his murder, and at that time a severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, so that all except the apostles were dispersed throughout the lands of Judea and Samaria. ²Devout men took charge of Stephen's funeral and made grievous

lamentation over him. ³But Saul made havoc of the church and, forcing himself into homes and dragging out men and women, he put them in prison.

⁴Those who were dispersed were everywhere preaching the message of good news. ⁵So Philip^y came down to a city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁶The crowds unanimously attended to the teachings of Philip as they listened to him and observed the miracles he performed. ⁷For from many who were possessed, the unclean spirits went out, screaming with a loud voice, while many paralytics and lame too, were healed, ⁸so that there was much rejoicing in that city.

c. A.D. 37

⁹However, a man in that city, named Simon, had been astonishing the Samaritan nation by the practice of magic, claiming that he was a remarkable person. ¹⁰Everybody, young and old, paid attention to him and said, "He is what is called the Great Power of God." ¹¹The reason they paid attention to him was that for a long time he had astonished them with magic arts.

¹²But when they believed Philip as he told the good news of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, men as well as women. ¹³Even Simon himself believed and, upon his baptism, kept close to Philip, amazed at the signs and mighty miracles he saw being performed.

¹⁴When the apostles in Jerusalem learned that Samaria had welcomed the message of God, they sent them Peter and John ¹⁵who, on coming down there, prayed for the believers to receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶for thus far they had been baptized only in the name of the Lord Jesus; the Spirit had not yet fallen upon any one of them. ¹⁷Then they placed their hands

v) Isa. 66:1, 2.

w) The burden of Stephen's address was that his listeners did to Jesus precisely what their fathers had done to their divinely appointed leaders.

x) It was not lawful for the Jewish people to execute anyone. It appears that there was no Roman retribution for their murder of Stephen because Pilate had been recalled and his immediate successor had not yet been appointed.

y) This man is known as Philip the Evangelist. He was one of the seven deacons appointed by the Jerusalem disciples to relieve the Twelve from ministering to the demands of many of the early Christians, ch. 6:1-6.

on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸Now when Simon observed that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was conferred, he offered them money ¹⁹and said, "Give me this power, so that the person on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." ²⁰But Peter told him, "May your money go to perdition with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God for money; ²¹you have neither share nor part in this message, for your heart is not right in God's sight. ²²Repent of this wickedness of yours and plead with the Lord to forgive you for what you had in mind. ²³For I see that you are in bitter gall and in fetters of wickedness."²

²⁴But Simon answered, "Plead with the Lord for me yourselves, so that none of the things you have mentioned may befall me."

²⁵Then after they had testified and spoken the Lord's message, they went back to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many Samaritan^a communities.

²⁶But the angel of the Lord told Philip, "Rise up and about midday go down the road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza—a lonely road." ²⁷So he got up and went, and an Ethiopian eunuch, a high official of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia, who was in charge of all her finances and had come to worship in Jerusalem ²⁸was on the way back and was sitting in his chariot reading the book of the Prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join him in that chariot." ³⁰And Philip ran up, heard him read the Prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

³¹He said, "How could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to climb in and be seated with him.

³²Now the Scripture passage he was reading was this:^b "As a lamb He was led to slaughter and as a sheep voiceless before his shearer, so He does not open His mouth. ³³In His humiliation He was deprived of justice. Who can tell the story of His offspring? For His life was taken from the earth."

³⁴The eunuch turned to Philip and said, "I beg of you, about whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak and, starting from that same Scripture, told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶Proceeding on the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What is to prevent my being baptized?" ³⁷[Philip assured him, "If you heartily believe, it is permitted." And he replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]^c ³⁸So he ordered the chariot to halt, and both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and he baptized him.

³⁹But when they came up from the water, the Lord's Spirit took Philip away and the eunuch did not see him any more; he went joyfully on his way. ⁴⁰Philip, however, was found at Azotus,^d and, as he passed through all the cities, he brought the good news all the way to Caesarea.^e

9 BUT SAUL, STILL BREATHING OUT threat and murder against the Lord's disciples, called on the high priest ²and requested of him letters to the Damascus^f synagogues, so that if he should find there any men or women who were of "the Way,"^g he might bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

³But as he traveled and approached Damascus, a light from heaven suddenly shone all around him. ⁴He fell to

2) Because of this incident the sin of using religion for monetary purposes is still called Simony.

a) See note at Luke 9:53. b) Isa. 53:7, 8.

c) So many reliable ancient manuscripts omit vs. 37, here enclosed in brackets, that it is practically certain that it was not part of the original text.

d) Azotus (now Ashdod) is situated on the eastern boundary of the Mediterranean Sea almost due west of Jerusalem.

e) Caesarea was founded by Herod the Great. Its site was a former coastal station called Strato's Tower. The location is on the Mediterranean shore a little more than 50 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

f) Damascus was and still is the principal city of Syria, located about 120 miles northeast of Jerusalem and approximately 30 miles from Caesarea Philippi.

g) "The Way" was a term used in the first century to denote Christianity, a new way of life, the Christian way of living.

the earth and heard a voice that spoke to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" ⁵He said, "Who are You, Lord?" He answered, "I am Jesus, whom you have been persecuting. [It is hard for you to kick against the goads." ⁶Trembling and astonished, he asked, "Lord, what would You have me do?" The Lord said to him,]^h "Rise and enter the city and it will be told you what you must do."

⁷The men who were traveling with him stood speechless; they heard the voice well enough, but saw no one. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him into Damascus. ⁹And for three days he remained blind and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰Now there was in Damascus a disciple by the name of Ananias, to whom the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias!" He said, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹The Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the street called Straight and inquire at the home of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus;ⁱ for he is there praying. ¹²And he has seen a man named Ananias entering and laying hands on him so that he may see."

¹³Ananias replied, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much he has hurt Your saints^j in Jerusalem, ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to put into chains every one who calls upon Your name." ¹⁵But the Lord told him, "Go. For he is My choice instrument to carry My name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel. ¹⁶For I will show him how much he will have to suffer on behalf of My name."

¹⁷So Ananias went and entered the house. Then placing his hands upon him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord sent me — Jesus who appeared^k to you

on the road you traveled — so that you may recover sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸Instantly it was as if scales fell from his eyes; he saw again. He arose and was baptized; ¹⁹then, after eating something, he regained strength.

c. A.D. 37-40

For some time Saul remained with the Damascus disciples ²⁰and at once preached Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. ²¹All who listened were amazed and said, "Is not he the one who went about ravaging those in Jerusalem who called on this name, and who came here to take them as prisoners shackled to the chief priests?" ²²But Saul continued to gain in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that this was the Christ.^l

²³After considerable time the Jews conspired to destroy him, ²⁴but Saul got wind of their plot. Day and night they watched the gates to kill him; ²⁵but his disciples took him and by night let him down over the wall in a basket.

c. A.D. 40

²⁶On reaching Jerusalem he made efforts to associate with the disciples, but they were all afraid of him; for they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷But Barnabas took him in, presented him to the apostles, and explained to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, how He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had fearlessly spoken in the name of Jesus.

²⁸After that, Saul went in and out with them in Jerusalem, spoke boldly in the Lord's name, ²⁹and especially talked and argued with the Greek-

h) The words in vss. 5 and 6 that are enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

i) See note at ch. 11:25.

j) In the N.T. the word "saint" refers to one who has been set apart by God as His own and for His service. Such a person may not always be saintly in character or life, but in his standing before God he has been sanctified, that is, made a saint by virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice, Heb. 10:10; 13:12. All believers in Christ are saints, even though they may not be as fully developed spiritually as they ought to be.

k) Paul testifies in 1 Cor. 15:8 of having seen the risen Christ.

l) It is probable that vss. 22-25 refer to a second ministry in Damascus, following a period of prayer and meditation in Arabia of which the apostle speaks in Gal. 1:16, 17. The "considerable time" of vs. 23 here corresponds with the "three years" of Gal. 1:18.

speaking Jews; but they undertook to murder him. ³⁰So when the brothers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹Then the church enjoyed peace all over Judea, Galilee and Samaria, strengthened within and progressing in reverence toward the Lord. And through the encouragement of the Holy Spirit there was increase in numbers.

³²As Peter was traveling about, his visits took him to the saints who lived at Lydda. ³³There he came across a man by the name of Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. ³⁴Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed." Instantly he got up, ³⁵and all the inhabitants of Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

³⁶At Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas,^m a woman full of good deeds and acts of charity. ³⁷At about that time she fell ill and died; so they bathed the body and laid it out in an upper room.

³⁸Now since Lydda is near Joppa, the disciples, learning that Peter was there, dispatched two men begging him, "Do come over to us without delay." ³⁹So Peter got up and went with them. On their arrival they brought him to the upper room, where all the widows stood around crying and pointing at the garments and coats which Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰But Peter put them all out, then kneeled down and prayed; and, turning to the body, he said "Tabitha, arise!" She opened her eyes and, seeing Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹Giving her a hand he lifted her up and called in all the saints and the widows, to whom he presented her alive.

⁴²This became known all over Joppa and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³It came about that Peter remained at Joppa for some time, the guest of Simon, a tanner.

10 NOW THERE WAS A MAN NAMED Cornelius living in Caesarea, a captainⁿ of what was called the Italian Cohort,^o ²who with his whole family was a devout person, one who feared God. He practiced liberal benevolences among the people and worshiped God constantly. ³He clearly saw in a vision at about three in the afternoon an angel of God entering his house and saying to him, "Cornelius." ⁴Gazing intently at him, he said in fear, "What is it, Lord?" He replied, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as worthy to be remembered before God. ⁵Now then, send men to Joppa and have them call for Simon, who is called Peter. ⁶He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner whose home is by the sea."

⁷As soon as the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier who belonged to his personal attendants, ⁸explained everything to them, and dispatched them to Joppa.

⁹The next day, while they were on their journey and approaching the town, Peter went up on the roof about noontime to pray. ¹⁰However, he grew hungry and wanted to eat. But while they were preparing a meal, a trance came over him. ¹¹He saw heaven opened and something coming down like a wide sheet let down to earth by the four corners. ¹²In it were all sorts of four-footed beasts and reptiles and birds. ¹³And a voice came to him, "Rise. Peter, kill and eat." ¹⁴But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything undedicated and unclean." ¹⁵Once more the voice came to him, "What God has purified you must not consider unclean." ¹⁶This happened three times; then immediately the thing was taken up into heaven.

¹⁷While Peter was inwardly puzzled about what the vision might mean, then and there the messengers of Cornelius, who had inquired for Simon's house, stood at the gate, ¹⁸calling out to inquire whether Simon, called Peter,

m) "Dorcas" means *gazelle*, an animal notable for its beautiful eyes.

n) A centurion, commander of 100 men.

o) A Roman cohort was the tenth part of a legion, or about 600 men. This captain was "of" the cohort and not necessarily in command of the full complement.

was a guest there. ¹⁹And as Peter was still pondering over the vision, the Spirit said to him, "There are three men looking for you. ²⁰Rise and go downstairs and go with them unhesitatingly, for I have sent them." ²¹So Peter went down and said to the men, "I am the one you are looking for. Why are you here?" ²²They said, "Captain Cornelius, a just and God-fearing man of good reputation among all the Jewish people, was instructed by a holy angel to have you brought to his house, and to hear what you have to say."

²³Then he invited them in and entertained them. The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

²⁴On the following day they entered Caesarea. Expecting them, Cornelius had invited his relatives and intimate friends, ²⁵and as Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet and paid him reverence. ²⁶But Peter raised him up with the words, "Get up. I am a human being too." ²⁷Conversing with him, he went in and found a large gathering ²⁸to whom he said, "You are aware how a Jew is not allowed to associate with or to visit one of another race; but God has shown me not to call any human being unhallowed or unclean." ²⁹For this reason I came without hesitation when I was sent for. May I inquire for what reason you sent for me?"

³⁰Cornelius said, "Four days ago at about this time I was praying in my home at three o'clock in the afternoon, when a man stood before me in dazzling attire ³¹and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your charities are remembered before God. ³²Now then, send to Joppa and invite Simon, called Peter; he is a guest at the home of Simon the tanner by the sea.' ³³So I sent for you at once, and you have been good enough to come. Now then, we are all present here before

God to hear everything in which the Lord has instructed you."

³⁴Peter then opened his lips and said, "Now I thoroughly understand the truth that God is not partial, ³⁵but in every nation he who reveres Him and practices righteousness is acceptable to Him. ³⁶He sent this message to the Israelites, when through Jesus Christ He made the good news of peace known to them — He is Lord of all.

³⁷"You know what occurred up and down Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John preached, ³⁸how God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power Jesus of Nazareth, who traversed the land doing good and healing all that were overpowered by the devil; for God was with Him. ³⁹And we are witnesses of everything He did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem — and they murdered Him, nailing Him to a cross.

⁴⁰"But God raised Him up on the third day and caused Him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to witnesses who were previously selected by God, to us who ate and drank with Him after His resurrection from the dead. ⁴²And to us He gave orders to preach to the people and to bear solemn testimony that He is the God-appointed Judge of the living and of the dead. ⁴³To Him all the prophets bear witness, that all who believe in Him receive forgiveness of sins through His name."

⁴⁴While Peter was still saying these things the Holy Spirit fell upon all who listened to the message. ⁴⁵And the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles also, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and declaring the greatness of God.

⁴⁷Then Peter answered, "Would anyone refuse the water for their baptism, since they have received the Holy Spirit as we ourselves did?" ⁴⁸So he directed them to be baptized in the

p) This was the first appeal expressly to the Gentiles by any of the apostles and was due, of course, to Peter's response to his recent vision.

name of Jesus Christ.⁴ Then they begged him to stay a few days.

c. A.D. 41

11 THE APOSTLES AND THE BROTHERS who lived in Judea heard that the Gentiles had welcomed God's message; ²so when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who insisted upon circumcision disputed with him ³with the charge, "You visited and ate with the uncircumcised." ⁴Peter, however, began to put the whole matter before them in order.

⁵"I was in the town of Joppa praying," he said, "and in a trance I saw a vision, something coming down like a large sheet let down from heaven by the four corners till it reached me. ⁶Looking into it, I noticed animals of earth and wild beasts and reptiles and birds. ⁷I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat.' ⁸But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing undedicated or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹But for the second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has purified, you must not consider unholy.' ¹⁰This happened three times; then everything was taken up into heaven again.

¹¹"At that very moment three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stood at the house where we were staying, ¹²and the Spirit told me to go with them without any hesitation; so six of the brothers went with me and we entered the man's home. ¹³Then he declared to us how he had seen the angel in his house, who stood and said, 'Send to Joppa to bring Simon, called Peter; ¹⁴he will give you the message through which you and your family will be saved.' ¹⁵But at the beginning of my message the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as on us at the beginning; ¹⁶so I was mindful of the Lord's message, how He said, John did

indeed baptize with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷Now since God granted them the same gift that He gave us after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?"

¹⁸When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Then God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

¹⁹Now those who were dispersed on account of the persecution that arose in connection with Stephen made their way as far as Phoenicia^r and Cyprus^s and Antioch,^t telling the message to none except Jews. ²⁰However, there were some of the Cyprians and Cyrenians who arrived at Antioch and spoke to the Greeks as well, preaching the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹The Lord's hand was with them and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

²²When word of it came to the attention of the Jerusalem church, they sent Barnabas to Antioch, ²³who, on his arrival, was happy to see the grace of God and who encouraged them all to remain loyal to the Lord with steady hearts — ²⁴for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith — and a considerable number were added to the Lord.

c. A.D. 43

²⁵Then he made a trip to Tarsus^u to look for Saul ²⁶and, on finding him, brought him to Antioch where for an entire year they met with the church and taught a large group. At Antioch, furthermore, the disciples were first designated as Christians.

²⁷At about that time there came down prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch, ²⁸one of whom, named Agabus, stood up and revealed through the Spirit that a terrible famine was to

q) This was probably the first Christian baptism of an uncircumcised group. It was all very astonishing to the Jewish believers in Christ because they had not grasped the full implications of Jesus' command to preach the Gospel to all the world.

r) Phoenicia was the name of a coastal territory on the Mediterranean Sea directly west of the Sea of Galilee. Tyre and Sidon were in Phoenicia.

s) Cyprus, a large island in the Mediterranean Sea, is about 85 miles west of ancient Phoenicia.

t) Antioch in Syria is about 25 miles inland from the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea.

u) Tarsus, the native city of the Apostle Paul, ch. 9:11, was situated in Cilicia no more than 12-15 miles north of the Mediterranean Sea.

come over the whole world — which occurred in the reign of Claudius.^v ²⁹So the disciples determined to send a contribution to the brothers who lived in Judea, in which each of them would take part according to his ability. ³⁰And this they did: they sent it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

c. A.D. 44

12 AT ABOUT THAT TIME KING Herod^w laid violent hands on some of those who belonged to the church. ²He slew James, the brother of John, with the sword ³and, noticing that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded also to arrest Peter. That was during the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. ⁴Arresting him, he put him in prison and charged four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover.

⁵So Peter was being kept in prison, but from the church prayer on his behalf was unceasingly made to God.

⁶On the night before Herod intended to bring him out to the people, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with double chains, while sentries in front of the door guarded the prison. ⁷Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood beside him, and a light shone in the cell; then, touching Peter on the side, he roused him and said, "Get up at once." The chains dropped from his hands ⁸and the angel told him, "Put on your belt and your sandals," which he did. He added, "Put on your cloak, and follow me." ⁹So he followed him out having no idea that the angel's activity was real, but imagining he was seeing a vision.

¹⁰They passed the first guard and the second, then reached the iron gate leading into the city, and it automatically opened for them. Walking out, they went along one block, when suddenly the angel departed from him. ¹¹When Peter came to his senses he

said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord sent His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

¹²When he got his bearings he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John, surnamed Mark, where a large number had gathered and were praying. ¹³When he knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴And, recognizing the voice as Peter's, she failed from sheer gladness to open the gate, but ran in to announce that Peter stood at the gate. ¹⁵However, they told her, "You are raving." But she insisted up and down that it was so. Then they said, "It is his angel." ¹⁶Peter meanwhile kept on knocking, and when they opened the door, they saw to their astonishment that it was he. ¹⁷He motioned them with his hand to be silent and explained how the Lord had brought him out of the prison; and he said, "Let James^x and the brothers know all this." Then he left and went to another place.

¹⁸With the break of day there was no little consternation among the soldiers as to what had really become of Peter. ¹⁹When Herod sought for him and did not find him he had the guards executed, after examining them. He then left Judea for Caesarea where he resided.

²⁰Now he was very angry with the Tyrians and the Sidonians;^y so they came to him in a body, and winning over Blastus, the chief chamberlain, they pleaded for peace; for their country depended on the country of the king for its food.

²¹On the appointed day Herod, arrayed in his royal robes, took his seat on the throne and made a public address to them. ²²The mob shouted, "A voice of a god and not of a man!" ²³But instantly an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not ascribe the

v) Claudius was the Roman emperor, A.D. 41-54.

w) This was Herod Agrippa I, a grandson of Herod I (Herod the Great) and King of Judea, A.D. 41-44.

x) James was a half brother of Jesus; he became the presiding officer of the Jerusalem church.

y) See note on Sidon at Matt. 11:21.

glory to God. He was eaten by worms, and died. ²⁴But the word of God kept on growing and multiplying.

²⁵And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had finished their ministry there, and brought along John, surnamed Mark.

c. A.D. 47

13 NOW THERE WERE IN THE church that was at Antioch prophets and teachers, such as Barnabas, and Simon, known as Niger,² and Lucius of Cyrene; also Manaen, a childhood companion of Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. ²And as they were worshiping the Lord and fasting the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."^a ³Then, after fasting and prayer and laying on of hands, they sent them away.

⁴So they, as they were sent out^b by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵Arriving at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. And they had John^c as their helper. ⁶Traversing the entire island as far as Paphos, they came across a Jewish magician, a false prophet named Bar-jesus,⁷ who was attached to the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man who summoned Barnabas and Saul, seeking to hear the word of God. ⁸But Elymas, the magician (for such is his name translated), opposed them by trying to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

⁹But Saul — also called Paul — filled

with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at him ¹⁰and said, "You son of the devil! You enemy of everything that is right, full of every deceit and villainy, will you never stop making crooked the straight ways of the Lord? ¹¹Now then the Lord's hand is on you. And you will be blind, not enjoying the sunlight for a time."

Instantly there fell on him a mist of darkness so that he groped around in search of someone to lead him by the hand. ¹²Then the proconsul, when he saw what had happened, believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

¹³From Paphos Paul and his company sailed away to Perga in Pamphylia, where John separated himself from them and returned to Jerusalem; ¹⁴but they went on from Perga and reached Pisidian Antioch.^d

Entering the synagogue on the Sabbath, they took their seats; ¹⁵but after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue leaders sent them the message: "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, speak up." ¹⁶So Paul stood up and, motioning with his hand for silence, said:^e

"Men of Israel and all you who reverence God, listen. ¹⁷The God of this people Israel selected our fathers and made them a great nation, when they lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt; then with an uplifted arm He led them out from there. ¹⁸For about forty years He endured their behavior in the wilderness; ¹⁹then, destroying seven

2) "Niger" means *black*.

a) The title of this book, The Acts of the Apostles, appears to have been given it after the first century. Many have suggested that a better name would be The Acts of the Holy Spirit.

b) On Paul's first missionary journey, chs. 13:4-14:26, he was accompanied by Barnabas and for a while by John Mark, 13:5, 13. The party sailed from Seleucia, a Syrian port on the Mediterranean coast near Antioch, 13:1, 4, to the Island of Cyprus, 13:4, where they preached the Gospel from Salamis, at the eastern end of the island, as far as Paphos on the west, 13:5, 6. From Paphos they sailed to the region of Pamphylia in what is now southern Turkey. They must have landed at the seaport, Attalia, and gone immediately to nearby Perga, where John Mark left them, and then on to Antioch in Pisidia, 13:14. Paul and Barnabas traveled eastward from there to Iconium, 13:51, southward to Lystra, and from there southeast to Derbe in the Lycaonian region, 14:18. The two men retraced their steps to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, 14:21, from which place they journeyed south to Perga and over to Attalia, where they set sail for their starting point, Antioch in Syria. The tour lasted about two years, A.D. 47-49.

c) That is, Mark, Cf. ch. 12:25.

d) Antioch in Pisidia (now Yalvac or Yalvaj in central Turkey) is about 300 miles northwest of Antioch in Syria, where the missionary journey began. Pisidian Antioch was originally a Greek city but became a Roman colony before the first century A.D.

e) There is a certain resemblance between the message that follows and Stephen's address in ch. 7. Of course Paul heard Stephen speak, 7:58-60. It was not that, however, that caused the resemblance but the fact that both men were expounding the Old Testament.

nations in the land of Canaan,^f He distributed their land by lot — ²⁰all of which took about four hundred and fifty years.^g

"After that He gave them judges until the Prophet Samuel. ²¹At that time they asked for a king and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. ²²After deposing him, He raised up David for their king, of whom He testified,^h 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man agreeable to My heart, who will fulfill all My desires.'

²³"From his offspring God has brought Israel a Savior, even Jesus, according to the promise, ²⁴after John had preached to all the people of Israel the baptism of repentance, preparatory to His coming. ²⁵And as John was finishing, he said, 'Who do you suppose me to be? I am not He; but One is coming after me whose sandals I am not fit to untie.'

²⁶"Brothers, sons of Abraham's family and all among you who revere God, to us this message of salvation has been sent; ²⁷for those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not know Him, even though the words of the prophets are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them when they sentenced Him; ²⁸and although finding no crime that deserved death, they requested of Pilate that He be executed. ²⁹And when they fulfilled everything that is written about Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. ³⁰But God raised Him from the dead, ³¹and for many days He appeared to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people.

³²"So we are bringing you the good news of the promise ³³which God has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus from the dead, as it is written in the second Psalm,ⁱ 'Thou art My Son; today I have become Thy Father.'

³⁴But that He raised Him from the dead, never to return to decay, He has expressed this way,^j 'I will give you the sacred blessings assured to David.'

³⁵"For this reason He says in another passage,^k 'Thou wilt not allow Thy Holy One to see corruption.' ³⁶For David, after serving the purpose of God in his own generation, died and was buried with his fathers, and underwent decay; ³⁷but He whom God raised did not experience decomposition.

³⁸"It should be clear then to you, brothers, that through this One forgiveness of sins is announced to you. ³⁹In Him every believer is absolved from everything from which you could not be absolved by the Law of Moses. ⁴⁰So be careful that the prophetic utterance^l does not become your experience, ⁴¹'Look, you scoffers, marvel and vanish; for in your time I will accomplish a deed such as you will never believe even if someone relates it to you.'

⁴²As Paul and Barnabas went out, the people begged to have the same things told them the next Sabbath, ⁴³and when the synagogue was dismissed many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked to them and persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴The next Sabbath nearly the whole city gathered to hear the word of God; ⁴⁵but when the Jews noticed the crowds, they became terribly jealous. They contradicted what Paul had said, and talked abusively. ⁴⁶Paul and Barnabas declared fearlessly, "God's message had to be told to you first, but since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we are turning to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷For so the Lord has commanded^m us, 'I have appointed you to be a light to the Gentiles, to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

f) The land now known as Israel.

g) That is, from the time of Abraham's call, Gen. 12:1.

h) 1 Sam. 13:14.

i) Ps. 2:7.

j) Isa. 55:3 and applied here as a Messianic promise.

k) Ps. 16:10.

l) Hab. 1:5.

m) Isa. 49:6.

⁴⁸When they heard this, the Gentiles were glad; they acclaimed the Lord's message and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. ⁴⁹And the word of the Lord was carried all over the country. ⁵⁰The Jews, however, stirred up the devout women of high repute and the outstanding men of the city, and instigated persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their territory. ⁵¹But they shook the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium, ⁵²and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

c. A.D. 48

14 THE SAME THING HAPPENED AT Iconium. They went into the Jewish synagogue and so spoke that a large group both of Jews and of Greeks believed. ²But the unbelieving Jews stirred and embittered the minds of the Gentiles against the brothers. ³So they remained for a considerable time, speaking freely with reliance on the Lord, who witnessed to the message of His grace by granting signs and wonders to be performed by their hands.

⁴The population of the town was divided, some siding with the Jews and some with the apostles; ⁵but when both Gentiles and Jews with their rulers created a movement to mistreat and to stone them, ⁶and they grew aware of it, they fled to the Lycaonian towns of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding area; ⁷where they went on preaching the good news.

⁸At Lystra there was a man seated who had no strength in his feet; he was lame from birth and had never walked. ⁹He heard Paul speaking, who in turn looked straight at him and, seeing that he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰said in a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet." He sprang up and began to walk.

¹¹When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in Lycaonian,

"The gods have come down to us in human form!" ¹²So they called Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes,ⁿ because he was the principal speaker. ¹³In fact, the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of the city brought oxen and wreaths to the gates of the city to join the people in offering sacrifice.

¹⁴But when the apostles^o Barnabas and Paul, learned of it, they tore their clothes and dashed forward among the crowds, ¹⁵shouting, "What is this you are doing, men? We are human, with emotions as yourselves. We are bringing you the good news to turn away from these useless things to the living God who made heaven, earth, and sea, and everything they contain. ¹⁶In days gone by He let all the nations go their own ways, ¹⁷though not leaving Himself without evidence as Benefactor; for He gave you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons and supplied you nourishment and enjoyment to your heart's content."

¹⁸Yet even though they spoke this way, they still had difficulty in stopping sacrificing to them. ¹⁹But Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium, who influenced the crowds so that they stoned Paul, then dragged him out of the city supposing that he was dead. ²⁰As, however, the disciples were encircling him, he got up and entered the city. And the next day he went with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹They brought the good news to that city and, after gaining a considerable number of disciples, went back to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, ²²reassuring the disciples spiritually and encouraging them to stand fast in the faith, and saying, "We must enter the kingdom of God by way of many afflictions."

²³They also appointed elders for them in each church, whom they committed with prayer and fasting to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

²⁴After traveling through Pisidia,

n) Zeus was the chief of the Olympian gods; Hermes, reputedly the son of Zeus, was the herald of the gods. Zeus and Hermes are identified with the Roman gods Jupiter and Mercury.

o) Neither Paul nor Barnabas was of the Twelve, cf. ch. 1:13, 21-26, but they were apostles (from the Gk. verb *apostello* meaning to send). In the N.T. the word "apostle" seems to be used in a twofold sense: (1) strictly of those who were directly commissioned by Christ—the Twelve and Paul; and (2) more broadly of others who were not of the Twelve and Paul but were also called apostles, e.g. Barnabas, ch. 14:4, 14, and James, the brother of the Lord Jesus, Gal. 1:19.

they reached Pamphylia ²⁵and, when they had spoken the message at Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶From there they sailed to Antioch, the place at which they had been entrusted to the grace of God for the work they had accomplished.

c. A.D. 49

²⁷Upon their arrival, they called a church meeting and reported what God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. ²⁸And they spent a long time with the disciples.

c. A.D. 50

15 SOME WHO CAME DOWN FROM Judea were teaching the brothers, "If you are not circumcised after the Mosaic custom, you cannot be saved." ²Since there was a great deal of dissension between Paul and Barnabas and these persons, it was arranged to have Paul and Barnabas and a few others of their number go up to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem about this dispute. ³So then, sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, where they narrated in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and thus made all the brothers very happy.

⁴When they arrived in Jerusalem they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported what God had done with them. ⁵But some of the believers who belonged to the Pharisee^p party got up and said, "They must be circumcised and ordered to observe the Law of Moses."^q

⁶Then the apostles and the elders held a meeting to look into this question ⁷and, after much debate, Peter arose and said to them, "Brothers, you will recall that a good while back God made choice among you, that through

my lips the Gentiles should hear the message of good news and believe, ⁸and God, who knows all hearts, gave them evidence by granting them the Holy Spirit just as He did to us. ⁹As He cleansed their hearts by faith, He did not at all discriminate between us and them. ¹⁰Now then, why be a trial to God by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to carry? ¹¹Instead, we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in the same way they are."^r

¹²The entire assembly kept quiet and heard Barnabas and Paul tell the story of the signs and wonders which God had done among the Gentiles through them. ¹³Then, after they had finished, James made reply, "Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴Symeon^s has been telling how early God visited the Gentiles to take out a people for His name, ¹⁵and the words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written,^t ¹⁶After this I will return and reconstruct David's tent that has fallen down and rebuild its ruins and restore it, ¹⁷so that the rest of the people may search for the Lord, even all the nations over whom My name has been invoked, says the Lord who does these things, ¹⁸which are known from eternity."^u

¹⁹"It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not trouble those who turn to God out of the Gentiles, ²⁰but that we direct them to abstain from what is contaminated by idols^u and from unchastity, and from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood. ²¹For Moses has from earliest times in every city those proclaiming him, because he is read in the synagogues each Sabbath."

²²Then it pleased the apostles and the elders, as well as the whole church, to select some of their men to be sent

p) See note at Matt. 3:7.

q) Not only the Ten Commandments but also all the ceremonial regulations of the Mosaic Law are referred to in this statement.

r) Peter and Paul are in complete agreement that salvation is by grace through faith and not by the works of the Law. Compare Peter's statement here with Paul's teaching in Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9.

s) Simon Peter. "Symeon" is the Greek form of the name Simon.

t) Amos 9:11, 12.

u) By having been dedicated to those idols.

to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas — Judas known as Barsabbas, and Silas, who were leaders among the brothers, ²³and they carried this letter:

"The brothers, including the apostles and elders, to the brothers from the Gentiles in Antioch, in Syria, and in Cilicia, greeting.^v ²⁴Since we have heard that some who came out there from among us but were not authorized by us have troubled you with messages and have unsettled your minds, ²⁵we have unanimously thought it well to send you chosen men with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶men who have jeopardized their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷So we are dispatching Judas and Silas, who will themselves announce these things by word of mouth; ²⁸for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to load you with no further burden except these essentials: ²⁹that you abstain from food offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled meat, and from unchastity. If you keep yourselves clear from these, you will get along splendidly. Farewell."

³⁰So then, those who were dispatched went down to Antioch and, after gathering the entire body together, they delivered the letter; ³¹and when they^w had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. ³²Both Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with a long speech. ³³When they had spent some time there the brothers sent them away

with peace to those who had sent them, ³⁴[though Silas decided to stay there.]^x

³⁵Paul and Barnabas remained at Antioch, teaching and preaching with many others the message of the Lord. ³⁶But some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and look in on the brothers in every city in which we have preached the word of the Lord, to see how they are getting along." ³⁷But Barnabas wanted to take along John, called Mark, ³⁸while Paul considered it ill-fitting to take with them the man who had quit them in Pamphylia and had failed to accompany them to the work. ³⁹The disagreement became so strong that they separated from each other, and Barnabas, taking along Mark,^y sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰while Paul, selecting Silas, set out, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord, ⁴¹and passed through Syria and Cilicia,^z strengthening the churches.

16 HE CAME DOWN TO DERBE AND to Lystra, where a certain disciple named Timothy, the son of a believing Jewess and a Greek father, lived, ²who was well recommended by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium. ³Paul wanted him to go with him, so he took and circumcised him because of the local Jews who all knew that his father was a Greek.

⁴As they traveled from one city to another they delivered to them the regulations which the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had decided they

v) In letters written in the first century the signature was placed first; then the address and introductory greeting.

w) Christians at Antioch.

x) Verse 34, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

y) It is not revealed why Mark, who was Barnabas' cousin, left Paul and Barnabas at Pamphylia or exactly why Paul and Barnabas separated because of him. But that Luke reports this dispute shows his honesty as a historian. Later, although how it came to pass is not stated, Mark was fully reconciled to Paul and worked with him, Col. 4:10; II Tim. 4:11; Philem. 24.

z) On Paul's second missionary journey, chs. 15:36-18:22, he was accompanied by Silas, 15:4. Timothy joined the two men at Lystra, 16:1-3. The trip began at Antioch in Syria, 15:35, as did the first missionary tour. From Antioch Paul and Silas went by foot north into Cilicia, encouraging churches that were already in existence, 15:41. Then they moved on to places that Paul had visited on his first tour — Derbe, Lystra and Iconium, 16:1, 2 — and proceeded into the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, 16:6, which was located in Asia Minor in the area that is now Turkey. They stopped briefly in Troas, 16:7, 8, and from there went by sea to Philippi in Macedonia, evidently touching at Samothrace and Neapolis, 16:11, 12. After a powerful ministry in Philippi the apostles were beaten and imprisoned; but they were released and went on to Thessalonica, where they remained for about three weeks, 17:1. Again they met with opposition, so they moved on to Berea, 17:10. There they were well received. Visits to Athens and Corinth in Greece followed, 17:15-18:1; then back to Ephesus, 18:19, where Paul sailed for home. Landing at Caesarea, 18:22, he went to Jerusalem and then finally to Antioch where the long journey of more than three years' duration had begun, c. A.D. 50-53.

should observe. ⁵Thus the churches were strengthened in the faith and daily their number increased.

⁶They traversed Phrygia and the Galatian country, since they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.^a ⁷On reaching Mysia they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; ⁸so, by-passing Mysia, they came down to Troas.

⁹During the night a vision appeared to Paul — a Macedonian man who stood and pleaded with him, "Cross over into Macedonia and help us."

¹⁰At once, when he had seen the vision, we^b made attempts to enter Macedonia, for we concluded that God had called us to tell the good news to them. ¹¹So, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and next day to Neapolis, and ¹²from there to Philippi, a colony and chief city of the Macedonian district.

We stayed in this city a few days.

¹³And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate of the city by the river-side, where we supposed that there was a place of worship and, when we sat down, we talked to the women who gathered. ¹⁴One woman, named Lydia, a purple-seller from the city of Thyatira, a worshiper of God, listened, and the Lord opened her heart to give attention to the things that Paul spoke. ¹⁵When she and her family had been baptized, she begged us, "If you consider me faithful to the Lord, come to my home and stay with us." And she prevailed upon us to come.

¹⁶But it happened, as we were going to the prayer service, that a servant girl met us who was possessed of a clairvoyant spirit, whose fortunetelling brought in much money for her owners. ¹⁷She followed Paul and us, shouting loudly, "These men are servants^c

of the Most High God; they are announcing to you the way of salvation."

¹⁸For many days she kept this up; then Paul was annoyed and, turning to the spirit, said, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And that moment it left her.

¹⁹When her owners became aware that their hope for gains was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities in the market place ²⁰and, bringing them to the magistrates, said, "These men are Jews and they are creating a disturbance in our city; ²¹they are advocating ways of behavior which as Romans we ought neither to welcome nor observe."

²²The crowd also joined against them, and the officials, after having them stripped, ordered them flogged; ²³then, after giving them a severe beating, they threw them into prison, charging the jailor to guard them securely.^d ²⁴In view of this order he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Then suddenly a tremendous earthquake occurred, which shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the doors sprang open and everyone's chains fell off. ²⁷When the jailor awoke and saw the prison doors standing open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul called out loudly, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!"

²⁹Asking for a light, he rushed in and fell terror-stricken before Paul and Silas, ³⁰and when he led them out he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, and

a) The Asia of the N.T. was the southwestern province of what we now know as Asia Minor.

b) The use of the pronoun in the first person plural indicates that the author, Luke, a capable historian, joined Paul and his party here at Troas. Luke evidently left them at Philippi, for the "we" does not appear in the text again until ch. 20:5, when Paul returned to Troas with Luke. Thereafter "the beloved physician," Col. 4:14, accompanied the apostle all the way to Rome, ch. 28:16, and it seems that he was with Paul during at least the major portion of the apostle's imprisonment there, II Tim. 4:11.

c) See note at Matt. 13:27.

d) Despite Paul's Roman citizenship, cf. chs. 21:39; 22:27, 28, no opportunity was given him to plead his case, vs. 37.

your family also." ³²Then they told him, together with his whole family, the word of the Lord.

³³At that very hour of the night the jailor took them and washed their wounds; and he was baptized then and there, he and all that were his. ³⁴Then, taking them up to his house, he set food before them and was extremely happy with all his loved ones because they had believed in God.

³⁵With the break of day the magistrates sent their orderlies to say, "Let these men go." ³⁶So the jailor reported the message to Paul, "The magistrates have sent to release you; now then you may leave in peace." ³⁷But Paul told them, "After flogging us publicly without trial, though we are Romans, they threw us in prison, now will they put us out secretly? Not at all. Instead, let them come themselves and take us out."

³⁸The orderlies reported these sayings to the magistrates, who grew alarmed at hearing they were Romans. ³⁹They came and apologized to them, and when they had brought them out, they begged them to leave the city. ⁴⁰So they left the prison and went to Lydia's house, and when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed.

c. A.D. 51

17 PASSING THROUGH AMPHIPOLIS and Apollonia, they arrived at Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue ²and, as was his custom, Paul went to meet with them. For three Sabbaths he argued with them out of the Scriptures, ³explaining and pointing out that the Christ must suffer and then rise from the dead, saying, "This Jesus, whom I preach to you, is the Christ."

⁴Some of them were persuaded and associated themselves with Paul and Silas — a large group of devout Greeks, as well as a number of prominent women. ⁵But the Jews grew jealous;

they got hold of some unprincipled loungers of the market place and formed a mob to set the city in an uproar, and then attacked Jason's house seeking to bring them out to the mob. ⁶And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city fathers, shouting, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too; ⁷Jason has taken them into his house as guests; they all oppose Caesar's ordinances, claiming there is another king — Jesus."

⁸The crowd and the magistrates were stirred up when they heard this, ⁹and when they had taken security from Jason and from the rest, they let them go.

¹⁰At once the brothers sent away Paul and Silas, to Berea by night. Upon their arrival, they attended the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹But these were of a nobler attitude than those in Thessalonica; for they heartily welcomed the message and made a daily study of the Scriptures, whether these things were so. ¹²Many of them, therefore, believed, including prominent Greek women and a number of men.

¹³But when the Jews of Thessalonica became aware that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there to agitate and stir up the crowds. ¹⁴Then the brothers sent Paul off at once as far as the sea, but both Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵Those who were conducting Paul took him to Athens and returned with instructions to Silas and Timothy that they should join him as soon as possible.

¹⁶While Paul was awaiting them in Athens, his soul was deeply vexed when he observed the idol-filled city. ¹⁷Accordingly, in the synagogue he discoursed with the Jews and the devout adherents, and daily in the market place with those he chanced to meet. ¹⁸Some of the Epicurean^e and of the Stoic^f philosophers also encountered

e) The Epicureans, followers of Epicurus, 341-270 B.C., held that the end of all things was personal pleasure.

f) The Stoics, disciples of Zeno, 336-264 B.C., believed quite the opposite of the Epicurean philosophy, for they condemned desire for personal happiness as weakness, and taught self-repression and indifference to both pleasure and pain.

him, and some said, "What would this babbler be trying to say?" But others said, "He seems to be announcing foreign deities," because he told the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹They took hold of him, brought him to the Areopagus^g and said, "May we know what this new teaching is, about which you are talking?" ²⁰For you are bringing some strange matters to our ears; we want to know just what they mean." ²¹For all the Athenians and the visiting foreigners spent their time in nothing else than to tell or to hear something novel.

²²Standing in the center of the Areopagus, Paul said: "Men of Athens, I notice on every hand how religious you are; ²³for as I went throughout your city and looked carefully at your sacred objects, I found even an altar with the inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you revere without knowing it, that I proclaim to you: ²⁴The God who made the world and all it contains, who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples built by human hands, ²⁵neither is He served by human hands as if He lacked anything — He, the Giver of life and breath and all things to every one. ²⁶He has made from one person every nation of men to settle on the entire surface of the earth, definitely appointing the pre-established periods and the boundaries of their settlements, ²⁷so that they might seek for God, if only they would feel for and find Him, although He is not far from each of us; ²⁸for 'in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets^h have expressed themselves, 'For we are also His offspring.' ²⁹Now then, since we have our being from God, we certainly should not have the idea that the Deity resembles gold or silver or stone or anything humanly manufactured or invented.

³⁰"However, while God overlooked those times of ignorance, He is now summoning all people everywhere to repent, ³¹since He has fixed a day when He is to judge the world righteously through a Man whom He has destined for the task, having furnished proof to everyone by raising Him from the dead."

³²Hearing of the resurrection from the dead, some scoffed, while others said, "We shall hear you again about this." ³³So it was that Paul went out from among them. ³⁴However, some men associated themselves with him and believed, of whom may be mentioned Dionysius, a member of the court of the Areopagus; also a woman called Damaris, and others besides them.

c. A.D. 51-53

18 AFTER THIS HE LEFT ATHENS and went to Corinth, ²where he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, and Priscilla his wife, who had but recently migrated from Italy, because of Claudius' order that all Jews must leave Rome. He called on them, ³and, as they were of the same occupation, he stayed with them and worked with them; for they were tent-makers by trade. ⁴And every Sabbath he discoursed in the synagogue and won over both Jews and Greeks.

⁵When Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, ¹Paul was completely absorbed in preaching the message, strongly urging upon the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. ⁶But since they kept opposing and defaming him, he shook out his garments against them and said to them, "Your blood be upon your heads! I am innocent. From now on I am going to the Gentiles."

⁷Then he left there and entered the house of a God-fearing man called Titius Justus, whose house adjoined the synagogue. ⁸But Crispus, the leader

g) "Areopagus" means *Hill of Ares*, Ares being the Greek god of war corresponding to the Roman god Mars. Mars Hill is a more familiar designation of the Areopagus than The Hill of Ares.

h) "In Him we live and move and have our being" is from the writings of the Cretan poet, Epimenides, seventh century B.C. "For we are also His offspring" is attributed to Cleanthes, a stoic philosopher, and also to Aratus, a Cilician poet, both third century B.C.

i) Macedonia was a dominant power in the fourth century B.C. when Alexander, its king, conquered Greece. Macedonia was situated in what is now northern Greece. Included in its territory were Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea.

of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his entire family, and many of the Corinthians who listened believed and were baptized. ⁹Then in a night vision the Lord said to Paul: "Have no fear, but speak and do not keep still, ¹⁰because I am with you and none will attack you in order to harm you because I have many people in this city." ¹¹So he settled down among them for a year and six months, teaching the word of God.

c. A.D. 53

¹²When, however, Gallio^j was proconsul of Achaia,^k the Jews unitedly rose against Paul and led him before the court, ¹³declaring, "This fellow advises the people to worship God in an unlawful way." ¹⁴But as Paul was at the point of speaking, Gallio told the Jews, "If, O Jews, it were a matter of crookedness or a serious crime, it would be reasonable to put up with you; ¹⁵but if it is a question of words and names and law among yourselves, then it is your own concern. I do not care to be judge of such matters." ¹⁶And he drove them from the court.

¹⁷Then they got hold of the ruler of the synagogue, Sosthenes, and in front of the court gave him a beating; but Gallio paid no attention to any of these things.

¹⁸After staying several days more, Paul bade the brothers farewell and sailed for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. He had his hair cut short at Cenchrea, for he had made a vow.

¹⁹They arrived in Ephesus,^l where Paul left them while he went himself to the synagogue to have a discussion with the Jews. ²⁰They requested him to remain for a longer time, but he did not consent. ²¹Instead, he said goodbye to them with the promise, "God willing, I shall come back to you." He then sailed from Ephesus ²²and landed at Caesarea;^m then, after going up to greet the church,ⁿ he went down to Antioch.

c. A.D. 54

²³After spending some time there, he took his leave and made his way^o successively through the Galatian country and through Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

²⁴Now there was a Jew named Apollos, a native Alexandrian, a man of learning, and powerful in the Scriptures, who came to Ephesus. ²⁵This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord and with a burning spirit he spoke and taught accurately of the things concerning Jesus, although he was acquainted only with the baptism of John. ²⁶He began to speak freely in the synagogue; but Priscilla and Aquila, after listening to him, took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately to him.

²⁷And as he planned to cross over to Achaia, the brothers wrote the disciples, urging them to give him a hearty welcome. On his arrival he proved of great benefit to those who through grace were believers; ²⁸for

j) Gallio is said to have been the brother of Seneca, Roman philosopher and author who was one of Nero's teachers.

k) Achaia was located in the southern area of what presently is Greece. Corinth was Achaia's capital and Sparta an influential city.

l) Ephesus was the leading city of Ionia and lay on the west coast of what is now Turkey, i.e., on the eastern edge of the Ionian Sea.

m) See note at ch. 8:40.

n) The church at Jerusalem.

o) Paul's third missionary journey, chs. 18:23-21:15, began at Antioch, 18:22, as had the first two. He went north to the Roman province of Galatia in Asia Minor and then westward to a section of the province known as Phrygia, encouraging believers in all these areas, 18:23. At length he moved on to Ephesus in Ionia, where he spent about three years. After an unhappy experience in Ephesus, related to images of Artemis, 19:23-41, the apostle traveled farther west into Macedonia and from there southward into Greece, 20:1, 2, where he stayed for three months. Again opponents sought to seize him, 20:3, so that he went back to Macedonia, accompanied by seven men, 20:4, who evidently went on ahead to Troas in Mysia, Asia Minor. In Philippi Luke joined Paul, 20:6 (see note at ch. 16:10). They sailed from Troas, where Paul's seven friends met them, and spent a week there. From Troas the party went south by land and sea to Miletus, 20:13-15. There Paul said farewell to the elders of Ephesus, for whom he had sent, since he did not expect ever to see them again, 20:17-38. The apostle and his companions sailed from Miletus to Tyre, 21:1, where they spent a week, after which they journeyed by way of Ptolemais and Caesarea to Jerusalem, 21:15, where the trip of about four years ended, A.D. 54-58.

with power he publicly refuted the Jews, proving through the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

19 WHILE APOLLOS WAS IN CORINTH, Paul, who had traveled overland, came down to Ephesus where he met some disciples, ²whom he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit on your becoming believers?" But they answered him, "Why, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³He asked, "Into what, then, were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴So Paul added, "John baptized the baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the One who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus."

⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶And as Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they talked in tongues and prophesied. ⁷Altogether there were about a dozen men.

⁸He also went into the synagogue and for three months he spoke with boldness, persuasively discussing the things concerning the kingdom of God. ⁹When, however, some became stubborn, refusing to believe and denouncing the Way^p before the people, he turned from them, taking the disciples with him and went on holding daily discussions^q in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This kept up for two years, so that the whole population of the province of Asia, Jews as well as Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

¹¹God performed uncommon miracles, too, through the hands of Paul ¹²to such an extent that people carried off to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons he had handled, and their illnesses were removed and the evil spirits cast out.

¹³But certain traveling Jews who

practiced exorcism^r undertook to name over those that had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus by saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." ¹⁴Seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, practiced this; ¹⁵but the evil spirit replied to them, "Jesus I know and I am acquainted with Paul, but you, who are you?" ¹⁶Then the man in whom the evil spirit dwelt, leaped on them, overpowered all of them and was so violent against them that they fled from that house stripped and wounded. ¹⁷This became known to all the Jews and Greeks who lived in Ephesus, and awe fell on them all; and they extolled the name of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁸And many who believed came and made full confession and declaration of their magic practices, ¹⁹and quite a number of those who had practiced magic arts collected the books into a pile and burned them before everybody. Counting up their value, they found them priced at ten thousand dollars.^s ²⁰Thus mightily did the word of the Lord grow and become stronger.

²¹After these events took place Paul decided under the direction of the Spirit to travel to Jerusalem by way of Macedonia and Achaia, and said, "After I have been there, I must see Rome also." ²²So he sent two of his assistants into Macedonia, Timothy and Erastus, while he remained for some time longer in Asia.

c. A.D. 57

²³At about that time considerable disturbance occurred regarding the Way. ²⁴For a certain Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis^t and provided the artisans with a large income, ²⁵called them together along with the workmen of the same trade and said, "Men, you know that we are deriving a good living from

p) See note at ch. 9:2

q) Some ancient manuscripts add "from ten until three."

r) Exorcism is the practice of addressing evil spirits by magic or religious formulas, or trying to expel them by the employment of a holy name.

s) The text reads "fifty thousand pieces of silver." These silver coins were probably Greek drachmas. A drachma would be the equivalent of about twenty cents in mid-twentieth century U.S. currency.

t) Artemis, the Greek counterpart of the Roman Diana, was the mythological goddess of the moon and fertility.

this trade. ²⁶Now you observe and hear how not only at Ephesus but in almost all Asia this Paul is alienating many people by persuading them that gods made by human hands are not real gods. ²⁷So there is danger not merely that our trade will come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess, Artemis, will be looked upon as nothing and her magnificent glory will come to an end — she whom all Asia and all the world worship."

²⁸As they listened they became full of anger and shouted, "Great is Artemis of Ephesus!" ²⁹Then the city was filled with confusion and, after dragging away Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, fellow travelers of Paul, they pushed together into the theater. ³⁰When Paul wanted to enter the assembly, the disciples did not permit him ³¹and even some of the deputies of the assembly who were his friends, sent him warning not to risk himself in the theater.

³²Some were shouting this and others that; for the assembly was just a tumult and the majority had no idea why they had come together. ³³Some of the crowd advised Alexander to speak, since he was pushed forward by the Jews, and Alexander motioned with the hand, as he wished to make his defense before the mob; ³⁴but as soon as they recognized him as a Jew, the whole crowd as with one voice broke into a shouting that lasted two hours, "Great is Artemis of Ephesus!"

³⁵But the town clerk quieted the mob and said, "Fellow Ephesians, where is there a person who does not know that Ephesus is the temple guardian of the great Artemis and of her image that fell from heaven? ³⁶Since this is undeniable, you should compose yourselves and not do anything rashly. ³⁷For you have brought these men here, who are neither temple destroyers nor insulters of our goddess. ³⁸Now then, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a complaint against anyone, courts are in session and pro-

consuls are available; let them bring charges against each other. ³⁹But if you have further complaint, then let it be straightened out in the legal assembly. ⁴⁰For we are in danger of being accused of riot on account of today's affairs, since there is no reason whatever that we can offer for this disorderly gathering." ⁴¹And with these words he dismissed the gathering.

20 AFTER THE TUMULT HAD ceased, Paul sent for the disciples to see him, gave them encouragement, bade them farewell and left for Macedonia. ²Then, after traveling through those parts and encouraging the brothers in a long speech, he came to Greece, ³where he spent three months. When he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to return by way of Macedonia, because of a plot against him on the part of the Jews.

c. A.D. 58

⁴There accompanied him Sopater, son of Pyrrhus of Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, both of Thessalonica; Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; also Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia; ⁵and they went on ahead and awaited us" at Troas. Then, after the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, ⁶we sailed out from Philippi and reached them in five days at Troas, where we tarried for seven days.

⁷As we were gathered for the breaking of bread on the first day of the week, Paul talked with them and, since he intended to leave the next morning, he prolonged his message until midnight. ⁸There were numerous lamps in the upper room in which we met; ⁹and a young man named Eutychus was sitting in the window and, while Paul kept on talking heaviness of sleep proved too much for him; so as he sagged down in his sleep, fell from the third story and was picked up lifeless. ¹⁰However, Paul went down, stooped over him and embraced him, saying, "Have no anxiety, for his soul is in him." ¹¹Then going up again,

he broke the bread and ate, conversed at length even until daybreak and left just as he was. ¹²They took the young man home alive, and were greatly encouraged.

¹³We went on ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, intending to take Paul on board there; for so he had arranged it, intending himself to travel there on foot. ¹⁴So, when he met us at Assos, we took him aboard and went to Mitylene. ¹⁵The next day we sailed on from there to a point facing Chios; the next we crossed over to Samos and the day after we arrived at Miletus. ¹⁶For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might lose no time in Asia, for he was hastening to be in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost if at all possible.

¹⁷From Miletus he sent messengers to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to him ¹⁸and, when they arrived, he told them, "You are well acquainted with my behavior among you from the day I first set foot in Asia and ever since; ¹⁹how I have served the Lord with all humility in tears and in trials that befell me because of the plottings of the Jews; ²⁰how I never failed to tell you what was for your benefit and to teach you publicly and in homes; ²¹how I bore testimony to both Jews and Greeks that they should repent before God and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

²²"And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem, and what is going to happen to me I do not know; ²³except that the Holy Spirit in one city after another testifies to me that bonds and affliction await me. ²⁴However, I am not concerned about anything; neither is my life dear to me except to finish my course and the ministry which I accepted from the Lord Jesus to bear witness to the gospel of the grace of God.

²⁵"And now I know that you all, among whom I have gone in and out preaching the kingdom, will see my

face no more. ²⁶For this reason I bear you witness today that I am guiltless of the blood of all of you; ²⁷for I have not fallen short at all of preaching to you the whole purpose of God. ²⁸Be on guard for yourselves and for the entire flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers; shepherd the church of God,^v which He has bought with His own blood.

²⁹"For I know that after I have left, savage wolves will make their way to you, that have no mercy on the flock; ³⁰and from your own number also persons will arise who will teach distorted things to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹Keep on the lookout, therefore, and remember how for three years with many tears I never stopped night and day giving each of you warning.

³²"And now, I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and grant you the inheritance among all those made holy.

³³"I have set my heart on no one's silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴You yourselves know that these hands supplied my needs and those of my companions. ³⁵I have in every way pointed out to you how, by working hard in this way, the needy must be assisted, and that we should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said,^w 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

³⁶Having so spoken, he bowed his knees and prayed with them all. ³⁷They all wept freely; they fell on Paul's neck and fervently kissed him. ³⁸They were grieved especially over the remark he made, that they would not see his face any more. Then they escorted him to the ship.

21 WHEN WE HAD TORN OUR-
selves away from their embrace and put out to sea, we ran a straight course to Cos; the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara; ²then, meeting with a ship that was crossing to Phoenicia, we embarked and set sail. ³Sighting Cyprus and leaving it to

v) Some ancient manuscripts read "Lord," Gk. *kurios*. In the O.T. Septuagint translation the word is sometimes used of God; in the N.T. it usually refers to Christ, who is God.

w) The church is indebted to Paul for this information, for there is no record in the Gospels of Jesus having said it.

our left, we sailed on to Syria and docked at Tyre, for there the ship had to discharge the cargo.

⁴We looked up the disciples and stayed there seven days. They advised Paul through the Spirit not to go on to Jerusalem; ⁵but when the time was up, we left and went on our journey escorted by all the believers with their wives and children until we were outside the city. Kneeling on the beach, we prayed, ⁶then embraced one another and embarked. And they went back to their homes.

⁷When we had completed our voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day. ⁸The following day we departed and arrived at Caesarea, where we called at the home of Philip, the evangelist, one of the seven,^x by whom we were entertained. ⁹He had four virgin daughters who prophesied.^y

¹⁰We had stopped there for several days when a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea and called on us. ¹¹He took Paul's belt and, tying his own feet and hands, he said, "Thus speaks the Holy Spirit: 'In this way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will deliver him to the Gentiles.'"

¹²On hearing this, both we and those who lived in that place urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³Then Paul replied,^z "What are you trying to do by weeping and discouraging me? I am prepared not merely to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem on behalf of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴And as he could not be dissuaded, we stopped trying to persuade him and said, "The Lord's will be done."

¹⁵So when these days were over, we got ready for the trip and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶Some of the Caesarean disciples, who went along with us, brought us to the home of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple by whom we were to be entertained.

¹⁷When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us joyfully ¹⁸and the next day Paul called on James, and we went with him. All the elders were present and, ¹⁹after we greeted them he recounted to them step by step what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰As they listened to him, they gave glory to God and then said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they all remain zealous for the Law. ²¹But they have been informed about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, neither to observe the ancestral customs. ²²Now, how about it? For they will learn that you have arrived. ²³So then, do as we tell you. We have here four men who have taken a vow. ²⁴Take them along, be purified with them and take care of their expenses so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everyone will realize that there is no basis for the reports about you, but that you yourself order your life in observance of the Law.

²⁵"With regard to Gentile believers, we have issued the resolution that they shall abstain from food offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled meat and from unchastity."

²⁶The following day Paul took the men along and, after undergoing the purification ritual with them, he entered the temple to announce the completion of the purification period, which would be when an offering had been made for each of them. ²⁷But when the seven days were about completed, the Jews from Asia who had noticed him in the temple stirred up the whole crowd and grabbed hold of him, ²⁸shouting, "You men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our nation, the Law, and this place, and besides, he has brought Greeks into the

x) The reference is to the seven deacons of ch. 6:1-16.

y) To prophesy is to declare the Word of God. Prophecy is not confined only to prediction of the future.

z) Divine guidance is a personal matter. Cf. chs. 19:21; 20:22; also 1 Kings 13:1-32.

temple and so defiled this holy place."²⁹For they had on an earlier date seen Trophimus of Ephesus with him in the city and supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

³⁰So the whole city became agitated; there was a rushing together of the people and, seizing Paul, they dragged him outside the temple, and instantly the doors were shut. ³¹They were trying to kill him, when the report reached the commander of the cohort^a that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

³²At once he marched soldiers and their officers double-quick down to the mob which, on seeing the commander and the soldiers, stopped pommeling Paul.

³³The commander then advanced, took charge of him, ordered him bound with two chains, and inquired who he was and what he had done.

³⁴Among the mob some shouted this and others that; so, unable to get at the facts because of the tumult, he ordered him taken to the barracks. ³⁵But when Paul got as far as the steps he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob; ³⁶for the multitude of people followed him, shouting, "Away with him!"

³⁷At the point of being brought into the fortress, Paul said to the commander, "Am I permitted to have a word with you?" He said, "Do you know Greek? ³⁸Are not you the Egyptian^b who recently stirred up the rebellion and led out four thousand cutthroats^c into the wilderness?" ³⁹But Paul replied, "I am a Jew from Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city. I beg of you, please let me speak to the people." ⁴⁰With his permission Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the people and, when all of them were quiet, he addressed them in the Hebrew language^d in these words:

22 "BROTHERS AND FATHERS, LISTEN to the defense I now make to you." ²As soon as they heard him address them in Hebrew, they were still quieter, so he proceeded, ³"I am a Jew, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city. At the feet of Gamaliel I have been educated with exacting care in our ancestral Law, with a zeal for God such as you all have today.

⁴"As such I persecuted this Way^e to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, ⁵as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear me out. For from them I received letters to the brothers in Damascus,^f where I was going, to bring the believers there back as prisoners to Jerusalem for punishment.

⁶"But as I was nearing Damascus on my journey, suddenly at noonday an intense light from heaven shone around me, ⁷and as I fell to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?' ⁸But I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.' ⁹Now my companions saw the light, but they did not hear the voice of the One who spoke to me.

¹⁰"I said, 'Lord, what shall I do?' Then the Lord said to me, 'Rise and go on to Damascus. There you will be told about all the work that has been laid out for you to do.' ¹¹However, because of the brilliance of that intense light, I was blinded; so I entered Damascus guided by the hands of my companions.

¹²"Then a man named Ananias, a man devoted to the Law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³called on me, presented himself, and said to me, 'Brother Saul, re-

a) See note at ch. 10:1.

b) The historian Josephus tells of such an Egyptian who was one of many imposters at the time that Felix was governor of Jerusalem, cf. ch. 23:24. This man pretended to be a prophet. He predicted that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down and that he and his band could then enter and take the city. Felix sent an army to apprehend him, but he fled. It is not clear that the Egyptian of vs. 38 was the same man, for his rebellion may have been anterior to the governorship of Felix.

c) "Cutthroats" is translated from a Greek word, *sikarios* (nominative singular), which means literally a man armed with a dagger, therefore an assassin.

d) The language^e was the colloquial Aramaic that was used by the Jews of that period.

e) See note on "Way" at ch. 9:2.

f) See note on "Damascus" at ch. 9:2.

cover your sight,' and instantly I looked up at him. ¹⁴He said further, 'Our fathers' God has prepared you beforehand to know His will, to see the Just One and to hear a message from His own lips; ¹⁵for you will give testimony for Him to everyone concerning what you have seen and heard.' ¹⁶Now then, why hesitate? Rise; be baptized and, calling on His name, be cleansed of your sins.'

¹⁷"Then when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I had a vision ¹⁸and saw Him as He said to me, 'Hurry, get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not welcome your testimony about Me.' ¹⁹I replied, 'Lord, they know well enough that I went from synagogue to synagogue, arresting and beating those who believed in You, ²⁰and, when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by and approving, and I watched over the clothes of those who killed him.' ²¹And He said to me, 'Go, for I shall send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

²²They listened to him up to that statement; then they shouted, "Away from the earth with such a fellow; for he is not fit to live!" ²³While they were yelling, waving their clothes and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks and to be examined by means of flogging, so they might discover why they shouted at him that way. ²⁵But when they had tied him up to be flogged, Paul asked the captain in charge, "Is it legal to flog a Roman citizen without trial?" ²⁶On hearing that, the captain went to the commander and reported to him, with the remark, "What is to be done, for this man is a Roman?" ²⁷The commander then went to him and asked him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." ²⁸The commander replied, "I have pur-

chased this citizenship for a large sum." Paul responded, "But I was actually born a citizen." ²⁹Then at once those who were to examine him kept their hands off, and the commander was afraid, on discovering that Paul was a Roman, because he had bound him.

³⁰On the following day, with the purpose of finding out clearly why the Jews accused Paul, he unfastened him, ordered a session of the chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin, ¹ and had Paul brought down to face them.

23 SO, WITH A STRAIGHT LOOK AT the council, Paul spoke. "Brothers, I have behaved myself in the presence of God with an altogether clear conscience to this very day." ²But the high priest, Ananias, ordered the attendants to strike him on the mouth. ³Then Paul said to him, "God is about to strike you, you whitewashed wall! You are sitting here to judge me according to the Law, and are you ordering me to be struck contrary to the Law?"

⁴The bystanders said, "You insult the high priest of God?" ⁵Paul replied, "I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ¹ 'You must not defame a ruler of the people.'"

⁶Paul, however, aware that one party was Sadducee^k and the other Pharisee^l, shouted, right in the Sanhedrin, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am accused."

⁷At this saying a dispute arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and there was division in the meeting. ⁸For the Sadducees maintain there is neither resurrection nor angel nor spirit, while the Pharisees confess the one as well as the other. ⁹So the outcry grew deafening. Some of the scribes of the Pharisees' party got up and argued, "We

g) Compare the testimony of Peter and John, ch. 4:20.

h) God promised Abraham that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed, Gen. 12:3. This promise was reaffirmed to Isaac, Gen. 26:4, and to Jacob, Gen. 28:14. In Jerusalem their descendants were not prepared to have the Gentiles, vs. 21, become recipients of that promise.

i) See note at Luke 22:66.

j) Exod. 22:28.

k) See note about the Sadducees at Matt. 3:7.

l) See note about the Pharisees at Matt. 3:7.

find nothing bad in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him..."

¹⁰And the discord grew so bitter that the commander, afraid that Paul might be torn to pieces by them, ordered a detachment to march down and snatch him from their midst, and bring him into the barracks. ¹¹But that night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take heart! For as you have borne Me witness in Jerusalem, just so it is necessary for you to testify at Rome."

¹²At daybreak there were Jews who formed a plot and pledged themselves with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. ¹³More than forty formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴Some of them went to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have sworn ourselves to the liability of a curse, to taste of nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵Now then, you, in cooperation with the Sanhedrin, send word to the commander to have him conducted to you as if you wanted to determine more particularly about his case. Then we, before he comes anywhere near, are ready to do away with him."

¹⁶However, the son of Paul's sister got wind of the ambush; so he came along and entered the barracks and informed Paul about it. ¹⁷Then Paul, after calling in one of the captains, said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him." ¹⁸Accordingly he took him to the commander and said, "Paul, the prisoner, summoned me to request that I bring this young man to you, since he has something to tell you." ¹⁹Then the commander, taking him by the hand, stepped to one side with him privately and inquired, "What is it you have to tell me?" ²⁰He said,^m "The Jews have agreed to ask you that you bring Paul down tomorrow before the Sanhedrin, as if they were to investi-

gate more particularly about him; ²¹but do not give in to them, for more than forty of them are lying in wait for him and have pledged themselves with an oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him, and right now they are in readiness, only waiting for your assent."

²²The commander then dismissed the young man, cautioning him, "Divulge to no one that you informed me of this." ²³He then summoned two of his captains and said, "Have two hundred soldiers ready by nine tonight to march to Caesarea; also seventy cavalry and two hundred spearmen. ²⁴Provide animals, too, for mounts for Paul to ride, and conduct him safely to Governor Felix."ⁿ

²⁵He wrote a letter with the following contents: ²⁶"Claudius Lysias to His Excellency Governor Felix—Greeting. ²⁷When this man was set upon by the Jews and was within an inch of being murdered by them, I went with my men and rescued him; for I learned that he is a Roman. ²⁸In the hope of discovering the reason for their accusation, I took him down to their Sanhedrin ²⁹and found that the complaint relates to questions of their Law, but without accusation of crime that deserves death or prison. ³⁰But when I was informed that there would be a plot against this man, I sent him to you at once and have directed his accusers to have their say to you."

³¹So the soldiers took Paul, according to their orders, and conducted him by night to Antipatris.^o ³²The following day they returned to their barracks, leaving it to the cavalry to travel on with him. ³³When those men reached Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and presented Paul to him.

³⁴After reading it, the governor inquired from what province he was and, on learning that he was from Cilicia,

m) One does not need to be an ordained minister or a missionary to serve the Lord.

n) Felix was procurator of Judea at this time, holding the office from about A.D. 52-60, when he was succeeded by Festus, ch. 24:27. Felix, a former slave, was freed by the Emperor Claudius, who gave him his appointment in Palestine. He was a cruel and immoral man who, according to Josephus, seduced his wife Drusilla, a Jewess, from her lawful husband.

o) Antipatris was slightly more than half way to Caesarea from Jerusalem. It was formerly called Aphek, but when Herod the Great rebuilt the town he named it for his father, Antipater.

³⁵said, "We shall give you a hearing whenever your accusers get here." He then gave orders to have him retained in Herod's palace.^p

24 AFTER FIVE DAYS ANANIAS, THE high priest, with some of the elders and Tertullus, an orator, came down to present their evidence against Paul to the governor; ²and, after Paul had been called in, Tertullus began to bring charges as follows:

"Since we enjoy peace through you, most excellent Felix, and since reforms are being made for this nation through your provision, ³in every way and everywhere we welcome this with deep appreciation. ⁴However, not to take more of your precious time, I beg of you by your courtesy to listen briefly to us.

⁵"For we have found this man to be a veritable plague, stirring up, as he does, all the Jews on earth, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶He even tried to defile the temple. So we seized him [and would have sentenced him by our Law; ⁷but the commander, Lysias, came and took him from us with great force. ⁸He ordered his accusers to present themselves to you].^q If you will cross-question him yourself, you will be able to discover on what counts we accuse him."

⁹And all the Jews agreed and declared that all that he said was so. ¹⁰Then, at a motion from the governor, Paul made his answer:

¹¹"Because I know that you have been judge over these people for many years, I find it easier to defend myself against these charges. It will be possible for you to ascertain that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship, ¹²and neither did they find me arguing with anyone in the temple, nor raising a riot among the people, either in the synagogues or in the city. ¹³Neither can

they produce any evidence to substantiate these charges.

¹⁴"I confess this to you, however, that according to the Way which they call heresy,^r even so I worship the God of my fathers, believing in everything written in the Law and the Prophets; ¹⁵for I possess that hope in God which these men themselves hold as their own, that there is to be a resurrection of the just and unjust. ¹⁶And so I exert myself always to have a clear conscience in my relations with God and with men.

¹⁷"After many years I came to bring to my people alms and offerings, ¹⁸and while I was doing this they found me in the temple after I had completed the ceremony of purification — not at all with mobs or riots. ¹⁹But there were some Jews from Asia who should have been here to complain if they knew anything tangible against me. ²⁰Or else let these men here say what wrong they found in me as I stood before the Sanhedrin, ²¹unless it is that one remark I expressed in their presence, 'I am being tried by you today concerning the resurrection of the dead.'"

²²Since Felix understood the teachings of the Way quite well, he adjourned the case and said, "When the commander, Lysias, comes down I shall decide your case." ²³He then gave orders to the captain to have Paul guarded, but with relaxed rigor, and that none of his friends should be prevented from rendering aid to him.^s

c. A.D. 59

²⁴After a few days, when Felix was present with his wife Drusilla, a Jewess, he sent for Paul and listened to him concerning faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵But as he discussed righteousness, the mastery of passions, and the coming judgment, Felix got frightened and responded, "You may go for now. When I can spare the time I will send for

p) In quarters reserved for prisoners.

q) The words in vss. 6-8 that are enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

r) The heresy was on the other side, for it was the Sadducees who were heretical in repudiating God's power to raise the dead.

s) Among Paul's friends in Caesarea were Philip and his family, ch. 21:8, 9.

you." ²⁶Meanwhile he was hoping he might obtain money from Paul; so he summoned him frequently and talked things over with him. ²⁷But after two years had gone by, Felix was succeeded by Portius Festus¹ and, to curry favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul imprisoned.

c. A.D. 60

25 ¹THREE DAYS AFTER HE HAD ARRIVED in the province Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem. ²The chief priests and the most prominent Jews appeared before him against Paul ³and requested of him and begged it as a favor to them that Paul be sent to Jerusalem—they planning to form an ambush and to murder him on the road.

⁴Festus replied that Paul was under guard at Caesarea, and that he himself would shortly go there. ⁵"Then," he went on, "those who are prominent among you may come along with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, bring your charges against him."

⁶After spending at the most from eight to ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, took his seat the next day on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought in. ⁷At his arrival the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him and presented their charges—numerous and weighty, which they were not able to substantiate. ⁸Then Paul made his defense: "I have committed nothing wrong either against the Jewish Law, or against the temple, or against Caesar."

⁹Festus, however, desirous to curry favor with the Jews, answered Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem

and there be tried before me on these charges?" ¹⁰But Paul said, "I am standing at Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have in no respect wronged the Jews, as you understood well enough. ¹¹In case I am guilty and have committed anything deserving death, then I am ready to die; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, then no one can surrender me to them. I make my appeal to Caesar." ¹²So, after conference with the council, Festus answered, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you shall go."

¹³When a few days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice^u arrived at Caesarea to bid Festus welcome; ¹⁴and after they had spent a good many days there, Festus acquainted the king with Paul's situation: "There is a prisoner left here by Felix, ¹⁵concerning whom, when I came to Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews made their appearance requesting sentence against him. ¹⁶I answered them that with Romans it is not customary to hand a man over until the accused has faced his accusers and has been given an opportunity to defend himself against the charges. ¹⁷So, when they assembled here, I lost no time in occupying the judgment seat on the next day, and I ordered the man brought in. ¹⁸When his accusers stood up they brought in no criminal charges against him such as I expected; ¹⁹but they had some controversies against him that concerned their own religion and a certain Jesus who had died, whom Paul asserted to be alive. ²⁰As I felt uncertain about the proper investigation of such issues, I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these complaints; ²¹but

t) Portius Festus was the successor of Felix as procurator of Judea, taking office about A.D. 60. He did not have an easy time during his procuratorship, but his term of office was in favorable contrast with that of Felix. Festus reinvestigated Paul's case and was ready to try him in Jerusalem, but the apostle made an appeal to be tried before Caesar and this released Festus from any further obligation in the matter, ch. 25:20, 21.

u) King Herod (Herod Agrippa II) was the grandson of Herod the Great and son of Herod Agrippa I, whose oldest daughter was Bernice. Thus Bernice was the sister of King Herod. At one time she had been married to an uncle who was ruler of Chalcis; but he died and she came to live with her brother. There was some scandal about the brother-sister relationship. Later she became the mistress of Vespasian. Drusilla, the wife of Felix, 24:24, was also a daughter of Herod Agrippa I and therefore the sister of King Herod and Bernice.

since Paul appealed that his case be retained for a decision by Augustus,^v I ordered him to be held until I send him on to Caesar."

²²And Agrippa said to Festus, "I should like to hear the man myself." He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him."

²³Accordingly, on the following day Agrippa and Bernice arrived with great display and, accompanied by the chief military men and the prominent citizens of the city, entered the audience hall. At Festus' order Paul was led in ²⁴and Festus said: "King Agrippa and all you men here present with us, you are looking at the person on whose account the whole constituency of the Jews have made complaint to me both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any more. ²⁵But I discovered nothing he has done that deserves death, and since he appealed to the emperor, I have decided to send him. ²⁶I have nothing substantial to write His Majesty, and for this reason I have brought him before you, and particularly before you, King Agrippa, so that after due examination I may have something to report. ²⁷For it seems to me odd to send on a prisoner without signifying the charges against him."

26 AGRIPPA SAID TO PAUL, "You are permitted to speak on your own behalf."^w Then Paul extended his hand and made his defense:

²"Concerning all the charges against me by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, O King Agrippa, that I am to defend myself before you; ³for you are thoroughly familiar with all the Jewish customs and problems. So, please listen to me with patience.

⁴"All the Jews are acquainted with my behavior from my youth up, both among my own people^x and in Jerusalem. ⁵They are fully aware, if only they were willing to bear witness, how from the very first I have lived as a Pharisee in agreement with the strictest sect of our religion. ⁶And right now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise which God made to our fathers ⁷and which our twelve tribes expect to realize as they worship night and day. For this very hope, O King, I am accused by the Jews.

⁸"What? Is it considered incredible among you that God raises the dead? ⁹The fact is that I was possessed of the idea that I should in every way oppose the name of Jesus the Nazarene, ¹⁰and so I did in Jerusalem. Many a saint^y have I shut up in prison, furnished as I¹ was with authority from the chief priests; and when they were executed I cast my vote against them.² ¹¹In all the synagogues I often forced them by torture to deny their religion. Yes, in my boundless rage against them I persecuted them as far as foreign cities.

¹²"With the authority and approval of the chief priests I was traveling to Damascus^a for this purpose, ¹³when on the road at noon I saw, O King, a light from heaven, more brilliant than the sun, shining around me and my fellow travelers. ¹⁴And when we all fell to the ground I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'^b ¹⁵But I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you a minister and witness both

v) Augustus was the personal name of the first Roman emperor, Augustus Caesar, Luke 2:1. He died in A.D. 14. The emperor at the time of Paul's defense was Nero, the fifth Roman emperor. The name Augustus was sometimes used for others of the Caesars.

w) Agrippa had no authority over Festus.

x) Paul's own people in Tarsus.

y) See note at ch. 9:13.

z) There are two views of Paul's reference to casting a vote for the execution of Christians prior to his own conversion to Christianity: (1) if his words are taken at face value, then he belonged to the Sanhedrin at that time; or (2) the reference may be a figurative expression of his opposition to Christians. The first interpretation seems more logical than the second. Since membership in the Sanhedrin was limited to married men, if Paul did cast his vote in the council he was a married man at the time.

a) See note at ch. 9:2.

b) A goad is a pointed rod used to urge a beast to move.

of the things that you have seen and of those in which I will still show Myself to you. ¹⁷I will deliver you from your people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you ¹⁸for the opening of their eyes and their turning from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, to obtain forgiveness of sins and their allotted portion among those made holy through faith in Me.

¹⁹"Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰but first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and then all over Judea and among the Gentiles I preached that they must repent and turn to God and do works consistent with repentance.

²¹"For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. ²²So, as I have enjoyed the help of God until this day, I take my stand witnessing to both small and great, without saying anything, however, except what the prophets and Moses said would take place—²³that the Christ was to suffer, and that He, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to our people and to the Gentiles."

²⁴As he was thus making his defense, Festus called out loudly, "You are raving, Paul; your excessive study is driving you mad." ²⁵But Paul replied, "Most illustrious Festus, I am not mad but am giving utterance to words of truth and sane thinking. ²⁶The king knows about these matters, to whom I speak freely. I do not believe any of these things are unknown to him, for they have not occurred in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you believe."

²⁸Agrippa turned to Paul, "You with a few words are trying to persuade me to be a Christian?" ²⁹Then Paul said, "I would pray to God that whether with a few words or with many not you alone but all who are now listen-

ing to me today might be in my condition—not including these shackles."

³⁰The king then stood up, and the governor and Bernice and those who had been sitting with them ³¹and, stepping to one side, they talked it over together and concluded, "This man has done nothing that deserves death or prison." ³²So Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free, if he had not appealed to Caesar."

27 WHEN IT WAS DECIDED THAT we should sail for Italy, they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a captain of the Augustan Cohort,^c whose name was Julius. ²Getting aboard an Adramyttium ship that would make the ports along the coast of Asia, we sailed away, and Aristarchus,^d a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us. ³The next day we docked at Sidon,^e where Julius, treating Paul kindly, allowed him to visit his friends and to be cared for.

⁴Putting to sea^f from there we sailed along the south coast of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary; ⁵then crossing the Cilician and Pamphylian waters, we landed at Myra in Lycia. ⁶The captain found there an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy, and he transferred us to her. ⁷After many days of slow sailing we arrived with difficulty off Cnidus; then, checked by the wind, we sailed south of Crete off Salmone, ⁸and with difficulty coasted along it and reached a place called Fair Havens, near which the city of Lasea is located.

⁹As much time had been lost and navigation had grown dangerous—for the autumn fast was already over^g—Paul warned them, ¹⁰"Men, I discern that this voyage will involve damage and considerable loss not merely to the cargo and the ship but to our lives as well." ¹¹However, the centurion put confidence in the pilot and in the shipowner, rather than in Paul's words, ¹²and because the harbor was poorly

c) See note at ch. 10:1.

d) Aristarchus appears to have been one of Paul's closest associates, chs. 19:29; 20:4, 6; Col. 4:10.

e) See note at Matt. 11:21.

f) This chapter is an illuminating source of information about seamanship in the first century.

g) That is, the Day of Atonement, celebrated early in October.

situated for wintering, the majority favored the plan of setting out again, so that they might possibly reach Phoenix, a harbor in Crete facing southwest and northwest, and winter there.

¹³With a light south wind coming up, they supposed that they were gaining their purpose, weighed anchor and ran close along the shore of Crete.

¹⁴But shortly after, a hurricane, known as a northeaster, came beating from the island, ¹⁵in which the ship was caught; so, unable to head against the wind, we gave way and were driven.

¹⁶Running under the lee of a small island called Claudia, we made the small boat secure only with the greatest difficulty ¹⁷and, having hoisted it, they undergirded the ship with ropes. Out of fear of being stranded on the Syrtis banks, they lowered the gear and so were driven. ¹⁸The next day, dangerously driven about as we were by the storm, they threw the cargo overboard ¹⁹and on the third day with their own hands they cast away the ship's tackle.

²⁰For many days neither sun nor stars appeared; the storm kept raging strongly, so that the last vestige of hope of our being saved was snatched away. ²¹As they had gone without food for a long time, Paul stood among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and so spared yourselves this damage and loss, and not have put to sea from Crete. ²²Even now I advise you to cheer up; for not a single person among you will perish—only the ship. ²³For this night there stood by me an angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve. ²⁴He said, 'Have no fear, Paul. You have to stand before Caesar, and be assured that God has granted you all that are sailing with you.' ²⁵Therefore, be of good spirits, men; for I have faith in God that it will happen in accord with what was told me. ²⁶But we have to be stranded on an island."

²⁷On the fourteenth night of our drifting up and down the Adriatic,^h

the sailors surmised at about midnight that they were bearing toward some shore; ²⁸so, taking soundings, they found twenty fathoms, and at a little distance when they sounded again, they found fifteen fathoms.ⁱ ²⁹Then, for fear that we might run aground on submerged rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and longed for break of day.

³⁰The sailors, however, tried to abandon the ship and, under pretense of going to cast anchor from the prow, they lowered the lifeboat into the sea; ³¹so Paul told the officer and the soldiers, "If these do not stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." ³²Then the soldiers cut the boat's ropes and let her fall.

³³With daybreak approaching, Paul urged them all to take some food. He said, "For fourteen days now you have been waiting expectantly without taking anything, ³⁴so I implore you to eat something; it is necessary for your safety. For not a hair of your head will perish."

³⁵Having said this, he took bread, gave thanks to God in the presence of them all and, breaking it, began to eat. ³⁶Then they all were encouraged and partook of nourishment, — ³⁷all told there were two hundred seventy-six of us on board.

³⁸When they had eaten to their satisfaction, they lightened the ship by dumping the wheat into the sea. ³⁹When day arrived, they did not recognize the coast, but they noticed an inlet with a beach into which they decided, if at all possible, to run the ship. ⁴⁰After casting off the anchors and dropping them in the sea and meanwhile loosening the ropes that held the rudders, they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. ⁴¹But as they hit a shoal where two seas met they grounded the ship; and the prow settled and stayed immovable, while the stern broke up under the force of the elements.

⁴²It was then the soldiers' idea to

h) This was in the Ionian Sea which is south of what is now called the Adriatic Sea.

i) A fathom is approximately six feet.

kill the prisoners, so that they might not swim away and escape; ⁴³but the officer, wishing to save Paul, prevented their doing it. He ordered those who could swim to leap overboard first and make for shore, ⁴⁴and the rest to follow, some on boards and some on fragments of the ship. And so they all reached shore safely.

28 WHEN WE HAD ESCAPED, WE learned that the island was called Malta. ²The natives showed us remarkable friendliness, for they lit a fire and welcomed all of us to it because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold. ³When Paul had gathered a bundle of twigs and laid them on the fire, a viper crawled out on account of the heat and fastened to his hand. ⁴When the natives observed the creature hanging from his hand, they remarked to each other, "Unquestionably this man is a murderer whom, though saved from the sea, Justice^j will not allow to live." ⁵But he simply shook off the creature into the fire and felt no hurt. ⁶They, of course, expected him at any moment either to swell up or fall suddenly dead; so, after waiting for a long time and seeing nothing out of the way happen to him, they changed their minds and said, "He is a god."

c. A.D. 61

⁷Now in that part of the island there were pieces of land that belonged to the chief of the island, a man named Publius, who took us in and for three days entertained us courteously. ⁸It so happened that Publius' father was laid up with fever and dysentery; so Paul went to visit him and, laying hands on him with prayer, he healed him. ⁹When this had occurred, the rest of the islanders who had diseases came

and were healed. ¹⁰They also showed us every kind of respect, and when we left they supplied all our needs.

¹¹At the end of three months we put to sea in an Alexandrian ship, that had wintered in the island and had for her figurehead Castor and Pollux.^k ¹²We docked at Syracuse and tarried three days. ¹³Then we tacked around and arrived at Rhegium. After one day a south wind came up and the following day we landed at Puteoli. ¹⁴There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days.

¹⁵Then we went on to Rome, and when the brothers there heard about us they came as far as the Market of Appius^l and Three Taverns^m to meet us. As soon as Paul saw them, he gave thanks to God and took courage.

¹⁶When we arrived in Rome [the officer delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but]ⁿ Paul was allowed to live by himself with a soldier to guard him.

¹⁷After three days he invited all the leading Jews to whom, when they gathered, he said, "Brothers, although I have committed nothing whatever against our people or against our fathers' customs, yet I was delivered to the Romans, a prisoner from Jerusalem. ¹⁸Upon examination they wanted to set me free, because I am innocent of any act that deserves death; ¹⁹but when the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar—although I had no charge to bring against my nation. ²⁰For this reason I begged to see you and to talk to you. It is because of Israel's hope that I wear this encircling chain."

²¹They replied to him, "Neither have we received letters from Judea about you, nor have any of the brothers arrived with a bad report or any gossip about you. ²²But we desire to

j) "Justice" is here personified as a goddess. The Maltese, a mixture of Greeks, Romans, Carthaginians and Phoenicians, were a people of many cultures.

k) The text reads "the Dioscuri," from the Greek noun *Dioskouroi* meaning *Twin Sons*, the mythical children of Zeus and Leda. As a figurehead for this Alexandrian ship they were her patron deities.

l) The market place at Appius, a town situated about 43 miles from Rome, was known as the Appii Forum.

m) The Three Taverns was an inn that was evidently a travelers' way station. It was approximately 25 miles from Rome.

n) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

hear from you what you have in mind; for so far as this heresy is concerned, we know that it is denounced everywhere."

²³Arranging a date with him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers, and he explained the matter to them from morning until evening, bearing witness about the kingdom of God, attempting to persuade them about Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. ²⁴Some, indeed, were convinced by the things that he said, but others did not believe.

²⁵So, since there was no agreement among them, they left when Paul spoke this one utterance. "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet," ²⁶"Go to this people and say, 'You will hear with your ears but will not catch the

meaning. You will look with your eyes but will not see. ²⁷For this people's heart is calloused and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes, so they may not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with the hearts and turn about and I should heal them.'" ²⁸Let it be clearly understood, then, that this salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles and they will listen."

²⁹[After he had said this, the Jews went away and had considerable discussion among themselves.]^p

³⁰Paul remained for two whole years in his rented lodging and welcomed everyone who came to see him. ³¹He preached the kingdom of God and taught regarding the Lord Jesus Christ altogether openly and without hindrance.

o) Isa. 6:9, 10. Rejection reflected on them, not on the message.

p) Verse 29, enclosed in brackets, is not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

ROMANS

1 PAUL, A SLAVE^a OF CHRIST JESUS, called to be an apostle, set apart for the good news from God, ²which He promised in advance through His prophets in the sacred Scriptures ³regarding His Son who, as to His human nature was descended from David and according to the Spirit of holiness ⁴was openly designated as the Son of God with power when He was raised from the dead, even Jesus Christ, our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship, to promote among all the Gentiles in behalf of His name obedience to the message of faith, ⁶among whom you also are included as those who have been invited by Jesus Christ; ⁷to all God's loved ones in Rome, called to be saints:^b Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸To begin with, I certainly thank my God for all of you through Jesus Christ, because your faith is being mentioned all over the world. ⁹For God, whom I serve with my spiritual self in the good news concerning His Son, bears me witness how constantly I mention you whenever I am at my prayers, ¹⁰pleading that somehow by

the will of God, I may some day be sped on my way to visit you. ¹¹For I am yearning to see you, so that I may bestow on you some spiritual gift for your confirmation—¹²I mean that we may be mutually strengthened by your faith and mine.

¹³But I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that often I have planned to visit you, so that I might reap some harvest among you, just as I have among the other Gentiles, but thus far I have been prevented. ¹⁴To both Greeks^c and barbarians,^d to both learned and unlearned I am a debtor; ¹⁵so I am eager to preach the gospel to you in Rome as well. ¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the good news; for it is God's power for salvation^e to every believer, to the Jew first and to the Greek also. ¹⁷For God's righteousness is disclosed in it through faith and leading to faith, as it is written,^f "The one who is righteous through faith will live."

¹⁸On the other hand, God's indignation is revealed from heaven against all impiety and wickedness of men who through their wicked ways suppress the truth; ¹⁹because whatever can be known regarding God is evident to

a) Greek *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

b) See note at Acts 9:13.

c) "Greeks" here is a broad term for all who had come under the influence of Hellenistic culture, including the Romans who had absorbed it; "barbarians" refers to all non-Greeks, i.e., foreigners. Together the two terms cover, according to the Greek point of view, the entire human race. To the Greeks all other people were barbarians; to the Jews all others were considered Gentiles. Elsewhere, 1 Cor. 1:23, 24, Paul classifies humanity as Greeks (Gentiles), Jews, and "the called," i.e., Christians ("both Jews and Greeks").

d) Compare Acts 28:2.

e) The word "salvation," when used in the Bible in a spiritual sense, embraces many facets of God's redemptive work, e.g. forgiveness, justification, propitiation, and redemption. Salvation is always the work of God in man; it is given to man by divine grace and through faith in the Son of God. Works that are pleasing to God follow faith in Him, Eph. 2:8-10.

f) Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38.

them, for God has shown it to them. ²⁰From the creation of the world His invisible qualities, such as His eternal power and divine nature, have been made visible and have been understood through His handiwork. So they are without excuse. ²¹Because, although they had knowledge of God, they failed to render Him the praise and thanks due to God. Instead, they indulged in their speculations until their stupid minds were all in the dark. ²²Claiming to be wise, they became foolish. ²³They even altered the glory of the immortal God into images in the form of mortal man and of birds, quadrupeds and reptiles.

²⁴Therefore God gave them up^g in the desires of their hearts to such impurity as dishonored their own bodies, ²⁵since they altered God's truth into falsehood, and revered and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

²⁶For this reason God abandoned them to shameful passions. Their women perverted natural functions for unnatural, ²⁷and similarly the men forsook their natural relationships with women and burned up with their lust for one another, men committing shamelessness with men and so acquiring in their persons the penalty that was coming to them on account of their wrong behavior. ²⁸Just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any more, so God gave them over to depraved thoughts, to practice what is not decent, ²⁹because they have been filled with every sort of wickedness, immorality, depravity and greed; crammed with envy, murder, quarreling, deceit and malignity; ³⁰as gossips, slanderers, God-haters; insolent, proud, and boastful; inventors of evil; disobedient to parents; ³¹without conscience, fidelity, natural affection or pity. ³²While knowing God's ordinance, that those practicing such things deserve death, they not only practice them but even

give their approval to those who do them.

2 YOU CAN OFFER NO EXCUSE, O man,^h whoever indulges in judging; for by passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, since you, who are passing judgment practice the same things. ²We know that God's judgment rightly falls on those who practice such wrongs. ³But do you imagine, O man, who condemn those practicing such evils and do them yourself, that you will escape God's judgment? ⁴Or do you underestimate His wealth of kindness and tolerance and enduring patience, unmindful that God's kindness is meant to lead you toward repentance?

⁵But in line with your obstinacy and impenitence of heart you are treasuring up for yourself anger for the day of anger and the revealing of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who will reward each person according to his deeds.ⁱ ⁷To those who with insistent good behavior seek glory, honor, and immortality, He awards eternal life; ⁸but to those who are factious and disobedient to the truth but rather are obedient to wickedness, He awards indignation and fury. ⁹Affliction and anxiety will be given to every human soul who does evil, to the Jew first and to the Greek as well. ¹⁰But distinction and honor and peace will be given to all who do what is good, to the Jew first and to the Greek as well. ¹¹For God shows no favoritism.

¹²Those who sin without knowing the Law^j will be lost without reference to the Law; while those who sin under the Law will be judged by the Law. ¹³For not the hearers of the Law are righteous before God, but those who practice the Law will be pronounced righteous. ¹⁴For when Gentiles who lack the Law do naturally practice it, they are for themselves a law, though they have none. ¹⁵They

g) All divine restraint of evil seems to have been removed. Cf. vss. 26, 28.

h) The reference is to Gentiles and Jews, all who might read the epistle.

i) In this chapter Paul expresses the basic principles of God's impartial judgment, vs. 11. Here, vss. 6-8, he is not dealing with justification by faith, which he expounds specifically in chs. 3:21-5:21, but with God's general system of moral government.

j) The Law revealed through Moses, particularly the Decalogue, Exod. 20:1-17.

show that what the Law requires is written in their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their thoughts accuse or defend one another. ¹⁶They will be judged on that day when God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus in agreement with the good news I preach.

¹⁷But if you are termed a Jew and you rely on the Law and pride yourself in God ¹⁸and know His will, and approve the things that really matter, because you have been instructed from the Law, ¹⁹and you are convinced that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a trainer of the simple, ²⁰a teacher of the ignorant, since you possess in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and truth; ²¹then, you who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²²You who forbid adultery, do you commit adultery? You who detest idols, do you commit sacrilege? ²³You who boast in the Law, do you dishonor God by its violation? ²⁴For "God's name," as has been written, ¹ "is on your account maligned among the Gentiles."

²⁵Circumcision, then, benefits only if you obey^m the Law; but if you are a violator of the Law, then your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ²⁶So, if the uncircumcised man observes the requirements of the Law, ²⁷will not his uncircumcision be accounted to him as circumcision? In fact, the physically uncircumcised, who carries out the Law, will judge you who, although you have the literally correct form of the Law and are circumcised, break the Law.

²⁸For neither is one a Jew from his looks, nor is circumcision what shows in the body; ²⁹but a Jew is a Jew deep in his heart, and so circumcision is a matter of the heart, a spiritual observance rather than a mere literal observance of the Law. Such a person's praiseⁿ comes not from men but from God.

3 THEN WHAT ADVANTAGE HAS THE Jew, or what benefit has circumcision? ²Considerable in every respect. Primarily, because they were entrusted with the utterances of God. ³What if some failed to believe? Their unbelief surely does not nullify God's faithfulness, does it? ⁴Not at all. Rather shall it be: God must be true though every man is a liar, as it is written,^o "That You might be vindicated in Your sayings and might triumph when You are tried." ⁵But if our wrongdoing brings out so strikingly the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Surely not that God is wrong — I speak humanly — when He inflicts punishment? ⁶No indeed! Then how could God judge the world? ⁷But if by my falsehood the truth of God abounds the more for His glory, then why am I condemned as a sinner? ⁸Why not say then, just as by some we are being slandered and charged with saying, "Let us do evil, so that good may result"? Deservedly are such talkers condemned.

⁹Then what? Do we Jews have an advantage over the Gentiles? Not at all. For we have already charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin's power, ¹⁰as it is written,^p "There is none righteous; not even one. ¹¹No one has understanding; no one is a searcher after God. ¹²All have strayed; they have together become worthless. There is none doing right, not even one. ¹³Their throats are open graves; with their tongues they deceive; venom of asps is behind their lips; ¹⁴their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. ¹⁵Their feet are swift for shedding blood; ¹⁶ruin and misery are in their ways ¹⁷and they have not known the path of peace. ¹⁸There is no reverence for God before their eyes."

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under its control, so that every mouth may be shut and the whole world may become liable to divine retribution;

k) Not all, but some Jews, were guilty of such sins — witness the need of temple cleansing.

l) Isa. 52:5; Ezek. 36:20.

m) Obedience to the Law is to do the will of God.

n) "Jew," named for Judah, means *praise*, and Paul seems to play on the word.

o) Ps. 51:4.

p) Ps. 5:9; 10:7; 14:1-3; 36:1; 140:3; Prov. 1:16; Isa. 59:7.

²⁰because not a single human being will be made righteous in God's sight through observance of the Law.⁴ For through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

²¹But now apart from the Law God's righteousness is revealed, as is witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets, ²²namely, God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ for all believers. For there is no distinction, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of God's moral excellence. ²⁴We are justified freely by His grace through the ransom that Christ Jesus provided; ²⁵whom God put forward as a reconciling sacrifice through faith in His blood. This was for the vindication of His righteousness in forgiving the sins that previously were committed under God's forbearance, ²⁶and to vindicate His righteousness at the present time, that He is righteous and that He accepts as righteous him that has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Where, then, does boasting come in? It is ruled out. Through what sort of law? Of works? No, indeed, but through the law of faith. ²⁸For we come to the conclusion that a man is justified by faith without the works of the Law. ²⁹Or is He God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? He is the Gentiles' God as well. ³⁰Since there is but one God, He will justify the circumcised for their belief and the uncircumcised through their faith.

³¹Do we, then, abrogate the Law through faith? Not at all; instead, we uphold the Law.⁵

4 WHAT SHALL WE SAY, THEN, THAT Abraham, our human ancestor, has discovered? ²For if Abraham was justified on account of works, then he has something to brag about. But not before God; ³for what does Scripture say?⁶ "Abraham believed God, and it

was accounted to him for righteousness." ⁴Now, to a workman wages are not paid as a favor but as an obligation; ⁵while to the person who does not work by Law, but whose faith rests on Him who declares the ungodly righteous, to him his faith is accounted for righteousness.¹ ⁶Precisely as David mentions⁷ the blessedness of the man to whom God attributes righteousness apart from his works: ⁷"Blessed are they whose iniquities have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered. ⁸Blessed is the man of whose sin the Lord will take no account."

⁹Now, then, does this ascription of blessedness apply only to the circumcised, or to the uncircumcised as well? For this is our statement: Faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. ¹⁰Then how was it accounted? When he was circumcised, or when he was still uncircumcised? Not after, but before his circumcision; ¹¹and he received the mark of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was still uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all uncircumcised believers, that to them righteousness might be accounted, ¹²and also the father of those circumcised who are not merely circumcised but walk in the footsteps of the faith our father Abraham had when he was still uncircumcised.⁸

¹³The promise to Abraham or to his offspring to inherit the earth did not come through the Law but through righteousness because of faith; ¹⁴for if followers of the Law are the inheritors, then faith is futile and the promise is abrogated. ¹⁵Because the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no Law there is no transgression.

¹⁶For this reason it is a matter of faith, so that the promise may be made sure as a matter of grace to all his descendants; not only to the followers of the Law but also to those

q) The Law reveals sin but neither blots it out nor cleanses the sinner.

r) The righteous demands of the Law are revealed most clearly in Christ's death for sin.

s) Gen. 15:6.

t) James uses Abraham's obedience in offering Isaac as a sacrifice in illustration of how faith and works are harmonized in the believer's life, James 2:21-24; cf. Gen. 22:1-14.

u) Ps. 32:2.

v) Abraham demonstrated his faith by his works after the institution of circumcision, Gen. 17:10, but he believed God before that, Gen. 12:4. Thus Abraham became the father of all nations, and all believers are his spiritual descendants.

who share Abraham's faith, who is thus father to us all, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have appointed you a father of many nations" — all this in the presence of God, in whom he believed, who makes the dead live and calls into existence what has no being. ¹⁸For Abraham kept hoping in faith, when hope was gone, that he would be the father of many nations, just as he had been told, ^x"So shall your offspring be." ¹⁹And there was no weakening of his faith, even when he recognized the impotence of his own body at the age of one hundred, as well as Sarah's inability to bear.

²⁰He did not in unbelief hesitate about God's promise but, empowered by faith, he rendered praise to God ²¹in the complete conviction that He was able to make good His promise. ²²For this reason it was accounted to him as righteousness.

²³This, however, was not written for him alone, "It was accounted to him," ²⁴but for us as well, to whom it will be accounted as believers in Him who raised from the dead our Lord Jesus, ²⁵who was put to death on account of our misdeeds and was raised on account of our justification.^y

5 SINCE, THEN, WE HAVE BEEN PRO-nounced righteous through faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²by whom we also obtain through faith entrance to this grace in which we stand firm, and rejoice in the hope of God's glory.

³Not this alone, but we glory in afflictions as well; for we know that affliction produces patience, ⁴and patience develops a tried character, and character begets hope, ⁵such hope as does not disappoint; for God's love is poured out into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.^z ⁶For when we were still helpless, Christ at the proper time died for the ungodly.

⁷Ordinarily one would hardly die

for a righteous person; but still for a good person someone might perhaps bring himself to die. ⁸But God proves His own love for us by Christ's dying for us when we were still sinners.

⁹Now then, as we have been declared righteous by His blood, how much surer is it that we shall be saved by Him from God's wrath. ¹⁰For if as enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, surely much more shall we who have been reconciled be saved by His life. ¹¹And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

¹²It is therefore as follows: through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and so death passed on to all persons in that all sinned.

¹³To be sure, sin was in the world earlier than the Law; but, in absence of law, sin is not accounted. ¹⁴Death, however, held rule from Adam to Moses over those who sinned but did not transgress a command in the way Adam, who foreshadowed the Coming One, had done.

¹⁵With the free gift, however, it is by no means as it is with the transgression; for if through the transgression of one person many die, far more richly did the grace of God and His gift, that comes through the favor of one man Jesus Christ, overflow to the many. ¹⁶Nor is the gift similar in effect to that one person's sin; for the judgment of one man brings condemnation, but divine grace led to justification out of many transgressions. ¹⁷For if, through that one person's transgression, death is king through that person, far more surely will those who receive the overflowing of grace and the gift of righteousness reign as kings in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸So then, as through one transgression^a condemnation came to all men, so through one righteous act^b there is

w) Gen. 17:5.

x) Gen. 15:5.

y) Christ's resurrection was God's declaration that, with the work of atonement accomplished, believers are counted as righteous.

z) The gift of God's grace received in faith issues in Christlike behavior as the Spirit works in and through the believer.

a) That is, Adam's transgression.

b) Christ's sacrifice opens the door of grace to all who will enter it.

for all men justification and life. ¹⁹For as through the disobedience of one man many were placed in the position of sinners, so through the obedience of the One many will be placed in the position of righteous ones.

²⁰But Law slipped in to make the transgression more serious; yet where sin increased, grace was in greater abundance ²¹so that, as sin^c reigned in death, so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 WHAT THEN ARE WE TO SAY? Shall we remain in sin to let grace become more plentiful? ²Not at all! How shall we, who have died to sin, still live in it? ³Or do you not realize that as many of us as were baptized in union with Christ Jesus were baptized in union with His death? ⁴So we are buried with Him in death^d through baptism in order that, just as Christ rose from the dead through the Father's glorious power, so we too shall conduct ourselves in a new way of living. ⁵For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, then the same must be true of our resurrection with Him, ⁶being aware of this, that our old self^e was crucified with Him, so that the power of the sin-controlled body might be done away with and we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷For a corpse is considered guiltless of sin.^f

⁸If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹well assured that Christ, once risen from the dead, will not die any more; death holds lordship over Him no longer. ¹⁰The death He died was once for all to sin,^g but the life He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹Similarly let us consider ourselves as actually dead to sin, but in Christ Jesus alive to God.

¹²Sin, then, must not be king in your mortal body, to have you yield to

its passions, ¹³neither must you offer the members of your body to serve sin as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as living persons who rose from the dead, and present the members of your body to God as instruments of righteousness.^h

¹⁴Sin shall not be your master, for you are not governed by Law but by grace.

¹⁵Then what? Shall we sin because we are not governed by Law but by grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶Do you not know that you are committed to obey as slavesⁱ the one to whom you offer yourselves as obedient slaves, whether that be to sin that leads to death, or to obedience that leads to righteousness? ¹⁷But thanks be to God that, though you were slaves of sin, you have become with all your hearts obedient to the standard of teaching to which you were introduced, ¹⁸so that with deliverance from sin you were made slaves of righteousness.

¹⁹I speak in these human terms because of your human weakness. Just as you offered the members of your body in the service of impurity in one act of lawlessness after another, so now offer your members in the service of righteousness for holy living. ²⁰For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness.^j ²¹And what good did you derive from things of which you are now ashamed? Death is their consequence. ²²But now, freed from sin and made slaves of God, the good you derive leads to holiness and the consequence is life eternal. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7 DO YOU NOT KNOW, BROTHERS — for I address such as understand the Law — that the Law has authority over a person only during his lifetime?

²The married woman is by law bound

c) Here and in chs. 6 and 7 "sin," which denotes man's natural state, is to be distinguished from "sins," which result from his possessing a sinful nature. Christ died for both sin and sins.
d) Christ died as our representative. In baptism believers become identified with His death and resurrection.

e) That is, the sinful nature in us, the inborn tendency to sin.

f) A dead body does not sin.

g) We died with Christ; therefore we also are dead to sin. Let us act that way, vs. 11.

h) Compare ch. 12:1, 2.

i) See note at Matt. 13:27.

j) That is, there was no relationship with righteousness.

to her husband while he lives; but when her husband dies, she is freed from the marriage law. ³While her husband lives; she would be an adulteress in case she married another man; but if the husband dies, she is legally free and is no adulteress at all if she marries another man.

⁴In a similar way you, my brothers, were put to death to the Law by means of the body of Christ, so that you may belong to Another, to Him who was raised from the dead in order that we bear fruit^k for God. ⁵For when we lived our earthly way, our sinful passions, aroused by the Law, were active in our bodily organs to bear fruit for death. ⁶Now, however, we are released from the Law; we have been dead to what once held us in its grip, so that now we serve in the new relationship of the Spirit and not in the old relationship of literalness.

⁷What, then, do we conclude? That the Law is sin? Far be it from our thoughts! Nevertheless, were it not for the Law, we should not have known sin. For instance, I should not have known about covetousness had not the Law said, ¹"Thou shalt not covet." ⁸But sin, by grasping the opportunity through the commandment, effected in me all sorts of covetousness. For apart from the Law sin is dead.^m

⁹I was once living in the absence of the Law, but with the coming of the commandment, sin took on new life — which to me meant death. ¹⁰The commandment that was aimed to give life was found to mean death to me ¹¹because sin, by grasping the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and killed me with it.ⁿ ¹²So then, the Law is holy, and so is the commandment holy, just, and good.

¹³Did, then, what was good become

death to me? Not at all! Instead, it was sin that must be shown up as sin, by working fatally for me through something good, so that through the commandment sin might become immeasurably sinful.

¹⁴For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am fleshly, sold under sin's control; ¹⁵for I^o do not understand what I am doing. I do not do what I want to do but what I hate to do. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the Law is good. ¹⁷However, I am no longer the one who does the deed, but sin which is at home in me does it. ¹⁸For I know that within me, that is within my flesh,^p what is good is not at home; the personal willingness is there but not the accomplishing of what is right. ¹⁹For I fail to do the good I want to do and I practice the bad that I do not want to practice.

²⁰But if I do what I have no desire to do, then I am no longer doing it myself, but rather sin that makes itself at home in me. ²¹Consequently, I discover a law that when I want to do right, wrong suggestions crowd in. ²²For in my inmost heart I agree with God's Law; ²³but in my whole natural make-up I observe another law, battling against the principles which my reason dictates, and making me a prisoner to the law of sin that controls my members.

²⁴Miserable man that I am, who will rescue me from this body doomed to death? ²⁵Thanks be to God because of Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I serve God's Law, but with my human nature I serve the principle of sin.

8 THERE IS THEREFORE NOW NO condemnation to those who are in

k) The fruit of the Spirit, Christian behavior, cf. Gal. 5:22, 23.

l) Exod. 20:17

m) Where there is no Law, there is no awareness of sin.

n) "Do and live," says the Law. But since man himself is incapable of living righteously, he cannot live the life that the Law demands. Only through faith in the crucified and risen Christ is a new life possible.

o) The Christian has two natures, the old one derived from Adam and the new one received at the new birth. In this profound passage, vss. 15-25, Paul uses "I" as referring sometimes to the old man and sometimes to the new man in Christ, as he portrays the struggle within the believer and finally recognizes that only in Christ can the believer be rescued from the domination of the old nature, vss. 24, 25; ch. 8.

p) "Flesh," as the word is used here, denotes man in his unregenerate state, not only subject to sin but also prone to sin. Only he who lives under the control of the Holy Spirit can be victorious over the control of the flesh, Gal. 5:16-18.

Christ Jesus; ²for the life-giving principles of the Spirit have freed you in Christ Jesus from the control of the principles of sin and death. ³For what the Law was unable to do, weakened as it was through the flesh, that God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and on account of sin; He thus condemned sin in human nature ⁴so that the Law's requirements might be completely met by us, who behave not in a fleshly but in a spiritual way.

⁵For those who are under control of the flesh are fleshly minded, but those who are under control of the Spirit are spiritually minded, ⁶and to be fleshly minded means death, while spiritual-mindedness means life and peace, ⁷because fleshly-mindedness is hostile to God; it is not submissive to God's Law, in fact it cannot be. ⁸So those who are controlled by the flesh are unable to please God.

⁹You, however, are not controlled by the flesh but by the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God is at home in you. If, on the other hand, anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead on account of sin, but the spirit is alive on account of righteousness. ¹¹If, then, the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will through the Spirit that dwells in you also make your mortal bodies live.^q

¹²It follows then, brothers, that we are obligated, but not to our human nature to live under its control; ¹³for if you live in a fleshly way, you will die. But if through the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, then you will live. ¹⁴For as many as are guided by God's Spirit are sons of God. ¹⁵Indeed, you receive no spirit that would re-enslave you to fear; instead, you receive the Spirit of sonship by which we cry, "Abba!" Father!" ¹⁶This Spirit

bears witness with our spirits that we are God's children; ¹⁷but if children, then heirs too; in fact, God's heirs together with Christ, presuming that we suffer together, so that we may also enjoy glory together.

¹⁸For I reason that this temporal suffering is not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the creation^r eagerly awaits the revealing of the sons of God; ²⁰for the creation was subjected to frustration, not from choice but through Him who effected that bondage, and that with hope; ²¹because creation itself will be liberated from its enslavement to decay into the glorious freedom of God's children.

²²For we know that to this day the entire creation has been groaning and suffering agony together as if in childbirth, ²³and not merely so, but we ourselves, who have the Spirit as first fruits, we also groan within ourselves as we await our adoption as sons, that is, our bodily redemption. ²⁴In this hope are we saved; but hope within sight is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, then we keep on patiently awaiting it.

²⁶In a similar way the Spirit joins in to help us in our weakness; for we do not know what and how we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself intercedes on our behalf with sighs too deep for words.^t ²⁷And the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit has in mind, for He pleads with God on behalf of the saints. ²⁸But we know that for those who love Him, for those called in agreement with His purpose, God makes all things work together for good.

²⁹Because those whom He knew beforehand He appointed beforehand to share the likeness of His Son, so that He might be the First-born among many brothers. ³⁰But whom He predestined, those He also called; and

q) Not only does the word "live" speak of the resurrection body in heaven but it also relates to the new kind of life that the believer possesses now in his mortal body.

r) "Abba" is the Aramaic word for "father." It was frequently used in prayer and sometimes within a family to address the head of the household.

s) All nature suffered because of man's original sin. Thus creation as well as the creature looks forward to deliverance from the bondage of sin.

t) All true prayer originates from God the Holy Spirit.

whom He called, those He also made righteous; and whom He made righteous, those He also glorified.

³¹Then what conclusion do we draw? If God is for us, then who is against us? ³²He who did not even spare His own Son but gave Him up on behalf of us all, will He not also favor us with everything along with Him? ³³Who will enter a charge against God's chosen? God is the Acquitter; ³⁴who is the condemner? Christ Jesus is He who died; what is more, who rose again, who is at God's right hand, who also pleads on our behalf.

³⁵Who will separate us from Christ's love? Affliction? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or destitution? Or danger? Or sword? ³⁶Just as it is written,^u "On Your account we are being killed all day long; we are considered sheep for slaughter." ³⁷But in all this we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor authorities, neither present nor future affairs, ³⁹neither powers of the heights nor of the depths, nor anything else created will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 IN CHRIST I TELL THE TRUTH, I am not falsifying, as my conscience, fortified by the Holy Spirit, bears me witness, ²when I say that I have in my heart intense grief and unceasing distress; ³for I could wish myself banished from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my human kinsmen ⁴who are Israelites. They are the sonship, the glorious Presence,^v the covenants, the giving of the Law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵Theirs are the fathers, and from them Christ was

humanly descended, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

⁶It is not as if God's message had failed, for by no means all who descend from Israel belong to Israel; ⁷neither are all Abraham's children because they are his offspring, but^w "Through Isaac your offspring shall be named after you." ⁸This means that it is not his physical descendants who make up the children of God, but the children of the promise are considered his offspring. ⁹For this is the message of the promise,^x "At about this time next year I will come, and Sarah will have a son."

¹⁰But this is not all. When Rebecca had conceived by one man, our forefather Isaac, ¹¹and before the children were born or had done anything good or bad, even then, in order that the purpose of God's choice might prevail, which rests not on works but on His calling, ¹²it was said to her,^y "The older will serve the younger." ¹³As it is written,^z "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."

¹⁴What shall we say then? Is there injustice with God? Perish the thought! ¹⁵For He said^a to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will take pity on whom I will take pity." ¹⁶So then, it is not a matter of man's willing or running, but of God's mercy. ¹⁷As Scripture says^b to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up high, to show in you the evidence of My power, so that My name may be made known over the whole earth." ¹⁸So then, He shows mercy to whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills.

¹⁹Then you will ask me, "Why does He still complain; for who is resisting His will?" ²⁰O man! who are you, anyway, to talk back to God? The thing that is being molded does not

u) Ps. 44:22.

v) The allusion is to the Shekinah cloud of glory that shone on the mercy seat in the tabernacle and temple, signifying the presence of the Lord, Exod. 40:34; Lev. 16:2; I Kings 8:10, 11.

w) Gen. 21:12.

x) Gen. 18:10.

y) Gen. 25:23. Obviously God endowed Jacob with latent resources superior to those of Esau, and Jacob made use of them.

z) Mal. 1:2, 3.

a) Exod. 33:19.

b) Exod. 9:16. In Exod. 8:15 it is stated that Pharaoh hardened his own heart, but Exod. 7:13, 14 ascribes the hardening to God. Because Pharaoh resisted the will of God, God caused his heart to become even harder than it had been before. Pharaoh became an instrument for God's purpose.

say to the one who molds it, "Why do you make me this way," does it? ²¹Does not the potter have the right with the clay to make from the same lump one utensil for noble use and another for ignoble use? ²²What if God, wanting to show His anger and to evidence His power, with great patience endured the agents that deserve wrath and have been prepared for destruction, ²³so that He might make known the wealth of His glory to the recipients of mercy, whom previously He prepared for glory, ²⁴even us whom He has called not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles?

²⁵So, too, He says^c in Hosea, "I will call those who were not^d My people 'My people,' and her who was not loved ²⁶'My beloved,' and in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there they will be called sons of the living God." ²⁷Isaiah, too, exclaims^e regarding Israel, "Even though the number of Israel's sons were as the sand of the sea, only a remnant will be saved ²⁸[for He will finish the work and round it out in righteousness]:^f for thoroughly and with dispatch the Lord will execute His decree on the earth." ²⁹As Isaiah further foretold,^g "Unless the Lord of hosts had left us offspring, we would have become like Sodom and would have been made like Gomorrah."

³⁰Then what is our inference? That the Gentiles, who did not try to acquire righteousness, got hold of righteousness, that is, of the righteousness that comes through faith, ³¹while Israel, pursuing a law for the securing of righteousness, failed to come up to it.^h ³²And why? Because their principle was not by faith but by works; they stumbled over the stone that occasions stumbling, ³³as it is written,ⁱ "See, I am laying in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble, a rock that trips men

up, and the believer in Him will not be shamed."

10 **BROTHERS, THE DESIRE OF MY** heart and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation; ²for I will say for them, that they have enthusiasm for God, but not with correct understanding. ³Ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God,^j and trying to set up their own righteousness, they have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴For Christ brought the Law to completion so that everyone who believes in Him may be justified.

⁵Moses does indeed describe^k the righteousness of the Law, "The man who practices it shall live by it." ⁶The righteousness of faith, however, has this to say,^l "Do not say to yourself, 'Who will ascend to heaven?' (which means, to bring Christ down), ⁷or 'Who will descend into the depth?' (which means, to bring Christ up from the grave)." ⁸But what does it say?^m "The word is near you, in your mouth and heart." It is the message of faith which we preach, ⁹that if you confess with your lips the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes so that he is made righteous, and with the mouth confession is made for salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says,ⁿ "Whoever puts his trust in Him will not be put to shame."

¹²There is then no distinction between Jew and Greek, for they all belong to the same Lord, bestowing His riches on all who invoke Him; ¹³for "everyone who calls on the Lord's name will be saved."

¹⁴Now then, how can they invoke Him in whom they have no faith? And how can they believe in One of whom they have not heard? Again, how can they listen without a preacher? ¹⁵But

c) Hos. 1:10; 2:23.

d) That is, the Gentiles.

e) Isa. 10:22, 23.

f) The words enclosed in brackets do not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

g) Isa. 1:9.

h) Gentile believers were better off than the Jews who tried to earn salvation by works; for salvation cannot be earned by any man, but is only by grace through faith in Christ.

i) Ps. 118:22; Isa. 8:14.

j) Through the grace of Christ.

k) Lev. 18:5.

l) Deut. 30:12, 13.

m) Deut. 30:14.

n) Isa. 28:16.

o) Joel 2:32, quoted by Peter at Pentecost.

how can they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written,^p "How lovely are the feet of those who publish the good news!"

¹⁶Not all, however, have heard the good news, as Isaiah says,^q "Lord, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷Faith, then, results from hearing, and hearing is through the message of Christ. ¹⁸But I ask, Have they not heard? Yes, indeed,^r "Their voice has gone forth over the whole earth and their words to the end of the world." ¹⁹I ask further, Did not Israel understand? To begin with, Moses says,^s "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation, and I will infuriate you against a senseless nation." ²⁰Then Isaiah boldly expressed it,^t "I have been found by those who did not seek Me; I have shown Myself to those who did not ask for Me." ²¹But concerning Israel He says,^u "All day long I have held out My hands to a disobedient and rebellious people."

11 I SAY THEN, HAS GOD REPU-
diated His people? No, indeed! In fact, I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham and of Benjamin's tribe. ²God has not repudiated His people whom beforehand He had in mind. Do you not know what the Scripture says concerning Elijah, how he appeals^v to God against Israel, ³"Lord, they have killed Your prophets; they have torn down Your altars; I alone am left and they are after my life?"

⁴Nevertheless, what divine response^w is given him? "I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵Just so there is at present a remnant in accordance with His gracious choice. ⁶But if it is by grace, then it is no longer an account of works; otherwise grace would no more be grace.

⁷Then what follows? Israel has not gained what it was seeking,^x but those

who are chosen^y have secured it, while the rest have grown callous; ⁸as it is written,^z "God has given them a spirit of stupidity — eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear, to this very day."

⁹David also says,^a "Let their table become a snare and a trap, a block and a retribution to them; ¹⁰let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and forever make them bend their backs."

¹¹I say then, did they stumble so as to fall? Not at all! Instead, through their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles to arouse Israel to jealousy. ¹²But if their transgression means the world's enrichment, and their failure is the Gentiles' gain, then how much more will their fulfilling of the divine demand be.

¹³But I am speaking to you Gentiles. For the very reason that I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry, ¹⁴trying if possible to rouse my own race to jealousy and save some of them. ¹⁵For if the rejection on their part means the world's reconciliation, what must their acceptance mean but life from the dead? ¹⁶If the first piece of dough is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷If some of the branches have been broken off and you, a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in and are sharing the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸do not boast against the branches, and if you do boast remember that you are not supporting the root; instead, the root supports you.

¹⁹You will reply, "The branches have been broken off so that I may be grafted in." ²⁰Well said! Through lack of faith they were broken off and through faith you remain in place. Be not haughty, but stand in awe. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. ²²So consider God's kindness and rigor — on the one hand His rigor applied to those who failed, and on the other

p) Isa. 52:7.

q) Isa. 53:1.

r) Ps. 19:4.

s) Deut. 32:21.

t) Isa. 65:1.

u) Isa. 65:2.

v) 1 Kings 19:10.

w) 1 Kings 19:18.

x) Righteousness was what Israel was seeking, but they sought it through self-effort, not by faith, ch. 10:3.

y) Righteousness is God's gift through Christ to His elect (chosen).

z) Deut. 29:4; Isa. 29:10. In both cases God was prepared to discipline His ancient people because of their disobedience.

a) Ps. 69:22.

hand God's kindness to you, provided you continue in His kindness; else you too will be cut away. ²³Besides they, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴And if you have been cut from a naturally wild olive tree and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, then how much more readily will these natural branches be grafted into their own original tree.

²⁵So that you might not be self-opinionated, brothers, I want you not to be ignorant of this secret: partial insensibility has come over Israel until the full number of the Gentiles come in, ²⁶and thus Israel will be saved, as it is written,^b "From Mount Zion a deliverer will come; He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷and this is My covenant with them when I have taken away their sins."

²⁸So far as the good news is concerned, they are enemies for your sakes; but so far as election is concerned, they are beloved because of the fathers. ²⁹For God's gifts of grace and His calling are irrevocable. ³⁰Just as you were once disobedient to God but now have received mercy, thanks to their disobedience, ³¹so they have now been disobedient so that through the mercy you are enjoying they may now receive mercy. ³²For God has confined all men under the power of disobedience, so that He might have mercy on all men.

³³O the depth of the wealth, the wisdom, and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments and how untraceable His footsteps!

³⁴For^c who has understood the Lord's mind, or who has become His counselor? ³⁵Or who has given anything to Him that it might be repaid him?

³⁶For from Him, and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever! Amen.

12 I BEG YOU, THEREFORE, BROTHERS, in view of God's mercies,

that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ²And do not conform to the present world system, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so as to sense for yourselves what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. ³For through the grace that is granted me I warn each one among you not to value himself more highly than he should, but to think soberly as God has measured out to each his portion of faith.

⁴For just as in one body we have many members, but not all the members have the same function, ⁵so the many of us form one body in Christ, while each is related to all others as a member. ⁶But having gifts that differ according to the grace bestowed on us, if it is prophecy, let it be used in proportion to the measure of faith God has bestowed it; ⁷if it is practical service, then employ such service in the same way — the teacher, in his teaching; ⁸the one who admonishes, in his admonition; the contributor, in his liberality; the leader, in his deep interest; he who practices charity, in genuine cheerfulness.

⁹Let your love be sincere, clinging to the right with abhorrence of evil. ¹⁰Be joined together in a brotherhood of mutual love, trying to outdo one another in showing respect, ¹¹never slacking in interest, serving the Lord, keeping spiritually aglow, ¹²joyfully hoping as you endure affliction, persistent in prayer, ¹³contributing to the needs of the saints,^d practicing hospitality.

¹⁴Bless your persecutors; yes, bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Share the joy of those who are happy and the grief of those who grieve. ¹⁶Live in harmony with others; do not aspire to eminence,^e but associate yourselves with humble people; do not be conceited.

¹⁷In no case paying back evil for evil, determine on the noblest ways of

b) Isa. 59:20; cf. Ps. 14:7.

c) Compare Job 35:7; 41:11; Isa. 40:13ff.; Jer. 23:18.

d) See note at Acts 9:13.

e) Whatever honors may come to men are as a result of the grace of God, to whom all glory belongs, Ps. 96:7, 8; Mal. 2:2.

dealing with all people. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹Do not avenge yourselves, dear friends, but leave room for divine retribution; for it is written,^f "It is Mine to punish; I will pay them back, says the Lord."

²⁰Instead,^g "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; in case he is thirsty, give him water to drink," for in doing so, you will pile burning coals on his head. ²¹Be not overpowered by evil, but overcome evil with good.

13 LET EVERY PERSON RENDER obedience to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those in authority are divinely constituted, ²so that the rebel against the authority is resisting God's appointment.^h Such resisters will incur judgment on themselves.

³For magistrates are not dread to the person who does right but to the wrongdoer. You do not want to fear the authority, do you? Do right, and you will earn its approval. ⁴For it is God's agency for your welfare. But if you do wrong, then be alarmed, for it does not carry the sword without reason; it is God's agent to bring deserved punishment on the evildoer. ⁵It behoves us, therefore, to be submissive, not because of punishment only but also for conscience' sake.

⁶Pay your taxes, therefore; for those who constantly attend to this task are God's agents. ⁷Pay all of them their dues: tax to whom tax is due; customs duties to whom customs duties are due; respect to whom respect is due, and honor to whom honor is due. ⁸Owe no one anything except that you love one another, for the person who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law. ⁹Because,ⁱ "Do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not covet," and

whatever other commandment there is, may be summarized in one word, and that is, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love works no harm to one's neighbor, so love meets all the Law's requirements.

¹¹Observe this in consideration of our times, because the hour has struck for us to wake up, for our salvation is now nearer than when we first believed. ¹²The night is well advanced and the day approaches; so let us put off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us behave ourselves decently as befits the daytime, not in carousing and drinking, not in immorality and debauchery, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ; do not make provision for the flesh to gratify its cravings.

14 WELCOME THE WEAK BELIEVER, and do not criticize his views.

²One person has faith that allows him to eat everything, but a weaker one confines himself to vegetables.^j ³The one who eats should not feel contempt for him who abstains, nor should the one who abstains censure him who eats; for God has accepted him.^k ⁴Who are you to censure another's servant? He will stand or fall with his own master. But he will stand, for the Lord will enable him to stand.

⁵One person gives preference to one day above another day, while another person esteems every day. Each person should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶He who observes the day, observes it with the Lord in view. So he who eats everything, eats with the Lord in mind, for he gives thanks to God. He who limits his eating refrains for the Lord's sake, and gives thanks to God.

f) Deut. 32:35; Prov. 20:22; cf. Prov. 24:29.
g) Prov. 25:21.

h) Paul here gives the norm for the Christian's relation to the state — namely, that he must be a law-abiding citizen. The apostle does not go into situations such as those when the government is so intolerable that it must be changed or when the authorities oppose God. Cf. Acts 5:29.

i) Exod. 20:13-15, 17.

j) In apostolic times there were some Christians of Jewish background who had conscientious scruples about eating meat which they feared might have been sacrificed to idols before being sold; these people Paul called "weak." Other "stronger" believers of Jewish background (like Paul himself) or Gentile Christians did not have such scruples, I Cor. 10:25. Christians also differed regarding the keeping of special days, vs. 5, 6.

k) Even a weak Christian is accepted by God because of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself; ⁸for in case we live, we live to the Lord, and in case we die, we die to the Lord; so whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.¹ ⁹For this purpose Christ died and lives again, to be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰But you, why do you find fault with your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before God's tribunal, ¹¹as it is written,^m "As I live, says the Lord, to Me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall render acknowledgment to God." ¹²Accordingly, every one of us will give account of himself to God.

¹³So let us no longer censure one another, but let us rather decide not to place a hindrance or a stumbling block in our brother's way. ¹⁴In union with the Lord Jesus I know and am convinced that nothing is uncleanⁿ in itself; it becomes unclean to the person who considers it unclean. ¹⁵And yet, if your brother is harmed on account of your eating, then your behavior is no longer controlled by love. You would not by your eating ruin a person for whom Christ died, would you? ¹⁶Do not then allow what is wholesome for you to be spoken of as evil; ¹⁷for the kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking, but in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸Whoever serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and is approved by men.

¹⁹So then let us definitely aim for everything that contributes to one another's peace and development. ²⁰Do not on account of food tear down the work of God. Everything is clean, yet it is wrong for a man to make others stumble by what he eats. ²¹It is well to eat no meat and drink no wine, to do nothing that would make your brother stumble.^o

²²You have faith? Have it personally in the presence of God. Happy is the person who has no qualms of conscience in what he allows himself to do. ²³But the person who entertains doubts, and nevertheless eats, stands condemned, because he is not acting from faith, and every act that does not spring from faith is sin.

15 WE WHO ARE STRONG OUGHT TO bear with the scruples of those who are weak. We should not please ourselves. ²But each of us should please his neighbor for his welfare, to strengthen him. ³For even Christ did not please Himself but, as it is written,^p "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."

⁴All those writings of long ago were written for our instruction, so that through the patience and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵And may the God who gives patience and encouragement grant you such mutual understanding in agreement with Christ Jesus ⁶that together as with one voice you may praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Accept one another, therefore, just as Christ accepted you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I say that Christ became a servant to the circumcised on behalf of God's truth to verify the promises that had been made to our fathers, ⁹and also that the Gentiles should praise God for His mercy, as it is written,^q "For this I will give You praise among the Gentiles and sing psalms to Your name." ¹⁰And again it says,^r "Be glad, O you Gentiles, together with His people," ¹¹and once more,^s "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing His praises, all you peoples." ¹²Isaiah further says,^t "There will be a shoot from Jesse, even He who will stand up to rule the Gentiles; upon Him will the Gentiles rest their hope."

1) Compare ch. 12:5.

m) Isa. 45:23.

n) Under the Mosaic Law some meats were forbidden as unclean, Lev. 11; but the same God who gave this Law in the O.T. releases the Christian from it in the N.T., Acts 10. Observe, however, that in the same spirit as vs. 1-13 of this chapter in the Epistle to the Romans, the Early Church told the believers in Antioch that they should abstain from certain meats, Acts 15:28, 29.

o) Here is a guideline that Christians would do well to follow.

p) Ps. 69:9.

q) Ps. 18:49.

r) Deut. 32:43.

s) Ps. 117:1.

t) Isa. 11:10.

¹³So may God, the fountain of hope, fill you with all joy and peace in your believing, so that you may enjoy overflowing hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁴I myself am convinced about you, my brothers, that you are full of goodness, amply furnished with knowledge, and competent to advise one another.

¹⁵But I have written to you very boldly in some matters so as to remind you, on account of the grace that God has granted me, ¹⁶that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, serving as a priest of the good news from God, whereby the Gentiles may become an acceptable offering, made holy by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷In union with Christ Jesus, then, I take pride in my service for God; ¹⁸for I will not venture to speak of anything but what Christ has done through me to bring the Gentiles to the place of obedience by word and deed, ¹⁹by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and everywhere as far as Illyricum,^u I have fully preached the good news concerning Christ. ²⁰So I endeavored earnestly to preach only where the name of Christ was not yet known, in order not to build on the foundation of someone else, ²¹but as it is written,^v "Those who have never been told of Him will see, and those who never heard will understand."

²²On this account also I have been frequently prevented from visiting you; ²³but now, since I have no more opportunities to do my work in this area, and with a longing extending over many years to visit you ²⁴whenever I might travel to Spain, I do hope to see you with my own eyes on passing through, and to have an escort from you on the way, after first having enjoyed your fellowship for a while.

²⁵Now I am on my way to Jerusalem^w in a ministry for the saints;^x ²⁶for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the needy among the Jerusalem saints.

²⁷They themselves decided to do it, and they certainly owe it to them; for if the Gentiles shared in their spiritual possessions, then they owe them their service in material things.

²⁸When therefore I have finished this work and have turned over to them the full amount of the donation, I shall come by you on the way to Spain. ²⁹And I know that when I come to you I shall come in the abundant blessing of Christ.

³⁰But I plead with you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, ³¹in order that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea; also that my ministry for Jerusalem may be well received by the saints, ³²and that I may subsequently come to you with gladness by the will of God and enjoy a refreshing visit with you. ³³And may the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

16 MAY I PRESENT TO YOU OUR sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the Cenchreae^y church, ²so that you may receive her in the Lord's name as saints deserve, and that you may assist her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she has been a helper to many, including me.

³Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who risked their own necks to save my life,^z and to whom not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful. ⁵And include the church that meets in their house.^a

My greetings to my dear Epaphroditus,^b the first convert to Christ in Asia.

⁶Greet Mary, who went through much

^u) Illyricum was an extensive territory on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea and opposite a large area of Italy. Later Illyricum was called Dalmatia.

^v) Isa. 52:15.

^w) Twice Paul had been warned that he should not go to Jerusalem, Acts 21:4, 10-14, but he himself was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go there whatever might befall him. See note at Acts 21:13.

^x) See note at Acts 9:13.

^y) Cenchreae was the seaport of Corinth on the Aegean Sea.

^z) This circumstance is not mentioned elsewhere in the N.T.

^a) Priscilla and Aquila opened their house as a gathering place for the church, I Cor. 16:9; cf. Acts 18:26. The early Christians did not have church buildings.

^b) This chapter contains the longest list of names of obscure Christians in the N.T. That this

trouble for you. ⁷Greet my relatives and fellow prisoners Andronicus and Junias; they are outstanding among the apostles and were Christians before I was one.

⁸Greetings to Amplias, my dear friend in the Lord. ⁹Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my dear Stachys. ¹⁰Remember me to Apelles, one who is tried and true in Christ, and to those of Aristobulus' family. ¹¹Greet my relative Herodion. Greet those of Narcissus' household that are in the Lord.

¹²My greetings to those Christian workers Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet that dear Persis, unwearied worker that she is in the Lord. ¹³Greetings to Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and to his mother, who is mine as well.

¹⁴My greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers with them. ¹⁵Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints associated with them. ¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send you their greetings.

¹⁷But I warn you, brothers, to keep an eye on those who cause divisions and temptations, quite out of harmony with the doctrine you have been taught, and to keep away from them.

¹⁸For people of that type do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appe-

tites, and by means of ingratiating talk and flattery they deceive the minds of the unsuspecting.

¹⁹The report of your obedience to Christ has reached everyone and makes me happy about you. But I want you to be wise when it comes to goodness, and innocent when it comes to evil. ²⁰And the God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹Timothy, my fellow worker, sends you greetings, and so do my relatives Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater.

²²I, Tertius, the writer^c of this letter, send you my greeting in the Lord. ²³Gaius,^d who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and brother Quartus send you their greetings.

²⁴[The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]^e ²⁵Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to the good news which I preach, the message concerning Jesus Christ, in accord with the revelation of the secret^f that was concealed for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations to bring about obedience to the faith, ²⁷to the only wise God be the glory forever and ever through Jesus Christ. Amen.

profound exposition of the Gospel ends with Paul sending individual greetings to so many Christians, vss. 1:14, with others joining him in doing this, vss. 21:23, is a reminder that the truths Paul presented relate to persons, not only in his day but now also.

c) Tertius was the scribe or stenographer who wrote down the letter, probably under Paul's dictation. It is generally agreed that the Epistle to the Romans was written in Corinth at the time of the apostle's third visit to that city, cf. Acts 20:2, II Cor. 13:1.

d) Gaius was baptized by Paul himself, I Cor. 1:14.

e) Verse 24, enclosed in brackets, is found in only one ancient manuscript. It seems evident that it is an interpolation that some copyist repeated from the same words in v. 20.

f) The Greek word rendered "secret" is *mysterion*, which is used in the N.T. of something that was formerly concealed but is now revealed, e.g. see Matt. 13:11, 34, 35; I Cor. 2:7, 8. It has thus become a kind of "open secret." In this verse the word relates to Christ and God's marvelous redemption in and through Him on behalf of all nations, Jews and Gentiles alike, cf. ch. 11:25-27; Eph. 1:9-12; 3:3-6; Col. 1:26, 27.

CORINTHIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 56-57, at Ephesus

1 PAUL, CALLED BY THE WILL OF God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,^a ²to the church of God at Corinth,^b those made holy in Christ Jesus and called to be saints,^c together with all who in every place invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord as well as ours: ³Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴Always I thank my God for you, for the divine grace that has through Christ Jesus been granted you; ⁵for in Him you have in every respect been enriched with full power of expression and full knowledge. ⁶In this way our witnessing of Christ has been confirmed in you, ⁷so that you are falling behind in no spiritual gift, while awaiting the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸And He will establish you to the finish, so that no blame may be yours at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is trustworthy, through whom you were called into the companionship of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁰But in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I beg of you, brothers, that all of you agree, that you eliminate factions among you, and that you be united in mind and attitude. ¹¹For the

Chloe family reports to me about you, my brothers, that there are wranglings among you. ¹²I mean that each of you either says, "Paul certainly is my leader," or "But Apollos^d is mine," or "But Cephas^e is mine," or "But Christ is mine." ¹³Is Christ dismembered? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in Paul's name?

¹⁴I am thankful to have baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵so that none of you may claim baptism in my name. ¹⁶Oh, yes, I baptized the Stephanas family, also, but I do not remember baptizing anyone else. ¹⁷For Christ sent me, not to baptize but to preach the good news, and that not with verbal eloquence, so that the cross of Christ will not be made ineffectual.

¹⁸For the message of the cross is folly to those on their way to destruction, but to us who are being saved, it is God's power, ¹⁹as it is written, ^f"I will render useless the wisdom of the learned and set aside the understanding of the intelligent." ²⁰Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar in the Law? Where is the debater of this time? Has not God shown the folly of worldly wisdom? ²¹Inasmuch as in God's providence the world failed to know God by means of its wisdom,

a) Sosthenes was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth, Acts 18:17.

b) Corinth, the principal city of the ancient Roman province of Achaia in southern Greece, is situated in close proximity to water on either side - The Gulf of Corinth on the west and nearby Cenchræe, Corinth's seaport on the Aegean Sea on the east.

c) See note at Acts 9:13.

d) Apollos was a Jew from Alexandria whom Paul met at Ephesus. He is said to have been "a man of learning and powerful in the Scriptures," Acts 18:24.

e) Cephas is the Aramaic equivalent of the Greek Petros, from which the name Peter comes. See note at Matt. 16:18.

f) Isa. 29:14.

God was pleased to save those who believe through the folly of the proclamation. ²²And while Jews request signs and Greeks search for wisdom, ²³we on our part preach the crucified Christ; a snare to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles, ²⁴but to the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, God's power and God's wisdom. ²⁵Because God's folly surpasses human wisdom and God's weakness surpasses human strength.

²⁶Simply consider your own call, brothers; not many of you were wise, humanly speaking, not many mighty, not many noble, ²⁷but God has chosen the world's foolish things to put to shame the learned; and God has chosen the weak in the world to shame the strong. ²⁸God also has chosen the world's insignificant and despised people and nobodies in order to bring to nothing those who amount to something, ²⁹so that nobody may boast in the presence of God.

³⁰But from Him you have your existence in Christ Jesus, who became for us divine wisdom and righteousness and holiness and redemption, ³¹so that as has been written,^g "Let the boaster boast in the Lord."

2 SO WHEN I CAME TO YOU, BROTHERS, I came with no superiority of eloquence or of wisdom, when I announced to you God's revealed truth; ²for I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. ³And I was before you with a sense of weakness, with fear and considerable trepidation.

⁴My message and my preaching were not in persuasive, learned oratory, but rather in evidence of the Spirit and power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom but on divine strength.

⁶We do, indeed, express wisdom among the mature, but neither the wisdom of this world nor the rulers of this world, who are going to pass away. ⁷Instead, we give expression to divine wisdom in the form of a mystery,^h wisdom that has been hidden,

which God before all time designed for our glory. ⁸None of this world's rulers has understood it, for had they understood they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹But as it is written,ⁱ "No eye has seen, nor ear has heard, neither has the human heart thought of what God has prepared for those who love Him."

¹⁰Through the Spirit, however, God has revealed it to us; for the Spirit fathoms everything, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For among men who knows a person's thoughts, except the man's own inner spirit? Similarly, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²And we have received, not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that comes from God, in order that we may know the things which God has freely given us.

¹³Of these matters we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit—interpreting spiritual truth to spiritual persons. ¹⁴But the unspiritual person does not accept the things of the divine Spirit; to him they are folly and he cannot understand them, because they are evaluated from a spiritual standpoint. ¹⁵The spiritual person, on the other hand, judges the value of everything, while he is properly valued by none. ¹⁶For who has known the Lord's mind well enough to instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

3 SO I WAS NOT IN A POSITION, BROTHERS, to speak to you as to spiritual persons but as to worldlings, as to babes in Christ. ²I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, because you were not yet strong enough. Neither, in fact, are you strong enough now, ³for you are still unspiritual. Insofar as you entertain jealousy and contentiousness, are you not unspiritual and do you not behave like the unconverted? ⁴When one says,^j "I hold with Paul," and another, "I with Apollos," are you not unchanged men? ⁵Who is Apollos, anyway, and who is Paul, but ministers through whom, as the Lord gave each

g) Jer. 9:24; cf. II Cor. 10:17.

h) This mystery relates to "the deep things of God," vs. 10. Cf. note at Rom. 16:25.

i) Isa. 64:4.

j) Compare ch. 1:12.

his task, you came to believe? ⁶I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but God caused the growth, ⁷so that neither the planter nor the waterer deserves credit, but God who causes the growth.

⁸The planter and the waterer, however, work as one, and each will receive his own reward in agreement with his particular labor. ⁹For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's fields; you are the building which God is constructing. ¹⁰Because of the grace of God which has been granted me, I have, as a wise master builder, laid a foundation on which another builds; and let each look out how he does the building. ¹¹For none is able to lay another foundation than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹²In case one builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, ¹³each one's work will become evident, for the Day will bring it to light; it will be revealed by fire. Of whatever quality each one's work may be, the fire will test it. ¹⁴In case one's construction survives, he will receive his pay. ¹⁵In case one's work is burned down, he will be the loser; though he himself will be saved, yet only as in passing through fire.

¹⁶Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, and you are such a temple.

¹⁸Let no one fool himself. If someone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become foolish in order to grow wise; ¹⁹for the wisdom of this world is folly in God's estimation; as it is written, ¹"He snares the shrewd in their own cunning." ²⁰And again, ^m"The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, how futile they are."

²¹Let none, therefore, boast in men, for everything is yours, ²²whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, ⁿor the universe, or life, or death, or present things or future things, they are all

yours, ²³while you are Christ's and Christ is God's.

4 PEOPLE SHOULD CONSIDER US AS servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. ²The prime requisite of stewards is fidelity. ³To me it is of very little importance to be judged by you or by any human court; nor do I even judge myself, ⁴for I am not vindicated because I am unconscious of wrong on my part. The One who judges me is the Lord. ⁵So do not pass premature judgment before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things hidden by darkness and will reveal the inner motives. Then will each one experience his approval from God.

⁶These suggestions, brothers, I have applied in a figure to myself and to Apollos for your sakes, so that from our experience you may learn not to go beyond what is written, ^oin order that you may not support one teacher against the other. ⁷For who concedes you any superiority? What have you that you have not received? But if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not received? ⁸Are you already satisfied? Are you already rich? Are you without us on the throne? How I wish you did reign, so we might reign with you!

⁹For I think that God has appointed us apostles last, as designed for death; for we have become an exhibition to the universe, to angels as well as to men. ¹⁰On Christ's account we are fools, but in Christ you are intelligent; we are weaklings, but you are powerful. You enjoy honor, but we are despised.

¹¹Up to this very hour we are hungry and thirsty; we are ill-clothed, roughly treated, and homeless. ¹²We toil to exhaustion with our own hands. Being slandered, we bless; being persecuted, we patiently endure; ¹³being defamed, we bring comfort. To this moment we are considered the scum of the earth, the off-scouring of all things.

k) The Holy Spirit resides in the heart of every believer in Christ, Rom. 8:9.

l) Job 5:13.

m) Ps. 94:11.

n) See note at ch. 1:12.

o) Everything is to be weighed by what God has revealed in His Word.

¹⁴I do not write these things to shame you, but to warn you as my dear children. ¹⁵For although you have a myriad of tutors in Christ, you nevertheless have not many fathers; because in Christ Jesus I became your father by means of the good news concerning Christ. ¹⁶Hence I urge you that you imitate me. ¹⁷For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my principles of behavior in Christ Jesus, such as I teach everywhere in every church.^p

¹⁸Some have grown inflated with pride, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹But, the Lord willing, I shall come to you shortly, and then I shall discover, not the words of those conceited persons but their power; ²⁰for the kingdom of God is not a matter of words but of power.

²¹Which do you want? Shall I come to you to punish, or in love and in a spirit of gentleness?

5 IT IS ACTUALLY REPORTED THAT there is sexual immorality among you, and that of a kind which does not occur among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife.^q ²And you, rather than grieving about it enough to remove the person who committed such a deed, are you still puffed up? ³As for me, present in spirit although absent in body, I have already, as if present, passed judgment on the one who thus behaved. ⁴In the name of the Lord Jesus, when you are gathered together and my spirit^r is present with you, together with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵let such a person be handed over to Satan for the destruction^s of the flesh in order that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus.

⁶Your boasting is not admirable. Are

you not aware that a little yeast changes the whole batch? ⁷Purge out the old yeast, so that you will be a fresh batch. You are in fact unleavened, for our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed, even Christ. ⁸Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with use of old yeast, certainly not with yeast of malice and vice, but with unfermented batches of purity and truth.

⁹I wrote you in that letter^t not to associate with sexually immoral people; ¹⁰not that in a public way you must have nothing whatever to do with the immoral of this world, or the avaricious and grasping, or the idolatrous, for then you must get out of the world altogether. ¹¹So I write you now that if a pretended brother is immoral or greedy or idolatrous or abusive or a drinker or a robber, you must not associate with him, nor even eat with one of that type.

¹²What business of mine is it to judge outsiders? Do you not have those within the church to judge? ¹³But outsiders God will judge. Expel that wicked person from your own company.

6 DOES ONE WHO HAS A CASE against someone else dare to go to law before a pagan court and not before the saints?^u ²Are you not aware that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you not competent to be judges of minor matters? ³Do you not know that we shall judge angels, not to mention affairs of this life?^v

⁴When, however, you do have an everyday case, do you appoint for judges those in the church who have no standing? ⁵I say this to shame you. Is there really not a single wise person among you who is capable of deciding

p) Paul's life matched his teaching.

q) Not the man's actual mother but his stepmother, his father being still living, II Cor. 7:12.

r) Paul's spirit as led by the Holy Spirit.

s) The word rendered "destruction" is translated from the Greek *olethros*. It does not of necessity carry the thought of annihilation but rather defilement or ruin, the subject thus becoming unsuited for its original purpose. The believer who continues to sin, such as the man described in this passage, may be given over to Satan so that he may be brought under conviction of sin and turned back to the place of obedience to God. Sometimes even physical death comes as a result of offenses against the Almighty, ch. 11:30; cf. Acts 5:1-11; 1 John 5:16, 17.

t) No copy of this letter has been found.

u) See note at Acts 9:13.

v) Implicit in reigning with Christ is the responsibility of judging the world, Dan. 7:22; cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30.

between brothers, ⁶instead of one brother going to law against another brother and that before unbelievers?

⁷It means complete defeat for you when you have lawsuits among yourselves. Why do you not rather suffer injustice? Why not rather be defrauded? ⁸Instead, you practice injustice and fraud, and that on your brothers.

⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom? Be not misled; neither profligates, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor partakers in homosexuality, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the avaricious, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And some of you were just that; but you were washed and you were made holy and you were made righteous by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

¹²Everything is permitted me, but not everything is beneficial. Although everything is allowed me, I will not be mastered by anything. ¹³Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will destroy both of them. The body is not for lust but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body; ¹⁴and as God raised up the Lord, so will He raise us up through His power.

¹⁵Are you not aware that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ to make them members of a prostitute? No, never! ¹⁶Or do you not know that one who unites with a prostitute is one body with her? For "The two," He says, "will become one flesh." ¹⁷But he who unites with the Lord is one spirit with Him.

¹⁸Shun sexual immorality. All other sin a person commits outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you do not belong to yourselves? ²⁰For you were bought and paid for; then give God the glory with your body.

7 CONCERNING THE SUBJECTS OF your correspondence, it is good for a man to let a woman alone; ²but because of prevailing immoralities^x let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband. ³The husband must render to his wife the obligations that are due her, and similarly the wife to her husband. ⁴The wife does not have authority over her own body, but her husband does, and just so the husband does not have authority over his own body, but his wife does.

⁵Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement for a time to devote yourselves unhindered to prayer; and come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you on account of your lack of self-control.

⁶I say this by way of concession, not as a regulation. ⁷I wish all men were as I am, but each person has his own gift from God, the one in this direction, the other in that.

⁸To the single and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain as I am; ⁹but if they cannot restrain their passions, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be consumed by passion.

¹⁰To the married couples I command—not really I but the Lord—that the wife must not leave her husband; ¹¹and in case she does separate, she must either stay single or make up with her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

¹²To the rest I say—but not as the Lord's command^y—if some brother has a wife who is not a believer but enjoys living with him, let him not divorce her. ¹³And if the wife has an unbelieving husband who enjoys living with her, let her not divorce her husband. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband is dedicated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is dedicated through her believing husband, else your children would be unholy, but now they are dedicated.

¹⁵In case the unbeliever wants to separate, let there be separation; the

w) Gen. 2:24.

x) Bear in mind that Paul's Epistle to the Romans was written in Corinth, in which letter see ch. 1:23-32.

y) Paul does not disclaim inspiration here but only disclaims a direct command of Christ.

brother or the sister is under such circumstances not tied down. But God has called you to enjoy peace. ¹⁶For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband, or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

¹⁷Certainly, as the Lord has assigned to each, as God has given each his calling, so keep on conducting yourselves; and this is my ruling in all the churches. ¹⁸Was a circumcised person called? Let him not try to efface it. Was an uncircumcised person called? Let him not be circumcised. ¹⁹Circumcision has no value, neither has uncircumcision, but the observance of God's commandments does count.

²⁰Let each one stay in the station in life in which he received his call. ²¹Were you a slave when called? Do not let that worry you; but if you can gain freedom, you should avail yourself of the chance. ²²It comes to this: the slave who is called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly he who is called while he is free is a slave of Christ. ²³You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴Brothers, let each remain with God in the station in life in which he was called.

²⁵Regarding the unmarried I have no divine injunction, but as one who has received mercy from the Lord to be trustworthy, ²⁶I give my opinion. I consider, then, that in view of the impending distress it is good for a person to remain in his present situation. ²⁷Are you united to a wife? Do not seek release. Are you unattached to a woman? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸But in case you marry, you do not sin; nor does the unmarried woman sin if she marries. Such, however, will experience trouble in this life, and I would spare you that.

²⁹I tell you this, brothers, the time is growing short. From now on let those who have wives behave as if they had none, ³⁰and the mourners as

if they were not mourning, and the joyful as if they did not rejoice; those who purchase as if they were not possessors, ³¹and those who make use of the world as if they had no use for it, ²because the present world order is passing away.

³²I would not have you worried. The single person is concerned with the Lord's affairs, how to please the Lord, ³³but the married person is concerned with things of the world, how to please his wife; he has divided interests. ³⁴The unmarried woman or the virgin is interested in the Lord's affairs, that she may be dedicated to Him in body and spirit; but the married woman is concerned with things of the world, how she may please her husband.

³⁵I mention this for your own good, not to throw a rope around you but to promote proper behavior and undisturbed devotion to the Lord. ³⁶If someone thinks he is not acting properly toward his virgin,^a in case she is passing the bloom of youth and circumstances render it suitable, let him do as he pleases; it is no sin for them to marry. ³⁷But he whose mind stands firm and who is under no compulsion, who has power over his own will and has determined in his own heart to preserve his virgin as a virgin, is doing right. ³⁸So then, he who marries his virgin does well, and he who does not marry her does better.

³⁹A wife is bound [by the law]^b to her husband as long as he lives; but in case her husband dies, she is free to marry whom she pleases—only he should belong to the Lord.^c ⁴⁰It is my judgment, however, that she will be better off by remaining single. And I think also that I have God's Spirit.

8 WITH REGARD TO FOOD THAT HAS been offered to idols, we are aware that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²If anyone fancies he knows anything, he

z) Not worldly things but things that pertain to the kingdom of God must be the Christian's supreme interest.

a) Either one's daughter or fiancée, probably the latter.

b) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts.

c) Compare II Cor. 6:14.

does not yet understand as he should; ³but if anyone loves God, that person is known by Him.

⁴Now concerning food that has been dedicated to idols, we know that no idol really exists, that there is no God but one. ⁵Even if there are so-called gods either in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, ⁶for us there is one God the Father, from whom all things come and who is our goal; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things exist and through whom we are.

⁷This knowledge, however, does not rest with everyone. There are some so accustomed to still thinking in terms of idols, that they eat food as offered to idols,^d and their conscience, weak as it is, becomes contaminated. ⁸Of course food does not recommend us to God; we are none the better for eating nor any the worse for not eating. ⁹But make sure that this freedom of choice of yours does not become a hindrance to those who are weak.

¹⁰For if someone sees you, with your knowledge, sitting^e at the table in an idol temple, will not his conscience, weak as it is, encourage him to eat food offered to idols? ¹¹In consequence this weak brother, on whose behalf Christ died, is ruined by your enlightenment. ¹²But as you thus sin against your brothers and hurt their weak consciences, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if my eating causes my brother to stumble, I shall eat no meat forever, so that my brother will not be made to fall into sin.^f

9 AM I NOT FREE? AM I NOT AN apostle? Have I not seen^g our Lord Jesus? Are you not my work in the Lord? ²If to others I am not an apostle, I certainly am to you; for in the Lord you are the certificate of my apostleship. ³My reply to those who criticize me is this: ⁴Do not we have the

right to eat and to drink? ⁵Do not we have the right to take along a Christian wife with us on our travels as the other apostles do, and the Lord's brothers, and Cephas?^h ⁶Or, are only Barnabas and I not entitled to freedom from manual labor?

⁷Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who herds a flock and does not enjoy its milk? ⁸Am I saying this purely from a human standpoint, or does not the Law say the same thing? ⁹For in the Law of Moses it is written,ⁱ "You must not muzzle a threshing ox." Is God thinking in terms of oxen, ¹⁰or does He not certainly speak on our behalf? For our sakes it is written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope and the thresher thresh in expectation of his share.

¹¹Inasmuch as we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it remarkable for us to reap material benefits from you? ¹²Since others enjoy the right to share material benefits from you, do not we all the more? True, we did not avail ourselves of this right; instead, we endure everything so that we may furnish no obstacle to the good news concerning Christ.

¹³Are you not aware that those who conduct the temple service make their living from the temple, and that those who tend the altar share in the altar gifts? ¹⁴In a similar way the Lord directed that those who preach the good news should live from the good news. ¹⁵But I have not availed myself of any of these rights, nor am I writing this to have them granted to me. I would rather die than have anyone rob me of this reason for boasting.

¹⁶For preaching the good news I claim no glory, for I am under compulsion to do so. It is woe^j to me if I do not preach the good news. ¹⁷If I do this willingly I have my reward; but if I am compelled to do so, it is an of-

^d) Since they keep thinking of idols as realities, their conscience is disturbed.

^e) See note at Mark 2:15.

^f) Here is a guide to Christians about engaging in certain doubtful practices.

^g) On the Damascus Road, Acts 9:1-22; cf. I Cor. 15:8.

^h) See note at ch. 1:12.

ⁱ) Deut. 25:4.

^j) The word translated "woe," Greek *ouai*, is equivalent to "alas." It is an expression denoting displeasure or pain.

fice with which I am entrusted.¹⁸What then is my compensation? This, that in preaching I may offer the good news without cost; that I do not make full use of my authority as a preacher of the good news.

¹⁹Although I am free from every one, I have enslaved myself to all of them in order to win a larger number.

²⁰To the Jews I behave as a Jew to win Jews; to those under the Law as one who is under the Law — although I am not under the Law — to gain those who are under the Law. ²¹To those who are without law I am as without law — although not lawless toward God but committed to Christ's Law — in order to win those who are without law. ²²To the weak I have become weak to win the weak. I have become everything to everybody so that by all means I may save some. ²³But I do it all to advance the good news, that I may have a share in it with you.

²⁴Do you not know that those who race in the stadium all run, to be sure, but one receives the prize? So run your race that you may win it. ²⁵And everyone who enters the contest, practices self-control in every detail; he, indeed, does it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable.

²⁶Accordingly, I run straight ahead, not aimlessly; I thus box, not punching the air. ²⁷But I discipline my body and make it serve me, so that, while I am preaching to others, I myself may not be disqualified.

10 I WANT YOU TO KNOW, BROTHERS, that although our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all as followers of Moses were baptized in the cloud and the sea,^k ³and all ate the same spiritual food ⁴and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock which accompanied them, which rock was Christ.^l ⁵Nevertheless God was not pleased with the

majority of them, for they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶These things occurred as examples for us, so that we may not lust after evil as they lusted, ⁷neither be idol-worshippers as some of them were, as it is written,^m "The people sat down to eat and to drink and got up to dance."

⁸Neither should we do immoral deeds as some of them did, whenⁿ twenty-three thousand fell in one day. ⁹Neither should we become a trial to the Lord as some of them tried Him and were destroyed^o by serpents. ¹⁰Do not grumble, either, as some of them grumbled, and they were put out of the way^p by the destroyer.

¹¹These experiences came to them as a lesson for us and were written as a warning to us, on whom the end of the age has come.^q ¹²Therefore let him who feels sure of standing firm, beware of falling. ¹³No temptation except what all people experience has laid hold of you, and God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted beyond your ability but will, at the time of temptation, provide a way out, so that you will be able to stand it. ¹⁴For this reason, my dear friends, keep clear from idolatry.

¹⁵I appeal to your intelligence; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶Is not the blessed cup, which we consecrate, a fellowship in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread we break a fellowship in the body of Christ? ¹⁷The many of us are one bread, one body, since we all participate in the one bread.

¹⁸Look at those of Israelite descent. Are not those who eat the sacrifice sharers of the altar? ¹⁹What then am I saying? That an offering to idols amounts to anything, or that the idol itself is anything? ²⁰No, but that which they sacrifice, they are offering to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ²¹You cannot drink the Lord's cup and the cup of demons. You can-

k) The Israelites identified themselves with Moses by sharing his experiences.

l) The rock was a symbol of Christ. A rock or stone is frequently employed figuratively of Him, e.g., Gen. 49:24; Deut. 32:4; II Sam. 23:3; Eph. 2:20; I Pet. 2:8.

m) Exod. 32:6.

n) Num. 25:1-9.

o) Num. 21:4-6.

p) Num. 16:41.

q) That is, particularly to those in the church in this present age.

not participate in the Lord's table and the table of demons. ²²Or shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we mightier than He?

²³Everything is allowed, but not everything is helpful. Everything is allowed, but not everything is constructive. ²⁴Let none seek his own advantage but rather that of his neighbor.

²⁵Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, without asking questions for conscientious scruples, ²⁶for the earth and its fullness are the Lord's.

²⁷In case an unbeliever invites you^r and you wish to go, eat whatever is served you, without making conscientious inquiries. ²⁸But if someone informs you, "This is food that has been offered to idols," then do not eat it, on account of the one who reminded you and for conscience' sake, — ²⁹I mean not your own but the other person's conscience; for why should my freedom be unfavorably judged before another person's conscience? ³⁰When I partake with gratitude, why should I be denounced on account of that for which I give thanks? ³¹So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.^a

³²Behave in such a way that you cause neither the Jews, nor the Greeks, nor the church of God to stumble, ³³just as I myself please everyone in every way, not seeking my own advantage but that of the many, in order that they may be saved.

11 IMITATE ME, AS I IMITATE Christ. ²I commend you for remembering me in everything, and for observing the traditions I transmitted to you. ³But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, that the man is the woman's head, and that God is the head of Christ. ⁴Any man who has his head covered while praying or prophesying dishonors his head, ⁵but any woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying dishonors her head, for it is the same as if she were shaved. ⁶If a

woman does not wear a veil,¹ let her hair be cut; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then let her wear a veil.

⁷The man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the man's glory. ⁸For man is not from woman but woman from man; ⁹neither was man created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. ¹⁰The woman, therefore, ought to have a token of authority on her head, because of the angels.¹¹ ¹¹Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, and man is not independent of woman, ¹²for just as the woman is from the man, so the man is through the woman, and they all have their origin from God.

¹³Judge for yourselves. Is it becoming for a woman to worship God without covering for her head? ¹⁴Does not nature itself teach you that long hair is disgraceful for a man ¹⁵but glorious for a woman? For her hair is granted her for a covering. ¹⁶In case, however, anyone seems anxious to dispute the matter, we do not observe such a practice, neither do the churches of God.

¹⁷In giving these instructions, however, I do not commend you, because you do not meet together for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸For in the first place, I hear that as you meet as a congregation there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹Indeed, there have to be factions among you, so that the genuine among you may be recognized.

²⁰So when you meet, you do not come to eat the Lord's Supper, ²¹for in your eating each one goes ahead and takes his own supper, so that this one stays hungry and that one imbibes too freely. ²²Do you not have homes for your eating and drinking? Or have you no respect for the church of God, and would you humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I tell you? Shall I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you.

¹) For a meal with him.

^s) Questionable practices should be examined by this test: can they be done to the glory of God?

^t) That is, to cover her head.

^u) Ministering angels, Heb. 1:14.

²³For I have received from the Lord^v what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, broken on your behalf; this do in remembrance of Me." ²⁵Similarly also He took the cup, after they had supped, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you will proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

²⁷Whoever, therefore, eats the bread, or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, is a violator of the Lord's body and blood. ²⁸But let a person look carefully at himself and in that spirit eat of the bread and drink from the cup; ²⁹for whoever eats and drinks without due appreciation of the body^w of Christ eats and drinks to his own condemnation. ³⁰For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number have died.

³¹If, however, we scrutinized ourselves, then we should not be judged. ³²And the judgments from the Lord serve to discipline us, so that we may not be condemned with the world. ³³Accordingly, my brothers, when you come together to eat,^x wait for one another. ³⁴If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that your meeting may not lead to judgment. The rest I will arrange^y when I come.

12 I DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE YOU in the dark, brothers, about spiritual gifts. ²You know how in your days of paganism you were drawn away after dumb idols, in whatever way you were led. ³I therefore declare to you that no one who says, "Jesus be

cursed!" is speaking by the Spirit of God; neither is any one able to say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴There are distinctive gifts of grace, but the same Spirit, ⁵and there are distinctive ministries, yet the same Lord. ⁶There also are varieties of things accomplished, but the same God does all the energizing in them all.

⁷To each is granted the evidence of the Spirit for the common welfare. ⁸To one person is given by the Spirit a message of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit; ⁹to a third faith is granted by the same Spirit; to yet another the gifts of healing by the one Spirit; ¹⁰to another miraculous powers; to this one prophecy, to that one discrimination between spirits, to a third variety of tongues, and to yet another the ability to interpret tongues. ¹¹All these abilities one and the same Spirit energizes, distributing to each individual exactly as He pleases.^z

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, while all the numerous parts of the body compose one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For by one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we have all been imbued with one Spirit.

¹⁴The body consists not of one but of many members. ¹⁵If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would nevertheless remain part of the body. ¹⁶Or if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it is nevertheless part of the body. ¹⁷If the entire body were an eye, where would the hearing come in? Or if all were hearing, what of the smelling? ¹⁸As it is, however, God has

v) The way that the believers at Corinth had been observing the Lord's Supper was certainly not from the Lord. Paul, on the other hand, had received a direct revelation from the Lord concerning its commemoration.

w) The body of Christ is composed of all believers in Him.

x) On the night on which our Lord was betrayed He and the Twelve partook of the Passover Feast in the upper room before He instituted the Lord's Supper. In later years believers frequently held feasts of love before they broke the bread and poured the wine of communion. In Corinth the feast of love, cf. Jude 12, had become out of hand and, as a result, the Lord's Supper was partaken of in an unworthy manner. One needs to scrutinize his own life before he meets with God, lest he be judged.

y) I Cor. 7:17.

z) Every Christian has a gift from the Holy Spirit. Each must discover what his gift is, and then use it for the glory of God.

placed the members in the body, each particular one of them just as He saw fit.

¹⁹If they were all one member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is there are many members to form one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I do not need you." ²²What is more, those seemingly delicate members of the body are indispensable, ²³and on those that are considered ignoble we bestow additional honor. Our unpresentable members are also given more than usual modesty, ²⁴such as our presentable members do not require. In fact, God has so constituted the body with the inferior members the more richly endowed, ²⁵that there may be no discord in the body, but instead the members may have the same concern one for another. ²⁶When one member suffers, all the members share the suffering. When a member is honored, they all share the joy.

²⁷But you are Christ's body and individually members of it. ²⁸And God has appointed in the church first apostles, next prophets,^a third teachers, then miracle workers, then gifts of healing, helping, administering, speaking in tongues. ²⁹Not all are apostles, are they? Not all are prophets, or teachers, or miracle workers, ³⁰or possessing the gifts of healing, or speaking in tongues, or being able to interpret, are they? ³¹But earnestly desire the more valuable spiritual gifts. And I shall show you a still more excellent way.

13 ¹EVEN THOUGH I SPEAK IN human and angelic language and have no love,^b I am as noisy brass or a clashing cymbal. ²And although I have the prophetic gift and see through every secret and through all that may be known, and have sufficient faith for the removal of mountains, but I have no love, I am nothing. ³And though I

give all my belongings to feed the hungry and surrender my body to be burned, but I have no love, I am not in the least benefited.

⁴Love endures long and is kind; love is not jealous; love is not out for display; ⁵it is not conceited or unmannerly; it is neither self-seeking nor irritable, nor does it take account of a wrong that is suffered. ⁶It takes no pleasure in injustice but sides happily with truth. ⁷It bears everything in silence, has unquenchable faith, hopes under all circumstances, endures without limit.

⁸Love never fails. As for prophesying, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will lose its meaning. ⁹For our knowledge is fragmentary and so is our prophesying. ¹⁰But when the perfect is come then the fragmentary will come to an end.

¹¹When I was a child I talked like a child, thought like a child, I reasoned like a child, but on becoming a man I was through with childish ways. ¹²For now we see indistinctly in a mirror,^c but then face to face. Now we know partly, but then we shall understand as completely as we are understood.

¹³There remain then, faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest^d of these is love.

14 ¹MAKE LOVE YOUR GREAT QUEST; then desire spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. ²For whoever speaks in a tongue^e does not speak to men but to God; no one catches the meaning; he is uttering secret matters in the Spirit. ³But he who prophesies gives people a constructive, encouraging and comforting message.

⁴He who speaks in a tongue improves himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church. ⁵I wish you might all speak in tongues, but I would

a) Prophets declare the full revelation of God and not simply predictions about the future.

b) The Greek noun for "love" in this chapter and 14:1 is *agape* (verb *agapao*) which denotes a very deep love such as Christ's love to man, John 13: 34. See note at John 21:15.

c) Most mirrors in apostolic times were made of metal. The images they reflected were not clear but blurred.

d) Love is greatest since it will endure throughout eternity, whereas faith and hope are temporal.

e) That is, an unknown tongue or unfamiliar language, and so in the verses that follow.

rather have you all prophesy. He who prophesies is more important than he who speaks in tongues, unless he should interpret so that the church may enjoy edification.

⁶If, for instance, I should come to you, brothers, speaking in tongues, what good would I do you unless I presented to you some revelation or information or prophecy or instruction? ⁷Unless musical instruments, such as a flute or a harp, produce distinct tones, how will anyone know what is being played? ⁸In case the trumpet emits an indistinct call, who will get ready for battle? ⁹Just so you, unless with your tongue you contribute an intelligent message, how will your speech be understood? You will be talking into empty space.

¹⁰There are who know how many languages in the world, and none without meaning. ¹¹If, then, I do not catch the significance of an expression, I shall seem a foreigner to the one who addresses me, and so will the one who speaks seem a foreigner to me. ¹²And you are in a similar situation. Since you are eager for spiritual gifts, seek to excel in the upbuilding of the church.

¹³The person, therefore, who speaks in a tongue, should pray for ability to interpret. ¹⁴For in case I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive. ¹⁵Then what about it? I shall pray with my spirit, but I shall pray also with my understanding. I shall sing with my spirit, but I shall sing also with my understanding. ¹⁶Else, when you in the Spirit render thanks, how will one not gifted with tongues say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you say? ¹⁷To be sure, you are giving thanks well enough, but the bystander is not edified.

¹⁸Thanks be to God, I speak in tongues more than all of you; ¹⁹but in the congregation I would rather speak five words intelligibly to instruct others than a myriad of words in a tongue.

²⁰Brothers, do not be children in your thinking; be children in wicked-

ness, but in your thinking be mature. ²¹It is written^f in the Law, "I shall speak to this people through strange languages and through alien lips, and even so they will not listen to me, says the Lord." ²²So then tongues are for a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. ²³Suppose at an assembly of the whole church they should all speak with tongues, and uninstructed or unbelieving persons came in, would they not say that you are demented? ²⁴But suppose they all prophesied, and some unbelieving or uninstructed person came in, he would be convicted by all; he would be called to account by all. ²⁵The secrets of his heart would become evident and so, falling face down, he would worship God, declaring that in very truth God is among you.

²⁶What then, brothers? When you meet together, each one contributes his part — a song, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation of it; everything should be constructive. ²⁷If someone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in his turn, and let one give an interpretation. ²⁸But in case there is no interpreter, let them keep still in the church; let each of them speak to himself and to God. ²⁹So, two or three prophets may speak while the rest pay attention. ³⁰But if a revelation comes to another who is sitting by, then let the first one be silent; ³¹for it is possible for all to prophesy, each in his turn, so that all may learn and all may receive encouragement. ³²And the spirits of the prophets are in subjection to the prophets; ³³for He is not the God of disorder but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. ³⁴Let the women keep silent in the churches, for they are not allowed to speak. Instead, they must, as the Law says,^g be in subordination. ³⁵If they wish to learn something, let them inquire of their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church. ³⁶Or did God's message get its start

^f Isa. 28:11, 12; cf. Deut. 28:49. The "Law" sometimes denotes not the Law of Moses only or the Pentateuch but all of the O.T.
^g Gen. 3:16.

from you? Or did it come to you alone?

³⁷If anyone considers himself a prophet or inspired, let him understand that what I write to you is the Lord's injunction; ³⁸but if anyone disregards it, he is to be disregarded. ³⁹To conclude, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, but do not hinder the speaking with tongues. ⁴⁰Let everything be done with propriety and in orderly fashion.

15 I WOULD FURTHER REMIND you, brothers, of the good news which I preached to you, which you welcomed, in which you stand, ²and by which you are saved, if you keep hold of my message to you — unless, indeed, you believed in vain.

³For I transmitted to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance^h with the Scriptures, ⁴that also He was buried, and that He rose on the third day in accordanceⁱ with the Scriptures; ⁵that also He was seen by Cephas,^j then by the Twelve. ⁶Later He appeared to more than five hundred brothers simultaneously, of whom the majority are still alive; but some have died. ⁷Afterward He appeared to James,^k then to all the apostles, ⁸and last of all He appeared to me^l also, as to one whose birth was like a miscarriage. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, not deserving the name of apostle because I persecuted the church of God.

¹⁰By divine grace, however, I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not ineffective. In fact, I have worked harder than any of them — that is, not really I but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹So, whether I or they, such is our preaching and such is what you believed.^m

¹²But if Christ is preached, that He was raised from the dead, how is it

that some of you claim there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³If there is no rising of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; ¹⁴but if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching amounts to nothing and your faith is futile. ¹⁵Then we are discovered to be false witnesses of God because we have testified about God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise if no dead are actually raised. ¹⁶For if no dead are raised, then neither has Christ been raised. ¹⁷But if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸And what is more, those who have died in Christ perished. ¹⁹If we have hope in Christ for this life only, then of all people we are most to be pitied.

²⁰But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. ²¹For inasmuch as death came through a man, the resurrection from the dead is also through a Man. ²²For just as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall allⁿ be made to live; ²³each, to be sure, in his turn: Christ first; then His own at His coming. ²⁴After that the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after abolishing every ruler and all government and power. ²⁵For He must be King until He puts all His enemies under His feet.

²⁶The last enemy to be subdued is death, ²⁷for "He has put everything under His feet." But when it says, "All things are subjected to Him," it is clear that the One who does the subjecting of all to Him is excepted. ²⁸However, once everything is subjected to Him, then the Son, too, will subject Himself to the One who put all things in subjection under Him, so that God may be all in all.

²⁹Otherwise, if the dead do not rise at all, what are they to do who are baptized for the dead?^p And why are

h) Ps. 22; Isa. 53.

i) Ps. 16:10.

j) See note at ch. 1:12.

k) This was Jesus' half brother, the son of Mary and Joseph, cf. Gal. 1:19.

l) On the Damascus Road, Acts 9:8, 17.

m) Without exception they preached the risen Christ.

n) All believers in Christ, called "His own" in the next verse, and not just everybody.

o) Ps. 8:6; cf. Heb. 2:8.

p) Perhaps the allusion is to those who bravely identified themselves in baptism with others who had been martyred for Christ's sake. Cf. vs. 30.

they baptized for them? ³⁰Besides, why do we live dangerously every moment? ³¹Every day I face death, as surely as I take pride in you, brothers, through Christ Jesus our Lord. ³²From a human standpoint, what good is my fighting against beasts in Ephesus? ³³If the dead are not raised, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." ³⁴Do not be misled. Bad associations corrupt good morals. ³⁵Return to sober-mindedness as you should, and quit sinning. For I say to your shame, some have no sense of the presence of God.

³⁵"But," someone will ask, "how are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?" ³⁶You simpleton! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷Nor is what you sow the body that is to be; it is a mere kernel, either of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸But God gives it a body as He plans, and to each seed its particular body. ³⁹All flesh is not the same; but one kind is human, another is animal, another is fowl, and another fish. ⁴⁰There are heavenly bodies and also earthly bodies; but the radiance of the heavenly is one kind and that of the earthly is another kind. ⁴¹The sun is radiant in one way and the moon is another way; the stars in still a different way. So does one star differ in radiance from another.

⁴²So too is the resurrection from the dead. The body is sown in dissolution; it is raised in immortality. ⁴³It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a spiritual as well as a physical body. ⁴⁵So it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

⁴⁶However, the spiritual was not first, but the physical; then the spiritual. ⁴⁷The first man, from the earth, was made of dust; the second Man is from heaven. ⁴⁸Those who are of the dust are like the one who was made of

the dust,^t and those who are of heaven are like the One from heaven. ⁴⁹And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly one, so we shall bear the likeness of the heavenly One.

⁵⁰But I make this statement, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Take notice; I am telling you a secret. We shall not all die but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet call. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this perishable must put on imperishability and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴And when this perishable has put on imperishability and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall the written word be fulfilled,^u "Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?"

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law.^v ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

⁵⁸Consequently, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, at all times abounding in the Lord's service, aware that your labor in the Lord is not futile.

16 WITH REGARD TO THE COLLECTION for the saints,^w you should do as I commanded the churches of Galatia. ²When the first day^x of each week comes, let each of you set aside in proportion to what he has gained, so that there may be no collection when I arrive. ³Then when I reach there, I will send those whom you approve with credentials to convey your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴And if it is fitting for me to go, then they will accompany me.

⁵When I have crossed Macedonia, I shall make you a visit, for I shall pass

q) The identity of the "beasts in Ephesus" is not wholly clear, Cf. ch. 16:9.

r) Isa. 22:13.

s) Gen. 2:7.

t) That is, Adam.

u) Isa. 52:8; Hos. 13:14.

v) Sin gave death its power over man when he broke the Law.

w) See note at Acts 9:13.

x) A day of praise for Christ's resurrection. On this account the early church gathered for worship on Sunday, the first day of the week, rather than on the Sabbath, which is the seventh day of the week.

through Macedonia; ⁶but I am likely to stay a while with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me off, wherever I may go. ⁷For this time I do not want to see you merely in passing, but I hope, the Lord permitting, to stay with you for a while. ⁸I shall remain in Ephesus, however, until Pentecost; ⁹for a wide door is opening up for service, and there are many opponents.

¹⁰When Timothy arrives, see to it that his presence with you is free from embarrassment, for he does the Lord's work, just as I do. ¹¹So let no one slight him, and whenever he returns to me, see him off safely, for I expect him along with the brothers.

¹²As for our brother Apollos, I have strongly appealed to him to visit you with the brothers, and find him quite unready to go now; but he will come whenever it is convenient.

¹³Be alert; stand firm in the faith; play the man; be strong. ¹⁴Let all that you do be done in love.

¹⁵I appeal to you, brothers (you know the Stephanas family, how it is the first fruits of the Achaia converts, and how they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints), ¹⁶that you obey such people as well as every fellow worker and earnest toiler. ¹⁷I am happy because of the arrival of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for they have made up for your absence; ¹⁸they have refreshed my spirit and yours. It is to such people that you would do well to give recognition.

¹⁹The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla, together with the church in their house,^y greet you heartily in the Lord. ²⁰All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

²¹Here is my greeting in my own handwriting,^z Paul's. ²²Whoever does not love the Lord, he shall be accursed.^a Our Lord, come!

²³The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. ²⁴My love to you all in Christ Jesus.

y) Aquila and Priscilla were among the first believers in Corinth. Paul made his home with them when he was there, since he worked in the same craft as Aquila, tentmaking. Aquila and Priscilla later moved to Ephesus, where this letter was written by Paul.

z) Usually Paul dictated his letters, e.g. Rom. 16:22. Sometimes he added a kind of postscript by his own hand, e.g. here and in Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; II Thes. 3:17.

a) In the Greek text *anathema*, referring to the object of a curse, is used here, followed by the Aramaic *marana tha*, meaning "Our Lord, come!"

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 57,
in Macedonia, probably Philippi

1 PAUL, BY THE WILL OF GOD AN apostle of Christ Jesus, and brother Timothy,^a to the church of God at Corinth,^b and to all the saints^c throughout Achaia: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who consoles us in our every trouble, so that we may be able to encourage those in any kind of distress, with the consolation with which we are divinely sustained. ⁵For as we experience richly the sufferings of Christ, so we enjoy through Christ an abundance of consolation.^d

⁶When we are troubled, it is for your comfort and salvation. When we are comforted, it is for the encouragement that you experience in the enduring of the same sufferings we endure. ⁷And our hope for you is unshaken in view of the fact that you are sharing as well in the sufferings as in the consolation.

⁸So we want you to know, brothers, about the trouble that came to us in Asia,^e how we were weighed down beyond all possible endurance, so that we really despaired of life. ⁹Indeed, we passed the sentence of death on ourselves, but it was in order that we might not rely on ourselves but on

God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰He rescued us from so perilous a death and will rescue us again; we hope in Him. for He will yet deliver us, ¹¹while you also cooperate by your prayer for us, so that thanks may be given by many on our behalf for the blessings that came to us through many.

¹²The reason for our pride is the witness of our conscience that we have behaved in the world generally, but especially toward you, with devout motives and godly sincerity; not with worldly wisdom but by divine grace. ¹³For the meaning of what we write you is not different from what you read and understand perfectly, ¹⁴just as you have partly understood us, to the effect that we are your reason for pride, as well as that you are ours in the day of our Lord Jesus.

¹⁵It was with this assurance that I planned to visit you first, so that you might enjoy a double blessing, ¹⁶visiting you on the way to Macedonia and again on the trip from Macedonia to you, and to be sent by you on my way to Judea. ¹⁷Since I intended this, did I act with fickleness; or did I plan in a worldly way what I had in mind, so that on my part yes, yes equals no, no? ¹⁸As God is trustworthy, our word to you is not yes and no, ¹⁹because Jesus Christ, the Son of God whom we preached to you, Silvanus and Timothy

a) See note at I Tim. 1:2.

b) See note at I Cor. 1:2.

c) See note at Acts 9:13.

d) Paul faced persecutions, divisiveness, and lack of discipline within the church. Yet in these trials he was consoled through Christ by the God of all comfort, vs. 3-5.

e) An example of Paul's troubles in Asia is recorded in Acts 19:23-41.

and I,^f was not yes and no, but in Him it is yes. ²⁰In Him all the promises of God are yes. For this reason we also say through Him "Amen" to God for His glory through us. ²¹But He, who makes us steadfast with you in joint fellowship with Christ and has anointed us, is God, ²²who also stamped His seal on us and deposited in our hearts the first installment of the Spirit.

²³I call upon God as my soul's witness, that to spare you I have delayed my coming to Corinth. ²⁴Not that we lord it over your faith, but rather that we work with you for your happiness, for by faith you stand firm.

2 I MADE UP MY MIND NOT TO MAKE you another distressing visit, ²for if I grieve you, who may make me happy except those whom I grieve? ³I wrote this so that when I came I might not be grieved by those who should make me happy; for I was confident that my confidence would be shared by every one of you. ⁴For in deep distress and with a heart of anguish, yes, with many tears I wrote you, not in order to grieve you but in order that you might know the love I so richly bear you.

⁵If someone^g has caused grief, he has not simply grieved me but, to some extent at least—not to exaggerate—all of you. ⁶For such a one this censure by the majority suffices; ⁷so, instead of further rebuke, you should forgive and comfort him, else he may be overwhelmed by despair. ⁸I therefore beg you to reinstate him in your affection. ⁹For this purpose I wrote, to know your attitude, whether you were altogether obedient. ¹⁰But whom you forgive, him I also forgive, and what I forgive is forgiven for your sakes in the presence of Christ, ¹¹lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his schemings.^h

¹²When I arrived at Troas for the good news concerning Christ, although there was a door opened for me in the

Lord, ¹³yet I enjoyed no peace of mind because I did not find my brother Titus; so I left them to go into Macedonia. ¹⁴But thanks be to God, who invariably leads us on triumphantly in Christ and evidences through us in every place the fragrance that results from knowing Him. ¹⁵For to God we are Christ's fragrance for those who are being saved and for those who are perishing; ¹⁶to the one a fatal aroma that brings death, but to the other a vital aroma that brings life.

¹⁷And who is qualified for these things? Are not we? For we do not, like so many, peddle an adulterated message of God, but from the purest motives before God we speak in Christ as those sent from God.

3 ARE WE BEGINNING AGAIN TO RECOMMEND ourselves? Or do we, like some people, stand in need of letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You are our letter of recommendation, written in our hearts, acknowledged and read by everyone, ³making it obvious that you are Christ's letter delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on human tablets of the heart.ⁱ

⁴In God's presence I have such confidence through Christ, ⁵not because we possess self-sufficiency to regard anything as from ourselves, but because our sufficiency is God-given. ⁶And He has qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant, not of written Law but of the Spirit; for the letter kills^j but the Spirit makes alive. ⁷Yet if the ministry of death, engraved in letters of stone, was inaugurated with such splendor that the Israelites were not able to gaze intently at the face of Moses, because of the radiance of his face, which after all faded away, ⁸how much more glorious must be the ministry of the Spirit? ⁹If there is glory in the administration that announces condemnation, how infi-

f) Three accordant witnesses, cf. ch. 13:1.

g) The Corinthians would know that Paul was referring to the erring brother of I Cor. 5:1.

h) Christians must be aware constantly of Satan's evil designs.

i) Jer. 31:33.

j) The Law, which points to man's sinfulness, condemns him; the Holy Spirit gives the believer life through Christ.

nately more glory must there be in the administration that declares righteousness! ¹⁰In view of the surpassing glory, what was once glorious retains no glory at all. ¹¹If what passed away had its splendor, how much more that which is permanent!

¹²Possessed of such hope we speak quite unreservedly, ¹³not as Moses did, who put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at the end of something that was fading away. ¹⁴In fact, their minds were dulled. To this very day, when the Old Testament is being read, that same veil remains, not lifted because only by Christ is it removed. ¹⁵Yes, until now, whenever Moses is being read, a veil lies over their hearts; ¹⁶but whenever one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷For the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

¹⁸But we all, as with unveiled face we see as in a mirror the Lord's glory reflected, are changed into the same likeness^k from one degree of glory to another, derived as it is from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

4 THEREFORE, BEING ENGAGED IN this service through divine mercy, we are not despondent, ²but we have renounced underhanded ways of which one should be ashamed. We do not behave craftily, nor do we falsify the word of God, but by clear announcement of the truth we commend ourselves in the presence of God to every human conscience. ³If the good news that we preach has been obscured, it has been obscured in the case of those who are perishing, ⁴in whom the god of this world^l has blinded their unbelieving minds, to prevent the illumination of the good news concerning the glorious Christ, who is the likeness of God, from penetrating their hearts.

⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and our-

selves your servants for Jesus' sake ⁶because God, who commanded^m that light should shine out of darkness has made it shine in our hearts so as to show forth the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

⁷This treasure, however, we possess within utensils of clay — an evidence that the unparalleled power is from God and not from us. ⁸We are hedged in from every side, but we do not live cramped lives; we are perplexed, but we do not despair; ⁹we are persecuted but not deserted; struck down but not destroyed, ¹⁰all the while bearing about in the body the dyingⁿ of Jesus, so that by our bodies the life of Jesus may also be shown. ¹¹In the midst of life we are constantly handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may yet be evidenced through our mortal flesh. ¹²Accordingly, death is active in us, but life in you.

¹³We have, nevertheless, that same spirit of faith as he had of whom it is written,^o "I have believed; therefore have I spoken." We, too, believe and therefore we speak, ¹⁴assured that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up with Jesus and will have us stand with you before Him. ¹⁵For all this is for your sakes in order that grace which is multiplying with the thanksgiving of the many may abound for the glory of God.

¹⁶For this reason we are not discouraged, but even though our outer nature suffers decay, our inner self is renewed day after day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary trouble is producing for us an everlasting weight of glory that exceeds all measures, ¹⁸because we do not fasten our eyes on the visible but on the unseen; for the visible things are transitory, but the unseen things are everlasting.

5 FOR WE KNOW THAT, IF OUR earthly tent in which we are living should be dismantled, we have a God-

k) The likeness of Christ, which grows stronger with spiritual maturity.

l) Satan, cf. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2.

m) Gen. 1:3.

n) Paul bore in his body scars that proved his sufferings for Christ's sake, Gal. 6:16; cf. II Cor. 11:24-27.

o) Ps. 116:9-11.

given dwelling, a house in heaven not made by hands, that will last forever. ²So it is that in this dwelling we sigh with longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, ³since with such clothing we shall not be found naked.^p ⁴For we sigh deeply while in this tent, not because we want to be stripped of it but rather to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be absorbed by life.

⁵For this experience God, who granted us the first installment of the Spirit has prepared us, ⁶so we always keep confident, knowing well enough that being at home in the body means being absent from the Lord; ⁷for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸But we have courage, and we prefer to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹Therefore we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him, whether absent or present; ¹⁰for we must all appear before the tribunal of Christ,^q so that each may receive as his due what he practiced while in the body, whether good or bad.

¹¹Knowing, therefore, what it means to revere the Lord,^r we seek to win people over. Our motives are clear to God and I hope they are made clear as well to your consciences. ¹²This is no repeated commendation of ourselves to you, but it is providing you with an incentive to feel proud of us, so that you may reply to those who are proud of a person's position and not of his heart. ¹³If we are beside ourselves, it is for God. If we are thoughtful, it is for you. ¹⁴For the love of Christ lays hold of us and brings us to this conclusion: one died for all, so that they all died; ¹⁵and He died for all so that all who live may no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and rose for them.

¹⁶Consequently, from now on we think of no one just in terms of his human nature. Even if we had thought of Christ in that way, we now no longer know Him just in terms of His human nature.^s ¹⁷Accordingly, if any

one is in Christ he is a new creation. The old is gone; lo, the new has come. ¹⁸But all things come from God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹which is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting up their sins against them, and committing to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰On behalf of Christ, then, we are ambassadors, God as it were making the appeal through us. We beg you for Christ's sake, be reconciled to God. ²¹God made Him who knew no sin to be made sin on our behalf, so that in Him we might share the righteousness of God.

6 AS GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS, HOWEVER, we appeal to you not to accept the grace of God without using it; ²for He says,^t "At a welcome time I have heard you and on a day of salvation I have helped you." Observe that now is a specially welcome time, that now is the day of salvation — ³and we put no obstacle whatever in anyone's way, so that our ministry may not be discredited. ⁴Rather, we prove ourselves in every respect as servants of God, by great endurance, in afflictions, distresses, and hardships; ⁵in lashes, imprisonments, and disturbances; in toils, sleepless nights, and without food; ⁶through purity, knowledge, and endurance of wrongs; through kindness, by the Holy Spirit, in genuine love; ⁷with a message of truth, by the power of God; by means of the weapons of righteousness for attack and defense; ⁸through honor and shame; through blame and praise; considered impostors when we are honest, ⁹and unknown^u when we are well known; thought of as dying when, you see, we are alive, and as disciplined but not put to death; ¹⁰as deceived and yet always joyful; as poor but making many wealthy; as having nothing and yet in possession of everything.

¹¹O Corinthians, we address you

p) That is, as disembodied spirits.

q) Rom. 14:10.

r) Sensing awe in view of the great Judge, our Lord Jesus Christ, John 5:22.

s) Having known Christ on earth is not as important as knowing Him now. Cf. John 20:29.

t) Isa. 49:8.

u) Compare Matt. 13:57.

frankly with wide-open hearts. ¹²You are not hedged in by us, but you are cramped in your own affections. ¹³In exchange — I am speaking as to children — open wide your hearts in the same way.

¹⁴Be not yoked unequally with unbelievers; for what common ground is there between righteousness and lawlessness, or what association is there between light and darkness? ¹⁵Or what harmony is there between Christ and Belial,^v or what partnership between a believer and an unbeliever? ¹⁶What agreement has God's temple with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, as God has said,^w "I will dwell in them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be My people." ¹⁷For that reason,^x "Come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch anything unclean." ¹⁸Then I will receive you and I will be a Father to you, and to Me you shall be sons and daughters. The Lord Omnipotent speaks."

7 IN POSSESSION OF THESE PROMISES, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, and complete our dedication in reverence of God.

²Allow us room in your hearts. We have wronged no one; we have ruined no one; we have exploited no one. ³I am not censuring you, for, as I previously said, you are in our hearts to die and to live together. ⁴My confidence in you is strong; my pride in you is great; I am filled with comfort; in all our trouble I am overjoyed.

⁵For as we reached Macedonia, our bodies enjoyed no respite at all, but there was trouble at every turn, quarrels outside and fears within. ⁶But God, who encourages the downhearted, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus,^y ⁷and not merely by his arrival but by the encouragement he received from you; for he reported how you are longing for us, your sorrow, your zeal for me, all of which turned out for my greater joy.

⁸If I have grieved you with my letter, I do not regret it, and although I did regret it — for I observe how that particular letter did, though only momentarily, give you grief — ⁹I am glad of it now, not because you were grieved but because your grief led to repentance. For your grief was such as God desired, so that you suffered no loss from us. ¹⁰For the sorrow that God approves works out a repentance that leads to salvation such as is never regretted, while the world's sorrow produces death.

¹¹For see how earnest this godly grief has made you; how apologetic; longing for me; how zealous; how ready to vindicate me. In every way you have proved yourselves cleared in the matter. ¹²So although I wrote you as I did, it was not on account of the offender or of the one offended, but so that your devotion for us might be revealed to you before God. ¹³On this account we have been comforted.

Added to our own consolation there was the enjoyment of Titus' happiness, because his spirit was refreshed by all of you, ¹⁴and I was not ashamed of my boasting to him about you; but just as everything we told you was true, so our boasting to Titus proved true. ¹⁵His feelings go out to you the more as he remembers the obedience of all of you, as with fear and trembling you receive him. ¹⁶I am glad I can have full confidence in you.

8 WE WANT YOU TO KNOW, BROTHERS, of the divine grace that has been granted the Macedonian churches:^z ²how, under a terrible ordeal of affliction their great happiness, combined with their deep poverty, has overflowed into a wealth of their generosity; ³how up to their ability — yes, and I bear them testimony, beyond their ability — they voluntarily have given, ⁴most urgently begging of us the favor of taking part in this service to the saints.^a ⁵They did not do simply what we hoped for, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and so, in

v) Greek *Beliar*, meaning *worthlessness*. It is a name that was frequently applied to Satan.

w) Lev. 26:12. x) Compare Isa. 52:11.

y) Titus had visited the church at Corinth and had reported conditions there to Paul, cf. ch. 8:6.

z) For example, Philippi, Berea, and Thessalonica.

a) See note at Acts 9:13.

keeping with the will of God, also to us.

⁶So we urged Titus to complete this gracious work among you, since he began it. ⁷But just as you are ahead in everything, in faith, in expression, in knowledge, in diligence of every sort, and in your love for us, so be foremost in this gracious work also.

⁸I am not issuing an order, but I would test the genuineness of your love by the eagerness of others. ⁹For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how, although He was rich, yet He became poor for your sakes, so that you by His poverty might become rich.^b ¹⁰Let me advise you in this matter. It is to your interest, because a year ago you were not only the first to act but also to want to do so. ¹¹Now then, complete the enterprise, so that your readiness in desiring it may be equaled by the task accomplished to the measure of your means. ¹²For if there is present a willing mind, the gift is appreciated in proportion to what one possesses, not to what one does not possess.

¹³In order to afford relief to others, you need not put a heavy burden on yourselves; ¹⁴rather share fairly. Let your abundance at this time make up for their shortage, so that their surplus may go toward your lack, and thus conditions may become equalized, ¹⁵as it is written,^c "The one who got much had nothing over and the one who got little did not lack."

¹⁶Thanks be to God, who planted in the heart of Titus the same devotion for you, ¹⁷for he welcomed my appeal and is so deeply interested in you that he went off to you of his own volition.

¹⁸But we are sending the brother^d along with him whose commendable ways in the things pertaining to the good news are known through all the churches. ¹⁹Besides, as an appointee of the churches, he travels with us in this ministry of grace for the Lord's own glory and for expediting our work.

²⁰We take this precaution, so that no one may find fault with us in our handling of this liberal collection; ²¹for we intend to do the right thing not only before the Lord but also before men.

²²Along with them we are sending our brother whose zeal we have frequently put to the test and who is now all the more zealous because he has so much confidence in you. ²³As to Titus, he is my associate and your fellow worker in serving you; as to our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, an honor to Christ. ²⁴Show them proof, then, of your love and of our boastings about you, such as will be evidenced before the churches.

9 IT IS SUPERFLUOUS FOR ME TO write you about this ministering to the saints, ²for I know of your willingness, and I boast about you to the Macedonians, saying that Achaia^e has been ready since last year, and your zeal has stirred up a large number of them. ³I am sending these brothers so that our pride in you may not in this instance be an empty boast, but that you may be as fully ready as I told them. ⁴Or else, if any Macedonians should come with me and find you unprepared, we — not to say you — should be humiliated because of our confidence. ⁵I considered it therefore necessary to request these brothers to visit you in advance and to have your promised bountiful gift all made up, so it will be ready to hand, a real thank offering and not something extorted from you.

⁶I say this, that he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, while he who sows liberally will also reap liberally. ⁷Let each one give as he has planned in his heart, neither grudgingly nor by compulsion; for God loves a happy giver. ⁸And God is able to pour out on you richly every possible grace, so that you will always and under all circumstances have plenty for your own need and an abundance for every good work, ⁹as

b) Christ is the supreme example of the believer's wealth.

c) The allusion is to the gathering of manna, Exod. 16:18.

d) No clue is given concerning this man's identity or of the man mentioned in vs. 22.

e) Achaia here may denote other cities in the province, e.g. Cenchreae, the seaport of Corinth, but the reference is particularly to the church at Corinth. The Macedonians would include the believers in Philippi, Berea, and Thessalonica.

it is written,^f "He has scattered abroad; he has given to the poor; his righteousness never fails."

¹⁰Now He who provides seed to the sower and food to eat will also supply and multiply your store of seed and will increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every respect for all kinds of generosity, and your liberality, as it is worked out through us, will cause thanksgiving to God. ¹²For the rendering of this service not only supplies amply the wants of the saints, but it also abounds in causing many thanksgivings to God; ¹³because of the proof of this service they are praising God for your loyalty to the good news about Christ which you confess, and for the liberality of your contribution for them and for all. ¹⁴And they feel a yearning for you in their prayer because of the unusual measure of divine grace that has come upon you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift.^g

10 I, MYSELF, PAUL, APPEAL TO you on the basis of Christ's gentleness and considerateness—I who am so meek when face to face with you and so bold toward you from a distance. ²I beg you not to force such boldness on me when I am with you as I intend to assume toward some who entertain the notion that we behave from merely human motives. ³For while we spend our life in a body of flesh, we do not war with carnal weapons. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not physical, but they are powerful with God's help for the tearing down of fortresses, ⁵inasmuch as we tear down reasonings and every proud barrier that is raised up against the knowledge of God and lead every thought into subjection to Christ. ⁶We are prepared also to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fully expressed.

⁷Take a look at what you are facing. If someone is confident that he belongs to Christ, let him ponder this, that we are Christ's as well as he. ⁸Even if we do boast excessively about our author-

ity, which the Lord granted us for your establishment and not for your destruction, I shall not be put to shame; ⁹neither would I appear as wanting to terrify you with my letters. ¹⁰For, "His letters," they say, "are weighty and forceful, but his physical presence is insignificant and his speech is contemptible."

¹¹Let such people consider this, that what we are when absent through the message of our letters, that we are in action when present. ¹²For we do not venture to count ourselves among or to compare ourselves with some who commend their own qualities. However, when they make themselves their standard of measurement and judge their own value from comparisons with each other, then they do not behave wisely. ¹³On our part, we shall not boast extravagantly but rather stay within the limit of the sphere which God has allotted to us, the boundary of which stretches far enough to include you.

¹⁴We are not overextending ourselves, as if we did not reach as far as you, for we were the first to reach you with the good news about Christ. ¹⁵Neither are we boasting unduly about fields in which others are serving^h but we entertain the hope that your growing faith may enlarge our sphere of influence so greatly with your help, ¹⁶that we may evangelize those beyond you, rather than brag about labor that has been accomplished in another's field. ¹⁷The person who boasts should boast in the Lord; ¹⁸for not he who commends himself, but whom the Lord commends, stands approved.

11 BEAR WITH ME A LITTLE IN this foolishness of mine. Yes, you will have to tolerate me; ²for I am jealous for you with a divine jealousy, because I gave you in marriage to one Husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³Only I am afraid that, just as the serpent beguiled Eve with his craftiness, so your thoughts may be corrupted from a sincere and

^f Ps. 112:9.

^g That is, Christ.

^h Paul would not assume credit for work done by other men.

pure devotion to Christ. ⁴In fact, if someone comes along and preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit from what you received, or a gospel different from what you accepted, you put up with it quite easily.¹

⁵Nevertheless I consider myself not inferior to the most eminent apostles. ⁶Even if I lack skill in speaking, I certainly do not lack knowledge, which we have in every way made perfectly clear to all of you. ⁷Or have I erred by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, when I preached to you the good news of God without compensation? ⁸I robbed other churches, taking support from them in order to minister to you; ⁹and when I was with you and ran short of funds, I imposed on none of you, for the brothers that came from Macedonia supplied my needs. Thus I invariably kept myself from being a burden to you, and so I plan to keep myself.

¹⁰As sure as Christ's truth is in me, this boast of mine shall not be stopped in the Achaia districts. ¹¹And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do. ¹²What I do, however, I shall do to remove the occasion from those who want it in order that in the work of which they boast they may appear as equal with us.¹ ¹³For such are false apostles, deceptive workers, wearing the masks of apostles of Christ; ¹⁴and no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵So it is nothing extraordinary if his servants disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose destiny will be in agreement with their actions.

¹⁶Once more I tell you, let no one consider me a fool; but if you do, then tolerate me as a fool, so that I too may do a bit of boasting. ¹⁷What I say, I do not speak from the Lord but in a foolish mood in this boastful confidence. ¹⁸Since many boast in a

worldly way, I too will boast; ¹⁹for you, being so wise, will gladly tolerate fools. ²⁰You stand for it when someone enslaves you, or imposes on you, or exploits you, or snubs you, or slaps you in the face. ²¹To my shame I admit that we were too lacking in force along those lines.

²²But in whatever line someone may boast — I talk foolishly — I dare to match him. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's offspring? So am I. ²³Are they ministers of Christ? I more so — I say it as if I were out of my mind — in measureless toils and imprisonments, in floggings beyond count and facing death frequently. ²⁴Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one,^k ²⁵three times I was beaten with rods,¹ once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, for a night and a day I have been adrift at sea. ²⁶In my many travels I have been in dangers of rivers and robbers, of Jews and Gentiles, of city, desert, and sea; in dangers among false brothers; ²⁷in wearying work and hardship through many a sleepless night; in hunger, thirst, and often without food; in cold and lack of clothing.

²⁸Besides these experiences from the outside, there is the daily responsibility for the churches.^m ²⁹Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my burning with indignation? ³⁰If I must boast, I shall boast of matters that show my weakness. ³¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying. ³²In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of Damascus guarded to arrest me, ³³and through a window I was let down in a basket over the wall and escaped from his hands.

12 THERE HAS TO BE BOASTING, AL-
though nothing is gained by it;

i) Although not so clearly as in Galatians, Paul seems to be referring to Judaizers, Christians who insisted upon circumcision and all the burdens it involved.

j) The Corinthians, who allowed Paul to earn his own living while he was preaching and teaching there, provided a living for false apostles.

k) Forty lashes was a punishment dealt to Jewish offenders by temple or synagogue officials. The O.T. Law prescribed forty strokes, Deut. 25:1-3, a number that was not to be exceeded. Therefore, lest while inflicting punishment according to the Law, the Law itself should be broken, only thirty-nine lashes were administered.

l) This penalty was adopted from the Romans.

m) Paul not only preached to these people but he also had a pastoral ministry among them.

so I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ²I know a manⁿ in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—was caught up as far as the third heaven. ³I also know of the same man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—⁴how he was caught up into Paradise and heard words too sacred to tell, which no human being is allowed to repeat.

⁵Of such an instance I will boast, but not about myself—unless it be about my weakness. ⁶Should I wish to boast, however, I should not be acting the fool, for I should be telling the truth. But I will refrain, so that no one may ascribe to me more than he observes in me or hears from me.

⁷In order that I might not swell with pride because of the extraordinary great revelations, there was given me a thorn^o in the flesh, a satanic messenger^p to strike me, that I might not be too elated. ⁸Three times I invoked the Lord about this, to have it removed from me, ⁹and He told me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength comes to perfection where there is weakness." Therefore I am happy to boast in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may abide upon me. ¹⁰I delight, then, in weaknesses, in insults, in needy circumstances, in persecutions and troubles, all on account of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

¹¹I have become a fool. You forced me to it, for I ought to be recognized by you. In fact, though I am nobody, I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles.^q ¹²The signs of the apostle were demonstrated among you by patience of every sort in the working of signs and miracles and acts of power. ¹³In what respect, then, were you inferior to the other churches, except that I myself was not a burden to you? Pardon me this unfairness.

¹⁴Here I am ready for my third visit to you, and I shall be no burden to you, for I am not after your possessions but after you. For the children should not accumulate wealth for their parents, but the parents for their children. ¹⁵So I shall gladly spend and be spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you excessively, am I loved the less?

¹⁶But let that be! I have not burdened you. But being crafty did I take you in by cunning? ¹⁷I have not exploited you through anyone I sent to you, have I? ¹⁸I urged Titus to go and sent along the brother. Did Titus exploit you? Have we not behaved in the same spirit and walked in the same tracks?

¹⁹You have been supposing all the while that we are apologizing to you? We are speaking in the presence of God as Christ's representatives, and it is all done, dear friends, for your upbuilding; ²⁰for I am afraid that perhaps when I arrive I may not find you in the condition I should like to find you; neither may you find me as you might desire.

There may be strife, jealousy, ugly temper, sectarianism, slander, gossiping, conceit, disharmony. ²¹I am fearful that on my return my God may humble me before you, and I may be saddened over many who have continued in their former sins and have not repented of the impurity, immorality, and sensuality which they have practiced.

13 THIS IS MY THIRD VISIT TO YOU
 "In the mouth" of two or three witnesses every statement will be confirmed." ²¹I said previously, when was there on my second visit, and I say it now in advance while I am still absent, to those who have sinned and to all the rest, that when I come once more I shall not spare them, ³since you are looking for proof of Christ'

n) Paul is here speaking of himself.

o) A bodily ailment. Its nature is not disclosed, perhaps so that all Christians who suffer persistent physical distress may take comfort in the apostle's response to his thorn in the flesh.

p) Paul was under God's protective care, as all believers are. God permitted Satan to test the apostle in this way for Paul's own good.

q) A term used by Paul to designate those of his opponents who were false apostles.

r) Deut. 19:15.

speaking through me, Christ who is not feeble toward you but mighty in you. ⁴For whereas He was crucified out of weakness, yet He lives through divine power, and we, too, are weak in Him; but we shall live with Him for your benefit through the power of God.

⁵Test yourselves, whether you are in the faith; examine yourselves. Or do you not recognize by yourselves that Christ Jesus is within you, unless you fail to pass the test? ⁶But I hope you will acknowledge that we do not fail.

⁷But we pray to God that you may do no wrong; and our purpose is not that our integrity may be shown, but that you may do what is right, even though we may appear to have failed. ⁸For we have no ability against the truth, but only on behalf of the truth. ⁹We are happy to be weak when you

are strong. And this is the object of our prayer, that you may reach full spiritual maturity.

¹⁰For this reason I write this in my absence, so that, when I am present, I need not be severe in the exercise of the authority which the Lord has granted me for constructive and not for destructive purposes.

¹¹Finally, brothers, farewell. Mind your ways, accept admonition, agree in your thinking, preserve peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³All the saints¹ greet you.

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.²

s) This was a ceremonial kiss in the early churches, apparently reflecting a custom in the synagogue.

t) See note at Acts 9:13.

u) Verse 13 is sometimes called The Apostolic Benediction.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 52-55

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE (SENT NEITHER from men nor through man^a but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)² and all the brothers here with me, to the churches of Galatia:^b ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴who gave Himself for our sins, to rescue us out of this present evil world in agreement with the will of God our Father, ⁵to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.

⁶I am amazed that you are so readily turning away from Him who called you by the grace of Christ, to another gospel, ⁷which is really not another; except that some are troubling you and want to distort the good news concerning Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel that differs from what we have preached to you — a curse on him! ⁹As we said before and repeat right now, if anyone evangelizes you with a gospel that varies from what you have received — a curse on him!

¹⁰Am I now trying to win men's favor, or God's? Or do I seek to please men? If I were still pleasing men I would not be a slave^c of Christ. ¹¹For I declare to you, brothers, that the good news that is preached by me is no

human affair; ¹²for neither did I receive it from a human being nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

¹³You have heard of my previous career in Judaism, how violently I persecuted the church of God and devastated it; ¹⁴how in devotion to Judaism I went further than many of my age among my people, so fanatically zealous was I for the traditions of my ancestors. ¹⁵But when it pleased Him who before my birth had set me apart and had called me through His grace, ¹⁶to reveal His Son in me, so that I might preach Him to the Gentiles, I did not at once confer with any human being, ¹⁷neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before I was, but I went away into Arabia and came back to Damascus. ¹⁸Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas^d and stayed in his company for fifteen days; ¹⁹but I saw no other apostle except James,^e the brother of the Lord. ²⁰Now what I am writing to you I say in the presence of God, that I am not lying.

²¹Then I went into the regions of Syria and of Cilicia myself ²²but I was unknown to the Christian churches of Judea. ²³They only learned it from hearsay, "Our erstwhile perse-

a) Paul plunges at once into a chief reason for his writing — the denial of his apostleship by his opponents for the purpose of weakening the force of his ministry.

b) Galatia was a Roman province covering a large area in the central part of what is now Turkey. Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were in this region. Paul's ministry in Galatia is mentioned in Acts 13; 14; 16:1-6.

c) See note at Matt. 13:27.

d) That is, Peter. See note at I Cor. 1:12.

e) James, a half brother of Jesus, was the leader of the church in Jerusalem, Acts 15:13; 21:18, and the writer of the epistle that bears his name, James 1:1.

cutor now preaches the faith he once was trying to destroy." ²⁴And on my account they glorified God.

2 FOURTEEN YEARS LATER I WENT up once more to Jerusalem along with Barnabas, taking Titus with us. ²And I went up in response to a revelation and laid before them the good news I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before the leaders, lest I might be running or had run my course uselessly.

³But Titus, who was with me, although he was a Greek, was not obliged to be circumcised ⁴to gratify the false brothers that had gotten in underhandedly, who stole in to spy on our freedom which we enjoy in Christ Jesus, and who planned to enslave us.^f

⁵Not for a moment did we yield in submission to them, so that the truth of the good news might continue for you.

⁶But from those who enjoyed a reputation—whatever they amounted to makes no difference to me; God does not regard human appearance—nothing additional was contributed to me by those of reputation. ⁷On the contrary, when they observed that I was entrusted with the good news for the uncircumcised, as Peter was for the circumcised—⁸for He who worked through Peter to make him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me to make me an apostle to the Gentiles—⁹so, acknowledging the grace that had been given me, James and Cephas and John, who were considered as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should serve the Gentiles and they the circumcised. ¹⁰Only they wanted us to remember the needy, which I myself was eager to do.

¹¹But when Cephas came to Antioch^g I opposed him to his face, because he was at fault; ¹²for until certain people arrived from James, he ate with the Gentile converts, but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself for fear of the circum-

cision party. ¹³So the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴But when I saw that they were not walking in line with the truth of the good news, I said to Peter in everyone's presence, "If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you require Gentiles to live like Jews?" ¹⁵We are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles; ¹⁶but since we know that a person is not made righteous through the works of the Law but only through faith in Christ Jesus, we have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be made righteous by faith in Christ and not through works of the Law; for by works of the Law no person will be justified.

¹⁷If then, seeking to be justified in Christ, we also are found to be sinners, is Christ a minister of sin?^h Not at all! ¹⁸Indeed, when I reconstruct the very things I have torn down, then I demonstrate that I am a wrongdoer. ¹⁹For through the Law I died to the Law in order that I may live to God; ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; I no longer live as I myself, but Christ lives within me; the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness were through Law, then Christ died to no purpose.

3 O THOUGHTLESS GALATIANS, WHO has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was so graphically presented as crucified? ²I want to learn from you only this: did you receive the Spirit from works of Law or from faith in the message? ³Are you that foolish, that you would now come to perfection with the flesh after beginning with the Spirit? ⁴Have you experienced so much for nothing? If indeed for nothing!

⁵Is He, then, who endued you with the Spirit and does wonderful works among you, doing so because of the

f) In the early days of the Christian faith some of the Jews could not believe that Christianity could exist apart from the regulations of the O.T. Law.

g) Antioch of Syria.

h) If salvation is gained through the Law, then Christ did not need to die for our sins, cf. vs. 21.

works of the Law or by faith in the message? ⁶Just as Abraham¹ "had faith in God and it was credited to him for righteousness." ⁷You see therefore, that those who are sons of Abraham are his sons by faith. ⁸And in anticipation that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, the Scripture foretold the good news to Abraham in the promise, ⁹"In you will all the nations be blessed," ⁹so that they are blessed through faith with believing Abraham.

¹⁰Those who depend on the works of the Law live under a curse, for it is written,^k "Cursed is every one who does not abide by all that is written in the book of the Law so as to do it." ¹¹But that no one is made righteous in God's presence through the Law is evident, for¹ "He who is righteous through faith will live." ¹²The Law, however, does not rest on faith, but^m "He who does these things will live by them."

¹³Christ has ransomed us from the curse of the Law inasmuch as He became a curse for us, for it is written,ⁿ "Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree," ¹⁴in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might be realized for the nations and that we through faith might receive the promise of the Spirit.

¹⁵Speaking in terms of human relationships, brothers, no one sets aside or adds to a person's last will when it has been ratified. ¹⁶But the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say,^o "And to the offsprings," in the plural, but in the singular, "And to your offspring," which is Christ. ¹⁷This is the point: the Law, that came four hundred thirty years later, cannot invalidate a covenant that had previously been ratified by God, so as to annul the promise. ¹⁸If the inheritance is by the Law, then it is no longer by promise; but God

has given it to Abraham through a promise.^p

¹⁹Why, then, was the Law given? It was added to show sins in their true light, until the Offspring should come concerning whom the promise was made. It was ordained through angels by means of a mediator. ²⁰But there is no call for an intermediary in case of one, and God is One.

²¹Is, then, the Law contrary to the promises of God? Not at all! If the Law had been as a power to produce life, then righteousness would in very truth have been by the Law; ²²but the Scripture has all men imprisoned under sin,^q so that the promise might be given to those who believe, through faith in Jesus Christ.

²³Before faith came, we were confined under the Law, awaiting in custody faith that was yet to be revealed, ²⁴so that the Law served as our custodian^r until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But with the coming of faith we are no longer under a custodian; ²⁶for through your faith in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God. ²⁷As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female, because you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹But if you are Christ's, then you are the offspring of Abraham; you are heirs in agreement with the promise.

4 NOW I AFFIRM THAT SO LONG AS the heir is a minor,^s he differs in no way from a slave,^t although everything belongs to him; ²but he is under guardians and trustees until the time that was prearranged by his father. ³This is our situation. While we were minors, we were subservient to the

j) Gen. 15:6.

j) Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18.

k) Deut. 27:26.

l) Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:38.

m) Lev. 18:5.

n) Deut. 21:23.

o) Gen. 13:15.

p) Abraham's faith is emphasized because he did not live under the Mosaic Law but more than four centuries before the Law was given, vs. 17.

q) The Law shows man that he is a sinner. That knowledge may point him to the Savior, Christ.

r) The Greek noun is *paidagogos*, from which comes the English word "pedagogue." A *paidagogos* was a man, usually a slave, who guided a boy to and from school. The Law guided men and women until Christ came.

s) Jews under the old covenant and Gentiles under sin were like minors.

t) See note at Matt. 13:27.

world's elementary teachings; ⁴but when the time was completed, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the Law, and that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, calling out, "Abba!" Father!" ⁷You are, therefore, a slave no longer, but through God a son, and if a son, then an heir as well.

⁸Previously, however, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to gods that essentially are not gods. ⁹But now, when you know God, or better yet, are known by God, how is it that you are turning back again to those weak and beggarly rudiments to which you want to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰You observe days and months, festivals and years. ¹¹You make me fear that perhaps I wasted my efforts on you.

¹²I beg of you, brothers, become like me, for I became as you are. You have in no respect wronged me. ¹³But you know how that the first time I evangelized you because of physical infirmity, ¹⁴and though my physical condition was for you a trial, you neither scorned nor spurned me, but you welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.

¹⁵What has become of that blessed enjoyment? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes to give them to me. ¹⁶Did I become your enemy because I am sincere with you? ¹⁷They^w busy themselves about you to no good purpose; instead, they want to isolate you from us so that you may be infatuated with them.

¹⁸But it is well to be zealously sought after always for a good cause and not merely when I am present with you. ¹⁹My children, over whom I once more suffer birthpains until

Christ is formed within you, ²⁰I wish I might be present with you right now and try a new way of speaking, for I am perplexed about you.

²¹Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, do you not listen to the Law? ²²For it is written^x that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and one by the freewoman; ²³but while the one by the slave girl was born in a fleshly way, the one by the freewoman came on account of the promise. ²⁴All of which is allegorical,^y indicating two covenants, one from Mount Sinai that generates slavery and is Hagar — Mount Sinai in Arabia. ²⁵It corresponds to the present Jerusalem; for she and her children are in servitude.

²⁶But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother, for it is written,^z ²⁷"Be cheerful, barren woman who does not bear; break out with shouting, you who have no birthpangs, because more numerous are the children of the desolate woman than of the one who has a husband." ²⁸And you, brothers, are like Isaac, children of the promise. ²⁹But just as then the one born in a fleshly way persecuted the one born in accord with the Spirit, so too at present. ³⁰But what does the Scripture say?^a "Expel the slave girl and her son, for the son of the slave girl will not be heir with the son of the freewoman." ³¹We therefore, brothers, are not children of the slave girl, but of the freewoman.

5 FOR THIS FREEDOM CHRIST HAS liberated us. Stand firm, then, and do not be held fast again by a yoke of servitude.

²Take note of what I, Paul, tell you: if you become circumcised, Christ will not benefit you in the least. ³Once more I assure every person who gets circumcised, that he is obliged to practice the entire Law. ⁴All of you who aim

u) "Abba" is a transliteration of an Aramaic word for "father." It was used within the family and frequently in addressing God in prayer.

v) Paul's affliction might have been poor sight, cf. ch. 6:11.

w) Paul's opponents who wanted to compel believers to observe the regulations of the Law, e.g. circumcision.

x) Gen. 16:15; 21:3.

y) Paul uses the situation as an allegory of the Jew and the gospel of Christ.

z) Isa. 54:1.

a) Gen. 21:10, 12.

at justification by the Law are severed from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵But by the Spirit we earnestly anticipate the righteousness for which by faith we hope, ⁶because in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor the want of it has validity, but faith working through love.

⁷You were coming along splendidly. Who got in your way, so that you do not follow truth? ⁸That persuasion is not from the One who called you. ⁹A bit of yeast raises the whole lump of dough. ¹⁰I have confidence in you in Christ, that you will not be otherwise minded; but that troubler of yours whoever he may be, will have to bear his punishment.

¹¹As for me, brothers, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the offensiveness of the cross has been removed. ¹²I wish those who are unsettling you would go so far as to make themselves eunuchs.

¹³You have been called to enjoy liberty, brothers; only, do not let the liberty be an opportunity for the flesh; instead, serve one another through love. ¹⁴Because the entire Law is summed up in this one statement,^c "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵If, however, you tear at and consume one another, look out or you will be destroyed by each other.

¹⁶But I say, behave in a spiritual way; then you will not carry out your fleshly cravings. ¹⁷For the longings of the flesh are contrary to the Spirit, and those of the Spirit are contrary to the flesh; they are in opposition to each other, so that you do not do what you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are guided by the Spirit, then you are not under the Law.

¹⁹Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, such as immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, magic arts, animosities, strife, jealousy, bad temper, outbreaks of selfishness, dissensions, factions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, carousings and everything of the kind, of

which I warn you as I did previously, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the Spirit's fruition is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, generosity, fidelity, ²³gentleness, self-control. There is no law against these.

²⁴Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.^d ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also be directed by the Spirit; ²⁶let us not become vain-glorious so as to compete with each other and to envy one another.

6 **BROTHERS, IN CASE A PERSON IS** caught in any misconduct, you spiritual persons should set him straight in a humble spirit, looking at yourself, so that you may not be tempted as well. ²Carry one another's burden and thus fulfill the law of Christ; ³for if anyone thinks he is somebody important and yet is of no account, he is deceiving himself. ⁴Let each one put his own work to the test; then he will enjoy his personal satisfaction and not boast to another. ⁵For each person has his own load to carry.^e

⁶The person who is being taught should share all good things with him who teaches the word. ⁷Make no mistake, God will not be mocked. What a person sows, that he will harvest as well. ⁸The one who sows for his own flesh will harvest ruin from his flesh; while the one who sows for the Spirit will harvest eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹Let us do what is right without tiring of it, for at its proper time we shall reap if we do not give up. ¹⁰So then, as opportunity offers, let us practice what is beneficial for everyone, but particularly toward the members of the family of faith.

¹¹Notice what large letters I write you in my own hand.

¹²Those who want to make a good showing in the flesh are the very ones who would force circumcision on you, for the simple reason that they may

b) Those who were disturbing the Galatian churches might corrupt all of the believers, as yeast raises the whole loaf.

c) Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39; Rom. 13:9.

d) This is spiritual circumcision.

e) Compare vs. 2, which speaks of burdens that can be shared, e.g. misfortune and sorrow. There are other burdens, e.g. painful duties, that the individual alone can bear. This kind is meant in vs. 5.

thus escape persecution on account of the cross of Christ. ¹³For those who are circumcised do not themselves observe the Law, but they want to have you circumcised, that they may boast of your physical experience. ¹⁴But for me, perish the thought that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. ¹⁵For neither circum-

cision nor the lack of it is important, but a new creation is what counts, ¹⁶and those who behave by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, even on the Israel of God.

¹⁷From now on let no one make trouble for me, for I bear in my body the marks^f of Jesus.

¹⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

f) The bodily scars that Paul had as a result of persecution for Christ's sake, e.g. Acts 14:19; II Cor. 11:24, 25, were marks that revealed the Lord's ownership of him.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 60-61, at Rome

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST Jesus by the will of God, to the saints^a [in Ephesus],^b the faithful in Christ Jesus: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly spheres^c through Christ, ⁴even as He has chosen us in Him before the world was founded, to be holy and blameless in His presence. ⁵In love He predestined us in Jesus Christ to be His sons, in agreement with the kind intent of His will, ⁶for the praise of His glorious grace with which He has freely favored us in union with the Beloved. ⁷In Him we enjoy redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses to the measure of the wealth of His grace, ⁸which He poured out on us, ⁹making known to us in all His wisdom and insight the secret of His purpose, according to His kind intention which He proposed in Christ, ^{10a}plan to be brought to completion when the time fully comes, to bring everything together in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In Him we too were made His heritage, as foreordained according to His purpose, who works out everything

in agreement with the design of His own will, ¹²so that we, the first to put our hope in Christ, might bring praise to His glory. ¹³In Him you also, after listening to the message of the truth, the good news of your salvation, have as believers in Him been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance, for a redemption through which you become God's property, and all to the praise of His glory.

¹⁵For this reason I too, on hearing about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶never fail in giving thanks for you as I mention you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, might grant you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation for an understanding of Himself, ¹⁸granting you eyes of the heart, so that you may know the nature of the hope to which you are called, and what is the wealth of His glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and how overwhelmingly great is His power for us believers. It is like the working of His mighty strength, ²⁰which He exerted when He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavenly spheres at His right hand, ²¹high above all government and authority, power and lordship, and every name that is named,

a) See note at Acts 9:13.

b) The words enclosed in brackets do not appear in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. Since this letter is not, therefore, addressed specifically to the church in Ephesus, it has been surmised that it may be the letter to the Laodiceans mentioned in Col. 4:16. It is possible that what is known as the Epistle to the Ephesians was a joint communication to both Ephesus and Laodicea. Both cities were situated in what is now Turkey: Ephesus near the Aegean Sea; Laodicea, and Colossae also, not more than fifteen miles from each other, were about eighty miles directly east of Ephesus.

c) Literally "in the heavenlies," the spiritual realm of life with Christ; and so in vs. 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12.

not only in this but also in the future world.

²²God has placed everything under His feet and has given Him as head over everything for the church, ²³which is His body, the completeness of Him who fills the universe at all points.^d

2 YOU TOO WERE DEAD IN YOUR trespasses and sins, ²in which you once conducted yourselves in line with the ways of this world system, controlled by the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit of the one now working in disobedient people.^e ³Among them we all once walked, as we indulged our fleshly desires and carried out the inclinations of our lower nature and our thoughts, and by nature we were objects of God's indignation, as were all the rest of mankind.

⁴But God is rich in mercy, so that on account of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵He made us who were dead in trespasses, alive with Christ—by grace you have been saved. ⁶And in Christ Jesus He caused us to rise, and seated us with Him in the heavenly spheres, ⁷so that He might show in the future ages the immeasurable wealth of His grace, by means of His goodness to us through Christ Jesus.

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that is not of yourselves; it is God's gift. ⁹It is not by works, so that no one may boast; ¹⁰for we are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God previously prepared for us so that we should live in them.

¹¹Keep in mind, therefore, that once you were physically Gentiles and were called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision that is made with human hands in the flesh; ¹²that in those days you were separated from Christ, aliens without the right of Israel's citizenship, and strangers to the covenants of promise, living in the world without hope and without God. ¹³But now in Christ

Jesus you, who were once far away, have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For He is our peace. Breaking down the barrier that separated Jews and Gentiles He united the two sections. By His own human nature He brought the hostility to an end, ¹⁵by abolishing the Law of commandments with its regulations, so that in Himself He might create the two into one new person and thus make peace, ¹⁶and through the cross reconcile them both in one body to God, bringing the hostility to an end by the cross.

¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸because through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹Therefore, you are no longer strangers and immigrants, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household; ²⁰you are constructed on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which the cornerstone is Christ Jesus. ²¹The whole building, framed together in Him, rises into a temple that is holy in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are built up together for a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

3 BECAUSE OF THIS I, PAUL, THE prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—²you surely heard how the administration of divine grace to you was granted me,^f ³how by revelation the secret was made known to me, as I wrote you briefly before.^g ⁴A perusal of it will enable you to understand my insight into the secret of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as now it is revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets, ⁶that the Gentiles are joint inheritors, share the same body, and are participants of the promise in Christ Jesus through the good news, ⁷of which I was made a minister by virtue of the gift of divine grace that was granted me in

d) There are two main interpretations of the words, "the completeness of Him who fills the universe at all points": (1) that Christ, who fills all things, so fills the church, His body, as to complete it; and (2) that, as a head without a body is incomplete, so Christ, who is the Head, is not complete without the church, His body. Possibly the latter view is preferable, although it must never be forgotten that spiritually Christ is the church's fullness.

e) Lit. "the sons of disobedience," an expression that denotes those who oppose God. In I Sam. 2:12 the same thought is expressed in the term "sons of Belial."

f) As the apostle to the Gentiles. g) Some think that the Epistle to the Colossians is meant.

agreement with the working of His power. ⁸On me, the least of all saints, was this grace bestowed to preach to the Gentiles the fathomless wealth of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light what arrangement was contained in the secret, that had through the ages been hidden with God, the Creator of all.

¹⁰Consequently, the many-sided wisdom of God may now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly spheres.

¹¹This is in accord with the eternal purpose which He carried out through Christ Jesus, our Lord, ¹²in whom by faith in Him we enjoy the confidence of unreserved approach. ¹³I pray, therefore, that you may not lose courage in these afflictions of mine for your sakes, for they serve to your honor.

¹⁴Because of this, I bow my knees^h before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name, ¹⁶that He may grant you, in keeping with the wealth of His glory, to be empowered with strength in the inner self by His Spirit; ¹⁷that through faith the Christ may dwell in your hearts, that you may be rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸in order that you may have power to understand with all the saints what is the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height, ¹⁹in fact to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled up to the whole fullness of God.

²⁰Now to Him who is able according to the power that works within us to do everything immeasurably far beyond what we pray or think of, ²¹to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations for ever and ever, Amen.

4 SO I EXHORT YOU, PRISONER AS I am in the Lord, to conduct yourselves worthy of the calling you have received, ²with unalloyed humility and gentleness, to bear patiently with one another in a loving way, ³making every effort to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one

body¹ and one Spirit, just as also you received your calling, with one hope; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who governs all and pervades all and is in us all.

⁷But to each of us grace is granted and measured by the gift of Christ.

⁸Thus it says, "As He ascended on high, He led the captured^k away into captivity; He gave gifts to men." ⁹But what does "He ascended" mean, except that He also went down into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰The One who descended is the very One who ascended far above all the heavens to fill the universe.

¹¹So He has given some to be apostles and others to be prophets; some to be evangelists and others to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the task of ministering toward the building up of the body of Christ, ¹³until we all may arrive at the unity of faith and that understanding of that Son of God that brings completeness of personality, tending toward the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴As a result, we should no longer be babes, swung back and forth and carried here and there with every wind of teaching that springs from human craftiness and ingenuity for devising error; ¹⁵but, telling the truth in love, we should grow up in every way toward Him who is the Head — Christ, ¹⁶from whom the entire body is fitted together and united by every contributing ligament, with proportionate power for each single part to effect the development of the body for its upbuilding in love.

¹⁷So I tell you this and testify in the Lord: you must no longer behave like the Gentiles, whose lives are spent in the uselessness of their ways of thinking. ¹⁸Their understanding has become darkened. Because of their ignorance and the obstinacy of their hearts, they have grown estranged from the divine life. ¹⁹Troubled by no compunctions, they are the sort that have abandoned themselves to sensuality, so

^h) Customarily the Jews stood when they prayed.

ⁱ) The body of Christ, that is the church, cf. I Cor. 12:13. ^j) Ps. 68:18.

^k) By His death and resurrection the Lord Jesus Christ conquered Satan, who had held men captive for such a long time, Heb. 2:14, 15.

as to practice with greediness all kinds of impurity.

²⁰But this is not the way you have come to know Christ,¹ ²¹if, indeed, you have heard about Him and have been taught in Him according to the truth as it is in Jesus: ²²that you are to rid yourself of the old nature^m with your previous habits, corrupted as it is by deceitful lusts; ²³that you be renewed in your mental attitude, ²⁴and that you put on the new nature that is created in God's likeness in genuine righteousness and holiness.

²⁵Therefore, laying all falsehood aside, speak truth each person to his neighbor, for we are one another's members. ²⁶When you are angry, commit no sin; do not remain angry until sundown. ²⁷Do not give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸The thief must steal no more, but rather toil to earn a living with his own hands, so he may have something to give the person in need.

²⁹Let no foul speech come out of your mouth, but only such as will build up where it is necessary, so as to add a blessing to the listeners. ³⁰And never grieve God's Holy Spirit, by whom you have been marked with a seal for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness among you—bad temper, anger, clamor, abusive language and all malice. ³²Be kind toward one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God has in Christ forgiven you.

5 BE THEREFORE IMITATORS OF Godⁿ as His beloved children, ²and live in love, as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God as a fragrant scent.

³But immorality and every kind of impurity or greed should not so much as be mentioned among you; such is the proper way for saints.^o ⁴Nor should there be indecency and foolish talking or low jesting; they are not fitting. Instead, let there rather be thanksgiving.

⁵For be sure of this, that none guilty of immorality or of impurity or of greed, which is idolatry, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

⁶Let no one lead you astray with empty words,^p for on account of such things the indignation of God comes on disobedient people.^q ⁷Do not be sharing with them. ⁸For once you were darkness but now in the Lord you are light; live as children of light—⁹for the fruition of the Light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth—¹⁰demonstrating what is pleasing to the Lord.

¹¹Do not participate in the fruitless doings of darkness but rather expose them; ¹²for while it is a disgrace even to mention the things they do in secret, ¹³yet everything that is exposed by the light is made visible, and where everything is made visible there is light. ¹⁴Thus it says,^r "Wake up, sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you."

¹⁵See to it, therefore, that you conduct yourselves carefully, not as foolish but as wise people ¹⁶who make the best possible use of their time, because these are evil days. ¹⁷Be not thoughtless, then, but gain insight in the Lord's will. ¹⁸And do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking one to the other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing heartily and making your music to the Lord, ²⁰and at all times giving thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²¹Be submissive to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²²Wives be subject to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³For a husband is head of his wife as Christ also is Head of the church;^s He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is submissive to Christ, so wives must in every respect be submissive to their husbands.

1) Not merely His teachings but Himself.

m) Literally "the old man," all that the Christian is apart from Christ. In vs. 24 it is "the new man" (lit.), that is, what the believer is in his new birth through Christ.

n) Compare Matt. 5:48. o) See note at Acts 9:13. p) That is, speech void of truth.

q) See note at ch. 2:2.

r) This appears to be an extract from an early Christian hymn. Cf. Isa. 26:19; 60:1, 2.

s) The husband and wife relationship dates from O.T. times as a spiritual symbol of the relationship of Jehovah and Israel, but the apostle is here speaking of Christ and the church, vs. 32.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶in order that by cleansing her by means of the washing in water He may sanctify her through His word, ²⁷so that He may present the church to Himself gloriously, having no spot or wrinkle or any of such thing, but holy and blameless.

²⁸In a similar way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. One who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and carefully protects it, just as Christ treats the church; ³⁰for we are members of His body. ³¹"On^t this account a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

³²There is a great, hidden meaning in this, but I am speaking about Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless, let each of you love his wife as much as himself, and let the wife revere her husband.

6 CHILDREN, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment^u with a promise, ³"that it may be well with you and that you may enjoy great length of life on the earth."

⁴And fathers, do not arouse your children's anger, but bring them up in the instruction and admonition of the Lord.

⁵Slaves,^v render obedience to your earthly masters,^w with reverence and awe, with such unmixed motives as you feel toward Christ. ⁶Do not be eye-slaves as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ carry out wholeheartedly the will of God, ⁷rendering service with goodwill as to the Lord and not to men, ⁸aware that whatever good each one may do he will be recompensed by the Lord, whether he is a slave or a freeman.

⁹And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Dispense with threaten-

ing, as you keep in mind that their Master and yours is in heaven, and with Him there is no partiality.

¹⁰In conclusion, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the complete armor that God supplies, so you will be able to stand against the devil's intrigues. ¹²For our wrestling is not against flesh-and-blood opponents, but against the rulers, the authorities, the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly spheres. ¹³Take up, therefore, the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand when you have done all the fighting.

¹⁴So stand your ground, with^x the belt of truth tightened around your waist, wearing the breastplate of righteousness on your body, ¹⁵with the readiness of the good news of peace bound on your feet; ¹⁶above all taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸praying in the Spirit on every occasion with ceaseless prayer and entreaty, constantly alert to pray with all perseverance and entreaty for all the saints; ¹⁹also for me, that, when I open my lips, the message may be given me that I may announce fearlessly the secret^y of the good news ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may present the good news freely, as it is my duty to speak.

²¹In order that you may know my affairs, how I am doing, Tychicus,^z the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will give you all the information. ²²I have sent him to you for this very purpose, to let you know all about us, and that he may encourage your hearts.

²³Peace to the brothers, and love joined with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.^a ²⁴Grace be with all who have a never-diminishing love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

t) Gen. 2:24. u) Exod. 20:12. v) See note at Matt. 13:27.

w) In principle this applies not only to slaves and their masters but also to employees and their employers. x) Isa. 11:5; 52:7. y) See note at Rom. 16:25.

z) Tychicus, who is mentioned also in Acts 20:4 and Titus 3:12, was Paul's courier who carried not only this letter but also the one to the Colossians, Col. 4:7.

a) God in Christ is the Source of Christian faith and love.

PHILIPPIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 60, at Rome

1 PAUL AND TIMOTHY,^a SLAVES^b OF Christ Jesus, to all the saints^c in Christ Jesus that live at Philippi^d with the bishops and deacons:^e ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³Every time I think of you I thank my God. ⁴Every time I pray I make my petition for all of you, with joyfulness ⁵for your fellowship in furthering the good news from the first day to this moment. ⁶Of this I am convinced, that He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion in the day of Christ Jesus.^f

⁷It is right for me to think of all of you in this way, because I have you in my heart, as all of you share with me in divine grace, whether it be in my imprisonment or in the defense and confirmation of the good news. ⁸For God is my witness how I yearn for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may grow ever richer and richer in real knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may test the things that are better, that you may be unsullied and blameless as you face the day of Christ, ¹¹abounding in the fruits of righteousness^g which come through

Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

¹²I want you to understand, brothers, that what has happened to me has turned out for, rather than against the advance of the good news, ¹³so that throughout the imperial guard^h and everywhere else it has become known that my imprisonment is because I belong to Christ. ¹⁴And the majority of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged by my imprisonment to be far more daring in telling the divine message fearlessly.ⁱ

¹⁵Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ out of jealousy and rivalry, but others out of good will; ¹⁶some, indeed, are preaching out of love, knowing that I am destined for the defense of the good news, ¹⁷but others preach Christ out of party spirit and not from pure motives. They intend to add distress to my bonds.

¹⁸Well, what of it? Anyhow, in any event, whether from pretense or from pure motives, Christ is preached and I am glad of that; yes, and I shall be glad, ¹⁹for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the provision that comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰For I eagerly desire and hope not to be

a) See note at I Tim. 1:2. b) See note at Matt. 13:27. c) See note at Acts 9:13.

d) Philippi was a Roman colony in Macedonia, an area which is now a part of northern Greece. The city was within a mile or two of the Aegean Sea and lay along the Egnatian Way that ran from the east coast of the Adriatic Sea to Byzantium, which bordered on the Bosphorus.

e) The church at Philippi was organized in accordance with N.T. practice, cf. Titus 1:5-9. For notes on bishops and deacons see I Tim. 3:1 and 8 respectively. f) The day of His return.

g) Compare Gal. 5:22, 23.

h) The headquarters of the imperial guard was the governor's palace. There were several thousand soldiers in the guard who may have heard the message of salvation in Christ.

i) Paul's courage under adversity fortified the courage of other believers.

put to shame at all,¹ but that with perfect boldness as always, so now Christ may be honored in my body, either through living or through dying.²¹ For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.^k

²²If, however, to continue to live means fruitful service for me, then I cannot tell which to choose.²³ So I feel the pressure from both sides: I have a yearning to take my leave and to be with Christ, for that would be far better,²⁴ but on your account it is more necessary that I remain in the body.²⁵ And since I am confident of this, I know that I shall stay and continue with all of you, that you may progress and have the joy that comes with faith,²⁶ so that through my coming to you again your pride in Christ Jesus because of me may become greater.

²⁷Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the good news concerning Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear that you are standing firm in one spirit and one mind, as you are joined in conflict for the faith of the good news,²⁸ not for a moment intimidated by your antagonists. For them this implies destruction, but for you deliverance, and that from God.²⁹ For you have been privileged on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him;³⁰ so you are experiencing the same conflict you have seen me wage and which you now hear that I am having.

2 IF, THEREFORE, IN RELATIONSHIP with Christ there is any encouragement, if there is any persuasive appeal of love, if there is any fellowship in the Spirit, if any affections and compassion,¹ ²then make my joy complete by being in agreement, having the same love, being united in spirit, having the same attitude, ³doing nothing out of selfishness or conceit, but with

humility regarding others superior to yourselves.⁴ Neither must each be looking out only for his own interests but also for those of others.

⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus⁶ who, though existing in the form of God, did not consider His equality with God something to cling to,⁷ but emptied Himself^m as He took on the form of a slaveⁿ and became like human beings.⁸ So, recognized in appearance as a human being, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death; yes, death by the cross.

⁹God, therefore, has lifted Him on high and has given Him the name that surpasses every name,^o ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, of those on earth, and of those under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Consequently, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you but even more so now that I am absent from you, cultivate your own salvation with reverence and trepidation,¹³ for it is God who is at work within you, so as to will and to work for His good pleasure.

¹⁴Do it all without grumbling and objections,¹⁵ so that you may be blameless and innocent, God's faultless children in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world,¹⁶ thus holding fast to the message of life as to be my pride on the day of Christ, because I shall neither have run nor labored in vain.¹⁷ In fact, even if my lifeblood must be poured out for a drink offering upon the sacrifice of your faith, I am glad of it and am glad together with all of you.¹⁸ Equally so be glad and share happiness with me.

¹⁹But, trusting in the Lord Jesus, I hope to send you Timothy shortly, so

j) Paul would have been ashamed had he failed to live and speak for Christ.

k) On earth Christ was everything to Paul. But it would be to his gain to be in heaven and thus in Christ's presence, cf. vs. 23; II Cor. 5:8.

l) The four "ifs" of this verse have the force of "since," i.e., *since* these things are so, "then make my joy complete," etc.

m) Not of His Deity, but of some marks of His divine glory that might have obscured His perfect humanity as described in vs. 7, 8. n) See note at Matt. 13:27.

o) After the ascension, which Paul refers to here, Christ took back to heaven the added glory of His perfect humanity; for on His return He was not only the Son of God but also the Son of man.

that I too may be cheered by news from you; ²⁰for I have no one else who shares my own attitude with such genuine interest in your affairs. ²¹They are all looking out for their interests, not for those of Christ Jesus. ²²But you know his sterling worth, how as a son with his father he has served with me for the good news. ²³So I hope to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴But I have confidence in the Lord that soon I too shall come.

²⁵I have considered it necessary to send you my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, Epaphroditus, whom you sent as your messenger to minister to my wants, ²⁶inasmuch as he is yearning for all of you and is distressed, because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷And he was ill indeed, even to the verge of death; but God took pity on him, and not only on him but on me as well, so that I might not experience one grief after another. ²⁸I am, therefore, sending him the more eagerly, so that you may be glad to see him again and that I may feel more relieved. ²⁹Therefore, welcome him with all joyfulness in the Lord, and hold such persons in high esteem, ³⁰for on account of the work of Christ he came to the brink of death and endangered his life, to make up for the service you could not render me.

3 FINALLY, MY BROTHERS, BE GLAD in the Lord. Repetition in my writing you is not irksome to me and for you it is safe. ²Look out for those dogs; look out for those wicked workers; look out for the mutilation faction.³ For we who worship God through the Spirit and pride ourselves in Christ Jesus, and do not confide in the flesh, we are the truly circumcised.

⁴I have, however, some basis for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else imagines that he has some basis for confidence in the flesh, I am ahead of him: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a native Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin,

a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the Law a Pharisee, ⁶as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to legal righteousness without blame.

⁷But everything that was gain for me I have considered loss for Christ's sake. ⁸And, what is more, I regard everything as loss in comparison with the supreme value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have incurred the loss of all things and consider them rubbish, in order to gain Christ ⁹and to be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, based on the Law but, through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection^a and the sharing of His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death,¹¹ in order that I might arrive at the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already made this my own or have already reached perfection, but I am pressing onward in the hope of making it my own because Christ Jesus has made me His own. ¹³Brothers, I do not imply that I have made it my own, but one thing I do — forgetting what is behind and reaching out for what lies ahead, ¹⁴I push on to the goal for the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵Let those of us, then, who are mature^a have this in mind, and if your views differ in any respect, God will make this clear also to you. ¹⁶But we must hold on to what we have attained.

¹⁷Join with me as followers, brothers, and observe those who behave as you have it exemplified in us. ¹⁸For many are living, of whom I have often told you and I say it now with tears, who are enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹whose end is destruction, whose god is their stomach, whose boast is in their shame, whose interests are centered on earthly matters. ²⁰For our citizenship belongs in heaven, from which also we expect the Lord Jesus Christ as De-

p) The allusion is to those who insisted upon Gentile converts' abiding by Mosaic regulations, particularly circumcision.

q) Because Christ arose, believers may know His power in this life, Rom. 6:4, and have assurance that they will be raised also, Rom. 8:11.

r) Christians ought to live as having died with Christ, Rom. 6:6, 8.

s) That is, mature in Christian living.

liverer, ²¹who will change the fashion of our humiliated body so that it will resemble His glorious body by the power that enables Him to subject everything to Himself.

4 NOW THEN, MY BROTHERS, BE-loved and longed for, my joy and my crown,⁴ in this way stand firm in the Lord, dear friends. ²I appeal to Euodia and I appeal to Syntyche^u to agree in the Lord. ³Yes, and I beg of you also, my genuine yokefellow, to lend these women a hand; for they struggled side by side with me in the proclamation of the good news, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

⁴Be joyful in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice. ⁵Be known by all the people for your considerateness; the Lord is near. ⁶Entertain no worry, but under all circumstances let your petitions be made known before God by prayer and pleading along with thanksgiving.^v ⁷So will the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding, keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is kindly spoken, whatever is lofty and whatever is praiseworthy — put your mind on these. ⁹And what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, that put into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰I was uncommonly happy in the Lord because of late your thoughtfulness^w toward me came to life again, a

matter in which you were interested but lacked opportunity. ¹¹Not that I mention this because of need, for I have learned to make ends meet in whatever situation I am. ¹²I know how to live simply and I know how to enjoy prosperity. I am acquainted with all circumstances: to be filled up and to be hungry, to have abundance and to suffer want. ¹³I have strength for every situation through Him who empowers me.

¹⁴At the same time you did well by sharing with me in my trouble. ¹⁵And you Philippians know, too, how in the early preaching of the good news, when we took our departure from Macedonia, not a single church except yourselves went into partnership with me with regard to giving and receiving; ¹⁶for even when I was in Thessalonica you more than once sent me something to meet my needs. ¹⁷Not that I am after the gift, but I am after the fruition that is multiplying to your credit.

¹⁸Now that I have received from Epaphroditus what you sent, a fragrant perfume, an acceptable offering that pleases God, I have enough and to spare; I am amply supplied. ¹⁹And my God will fully supply all your needs according to His abundant wealth so glorious in Christ Jesus. ²⁰And to God our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹Greet every saint^x in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me send you greetings. ²²All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

²³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

t) In the N.T. a crown is used as a figure for reward, cf. I Cor. 9:25; I Thess. 2:19; II Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; I Pet. 5:4.

u) Euodia and Syntyche were two women in the church at Philippi who apparently had a strong disagreement. Although Paul rebuked them kindly with this appeal, his regard for them was not lessened because of their dissent. Observe how frequently the apostle expressed affection for "all of you," chs. 1:4, 7, 8, 25; 2:17; 4:23.

v) The prayer of faith contains gratitude. See e.g. Christ's prayers, Matt. 11:25; John 11:41.

w) When Paul wrote this letter he needed the material help of fellow believers, for he was a prisoner in Rome. In the past he had worked with his own hands at his trade of tent making, cf. Acts 18:1-3; 20:34; I Cor. 4:12. x) See note at Acts 9:13.

COLOSSIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 60-61, at Rome

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Timothy^a ²to the consecrated and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae^b: Grace to you and peace from God our Father [and the Lord Jesus Christ].^c

³We constantly give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we are praying for you; ⁴for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you cherish for all the saints,^d ⁵because of the hope that is stored up for you in heaven. You first heard of this hope in the message of the truth concerning the good news that reached you, ⁶as it has come also to the whole world, with fruitful results which are spreading abroad, as is the case among you ever since you heard and came to know in truth the grace of God.

⁷So you learned from Epaphras,^e our dear fellow bondsman,^f who is a faithful minister of Christ for you; ⁸and he has also pointed out to us the love you cherish through the Spirit. ⁹We have, therefore, from the day we heard it, never neglected praying and petitioning for you, that you might be filled

with all spiritual wisdom and insight so as to understand His will clearly, ¹⁰and to live in a way worthy of the Lord and to His entire satisfaction, by producing results in all sorts of good work, and by growing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹We pray that you may be invigorated with complete power in accordance with His glorious strength, for the cheerful exercise of unlimited patience and perseverance, ¹²with thanksgivings to the Father, who has qualified you for your share in the inheritance^g of the saints in the light.

¹³He has rescued us from the domain of darkness,^h and has transferred us into the kingdom of His Beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption [through His blood],ⁱ the forgiveness of sins; ¹⁵who is the likeness^j of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. ¹⁶For through Him^k all things were created in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; they are all created through Him and for Him, ¹⁷and He is Himself before all, and in Him all things hold together.^l

¹⁸He also is the Head of the body,

a) See note at I Tim. 1:2.

b) Colossae, like Laodicea and Hierapolis, ch. 4:13, was situated in Phrygia, the western area of what is now known as Turkey. The three cities were close together.

c) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. d) See note at Acts 9:13.

e) Epaphras, who may be identical with Epaphroditus of Phil. 2:25-30, had visited Paul in Rome, vs. 7; Philem. 23. f) See note at Matt. 13:27.

g) As the Hebrews had once inherited the Promised Land.

h) The realm that is controlled by Satan and his emissaries, Luke 22:53; Eph. 6:12.

i) The three words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. Unquestionably they are an interpolation taken over from Eph. 1:7, where they are authentic. j) It is in Christ that men can see what God is like, John 1:18; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3.

k) The Son of God.

l) As the Apostle John revealed, "through Him everything came into being," John 1:3; cf. Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3.

the church; He is its beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that in every respect He might have first place. ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, ²⁰and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, those on earth as well as those in heaven, as through Him God made peace by means of the blood of His cross.

²¹You, too, who once were estranged and of a hostile attitude with your evil activities, ²²He has now reconciled in His human body through His death, to introduce you into His presence holy and blameless and irreproachable — ²³if you remain grounded and settled in the faith and are not moved away from the hope inspired by the good news to which you listened, which has been preached to every creature under heaven^m and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴I am now glad amid my sufferings for you, and am making up in my own life on behalf of His body, which is in the church, what I am still lacking of afflictions for Christ. ²⁵I have become a minister of the church by divine appointment that was given me, to preach fully to you the word of God, ²⁶the secretⁿ that was hidden from ages and generations, but which now has been revealed to His saints, ²⁷to whom God has chosen to make known what is the wealth of this glorious secret among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸Him we proclaim, while warning every person and instructing every individual in all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in Christ. ²⁹And for this I toil, wrestling according to His energy which is powerfully at work in me.

2 FOR I WANT YOU TO KNOW IN HOW great a struggle^o I am engaged for you and for the Laodicean brothers, and for those who have not personally seen my face, ²so that their hearts may

be encouraged, welded together in love, to attain all the riches that the full assurance of insight brings, with a knowledge of Christ, the secret of God,^p ³in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge lie hidden.

⁴I mention this, so that no one may confuse your thinking by specious argument; ⁵for while I am physically absent, I am nevertheless with you in spirit, as I observe with joy your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

⁶So, as you accepted Christ Jesus as Lord, live in union with Him, ⁷rooted and built up in Him and confirmed in the faith, just as you have been taught. And be overflowing with the giving of thanks.

⁸Beware of anyone carrying you captive through philosophy and empty deceitfulness along lines of human tradition and the world's elementary principles and not according to Christ. ⁹For in Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily,^q ¹⁰and in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority, you are enjoying fullness of life. ¹¹In Him, too, you were circumcised — not with a physical circumcision — in stripping off your fleshly body in Christ's circumcision, ¹²when you were buried with Him in baptism and thereby raised to life with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and your lack of physical circumcision, He made alive together with Him, as He forgave us all our trespasses, ¹⁴canceled the record of debt that stood against us, with its requirements, and took it out of the way, when He nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵Disarming the rulers and authorities^r He publicly exposed them to disgrace as He triumphed over them by means of the cross.

¹⁶Allow no one, therefore, to be your judge in regard to eating and drinking, or the observance of a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷These

m) That is, to every conceivable rank and condition of men.

n) For the meaning of the word "secret" in vss. 26, 27, chs. 2:2; 4:3, see note at Rom. 16:25.

o) That is, in prayer and in writing this letter and the one to the Laodicean church, ch. 4:16.

p) The marvelous revelation of God's plan for man, ch. 1:27.

q) The incarnation continues; the verb is in the present tense. r) That is, those of demonic type.

are shadows of things to follow, but the body is Christ. ¹⁸Let no one defraud you of salvation's prize, no one who indulges in assumed humility and the cult of angel-worship^a who brags of visions and is puffed up without cause by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹instead of keeping hold of that Head from which the whole body, supported and held together by ligaments and sinews, grows with divine growth.

²⁰If with Christ you have become dead to the elementary principles of the world, why allow regulations to be imposed on you as if you were living under the world's control: ²¹Don't touch this! Don't taste that! Don't handle the other! ²²All these are destined to wear out; they are governed by human injunctions and instructions, ²³such as have, to be sure, a suggestion of wisdom by self-imposed worship and humiliation and unsparing severity of the body, but are of no value in combating fleshly indulgence.^t

3 IF, THEN, YOU HAVE BEEN RAISED with Christ,^u seek the things which are above, where Christ is seated at God's right hand. ²Apply your mind to things above, not to things on earth; ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is our life, makes His appearance, then we also will appear in glory with Him.

⁵Therefore put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth^v — immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greediness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of them God's anger will come [on disobedient people].^w ⁷And at one time you were addicted to them, when your life was spent in such ways. ⁸But now you must also put all these things away — anger, bad temper, malice, slander, shameful language. ⁹Do not lie to one another, since you have stripped off the old nature

with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self who is being renewed in a full knowledge in the likeness of Him who created him. ¹¹You are where there is no difference between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian,^x slave, and freeborn, but Christ is all and in all.

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen, set apart and enjoying His love, clothe yourselves with tenderness of heart, kindness, humility, gentleness, patient endurance. ¹³Bear with one another and forgive each other in case one has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so do you. ¹⁴But crown it all with love, which is the perfect bond of union. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ, to which you were called in one body, arbitrate in your hearts. And be thankful.

¹⁶Let the enriching message of Christ have ample room in your lives as you instruct and admonish one another in all wisdom with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs that are sung in a thankful spirit in your hearts toward God. ¹⁷And whatever you do by word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, through whom you are offering thanks to God the Father.

¹⁸Wives, be submissive to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord to do. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh toward them. ²⁰Children, be obedient to your parents in every respect, for this is pleasing to the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not irritate your children, that they may not lose heart.

²²Servants,^y obey your earthly masters in every way, not as men-pleasers when working under their eyes, but with unmixed motives out of reverence for the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴for you know that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is Christ the Lord

s) The humility of these people was actually dishonoring to God; for in attempting to approach Him through worshipping angelic beings they were denying the only access available to them, that is, through Christ, John 14:6.

t) All these afford merely human satisfaction.

u) Christ died and rose again as representative of us. v) Compare Matt. 5:29; Mark 9:43-47.

w) The words enclosed in brackets are not found in the majority of the most reliable ancient manuscripts. The expression is found elsewhere in the N.T., however, e.g. Eph. 5:6.

x) The Scythians were an uncivilized people who lived north of the Black Sea.

y) See note at Matt. 13:27.

for whom you are working. ²⁵For the wrongdoer² will get what is coming to him for his wrongdoing; there will be no partiality.

4 MASTERS, TREAT YOUR SERVANTS with justice and fairness, well aware that you also have a Master in heaven.

²Keep persevering in prayer; attend to it diligently with the offering of thanks, ³praying for us also, that God may open for us a door to tell the message of the secret^a of Christ on account of which I am in prison, ⁴so that I may make this known in the way I am obliged to tell it.

⁵Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, using your time to the best possible advantage. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious and so well reasoned out that you will know how to reply to each individual.

⁷Tychicus,^b our beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all about my affairs. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, to let you know our circumstances, and to encourage your hearts.^c ⁹He is accompanied by Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother who is one of your own. They will acquaint you with everything that is going on here.

¹⁰Aristarchus,^d my fellow prisoner, sends you greeting; so does Mark,^e the cousin of Barnabas, about whom you received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him. ¹¹Also Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only ones of the circumcision who serve as co-workers for the kingdom of God; they have become a comfort to me.

¹²Epaphras,^f one of your own, a slave of Christ Jesus, wants to be remembered to you. He is always wrestling for you in his prayers, that you may stand firm, mature, and thoroughly convinced in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him witness how deeply concerned he is about you and the brothers at Laodicea^g and Hierapolis.

¹⁴Luke,^h the beloved physician, sends greetings, and so does Demas.ⁱ

¹⁵Extend our greetings to the brothers in Laodicea; also to Nympha and the church that meets at her home.

¹⁶When this letter has been read in your presence, arrange that it may also be read by the Laodicean church, while you read the letter from Laodicea.^j ¹⁷And say to Archippus:^k See to it that you fulfill the ministry which you have received in the Lord.

¹⁸My greeting in my own, Paul's, handwriting. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

z) That is, the abusive master.

a) See note at Rom. 16:25.

b) Tychicus, a native of Corinth, joined Paul there on his last missionary journey, Acts 20:4, 5, and remained with the apostle and served him for many years, Eph. 6:21; II Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12. c) Philem. 10.

d) Aristarchus was a native of Thessalonica, Acts 20:4. Like Tychicus, vs. 7. Aristarchus was a companion and fellow worker with Paul for a long time, Acts 19:29; 27:2; Philem. 24.

e) This was John Mark of Jerusalem, who with Barnabas accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey but not the second, Acts 12:25; 15:37-39. He later served Paul in various ways, II Tim. 4:11. It was to the home of John Mark's mother that Peter went when he was miraculously released from prison, Acts 12:12. Mark was the author of the Second Gospel.

f) See note at ch. 1:7.

g) For the location of Laodicea and Hierapolis see note at ch. 1:7. It was in Laodicea, mentioned in ch. 2:1, that one of the seven churches of Rev. 2-3 was situated, Rev. 3:14.

h) Luke, the author of the Third Gospel and The Acts, joined Paul at Troas during the apostle's second missionary journey, Acts 16:10 (where see note), and was with him almost constantly until Paul's martyrdom, II Tim. 4:11. i) See note at Philem. 24.

j) It was evidently customary in N.T. times to exchange letters among the churches. Some think that "the letter from Laodicea" was the one that is now known as the Epistle to the Ephesians.

k) Philem. 2.

THESSALONIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 51, at Corinth

1 PAUL AND SILVANUS^a AND TIMOTHY,^b to the church of the Thessalonians^c in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:^d Grace to you and peace.

²We offer thanks to God always for all of you as we make mention of you in our prayers, ³and constantly recall in the presence of God and our Father your active faith, your labor prompted by love, and your enduring hope that rests on our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴Brothers, beloved of God, we know His choice of you; ⁵for our good news reached you not only in words but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with sound conviction, even as you well know in what way we conducted ourselves among you for your sakes. ⁶You also became followers of us and of the Lord when, with joy derived from the Holy Spirit, you welcomed the message under great affliction;^e ⁷so that you became an example to all who believe in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸For not only did the Lord's message echo from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but the fact of your faith in God has been made known everywhere, so that we do not need to say anything.

⁹For they voluntarily tell about us, what remarkable introduction we had to you and how you turned to God

from idols, to serve the living and true God ¹⁰and to await His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead — Jesus who delivers us from the coming wrath.

2 FOR YOU YOURSELVES ARE AWARE, brothers, how our entrance among you was not futile, ²but after the sufferings and ill-treatment we experienced, as you know, at Philippi,^f we took great courage by the help of our God to tell you amid severe struggle the good news from God. ³For our appeal springs neither from delusion, nor from impure motives, nor from deceit, ⁴but precisely as we have been divinely approved to be entrusted with the good news, so we tell it, not to ingratiate ourselves with men but to please God, who tests our hearts. ⁵For we never indulged in flattery, as you well know, neither did we use a pretext to satisfy our greed — to which God is witness — ⁶neither did we seek the plaudits of men, either from you or from others, though as Christ's apostles we were in position to claim authority. ⁷Instead, we were mild-mannered in your circle, like a nurse tenderly fostering her own children. ⁸Thus being strongly drawn to you, we were joyfully willing not only to impart to you

a) Silvanus, called Silas in The Acts, is first mentioned in Acts 15:22. Evidently he was a member of the Jerusalem church and as such was sent with Paul to inform the believers at Antioch of the decision of the Jerusalem council, Acts 15:27-29. Later he accompanied Paul on the apostle's second missionary journey, vs. 40, and was imprisoned with him at Philippi, Acts 16:19-40. Silvanus visited Thessalonica with Paul, Acts 17:4, and continued to help him in the work, II Cor. 1:19. b) See note at I Tim. 1:2.

c) Thessalonica, now known as Salonica, is located in Greece on the northwestern coast of the Aegean Sea. In N.T. times it was the capital of Macedonia.

d) Notice that in this early epistle Christ shares an equal place with God the Father.

e) Acts 17:5-9. f) See note at Phil. 1:1.

the good news from God but our own lives as well, because you had become dear to us.

⁹You will recollect, brothers, our toil and hardship as we worked night and day, so that we might be no burden to any of you while we preached to you the good news from God. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and so is God, how pure, fair, and irreproachable was our behavior toward you believers. ¹¹You know how we, like a father toward his own children, appealed to each of you and encouraged you and charged you ¹²to conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the God who is calling you into His own kingdom and glory.

¹³On this account we also constantly thank God because, when you took hold of the divine message from us, you did not accept it as a human message but, as it truly was, a message from God, which also is effective in you who believe. ¹⁴For you, brothers, have become followers of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea; because you also have suffered at the hands of your own countrymen just as they suffered from the Jews, ¹⁵who put to death the Lord Jesus as well as the prophets, and persecuted us. They are displeasing to God and opponents of all people; ¹⁶for they forbid us to tell the message of salvation to the Gentiles, so that they constantly fill up the measure of their sins. But divine indignation has overtaken them.

¹⁷But we, brothers, when we were deprived of you for a little while insofar as presence goes but not in heart, made the more intense efforts with great longing to see you face to face, ¹⁸because we wanted to come to you, I Paul indeed more than once, but Satan interfered with us.^e ¹⁹For who except you is our hope or happiness or crown^h of pride in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?ⁱ ²⁰For you are our glory and joy.

3 SO, WHEN WE COULD NOT STAND IT any longer, we thought it best to

be left alone at Athens, ²and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister concerning the good news of Christ, to confirm you and encourage you in your faith, ³that no one may be disturbed by these afflictions. For you know yourselves that for this we were appointed; ⁴for when we were with you, we told you in advance that we were going to have trouble, exactly as you know it happened.

⁵And for this reason, when I could no longer stand it, I sent to make sure about your faith, whether perhaps the tempter^j might have tempted you, and our work should be useless. ⁶Now, however, since Timothy has returned to us from you and has brought us the good news about your faith and love, and how you retain us constantly in loving remembrance, how you are yearning to see us, just as we are to see you, ⁷we have reason, brothers, to be encouraged about you on account of your faith, in spite of all our distress and affliction. ⁸Because now we truly live if you stand firm in the Lord.

⁹How can we ever repay God with enough thanksgiving for you in view of all the happiness we are enjoying because of you in the presence of our God? ¹⁰Night and day we keep praying earnestly to see you face to face and to supply what is lacking in your faith.

¹¹May our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²May the Lord make your love for one another and for everyone abundant and running over, just as ours is for you, ¹³so that your hearts may be made so steadfast that you will be spotless before God our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.^k

4 FINALLY THEN, BROTHERS, WE BEG of you and exhort you in the name of the Lord Jesus to continue living in the way you learned from us, a way that is pleasing to God (and as you are behaving), and that you keep on,

g) Apparently Satan did this by working through those who opposed Paul.

h) See note at Phil. 4:1.

i) Five times in this epistle the second advent of Christ is alluded to: chs. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15, 16; 5:2, 3. j) Satan. k) See note at Acts 9:13.

doing still better. ²For you are aware what instructions we gave you by authority of the Lord Jesus.

³This is God's will — your sanctification,¹ that you keep yourselves from sexual immorality, ⁴that each of you learn how to take his own wife in purity and honor, ⁵not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who have no knowledge of God. ⁶Let no one overstep the bounds and take advantage of his brother in this matter, for the Lord is a punisher in all such cases, as previously we told and solemnly charged you. ⁷For God has not called us to an impure but to a holy life; consequently, ⁸the one who rejects this does not reject man but God, who has given us His Holy Spirit.

⁹It is not necessary to write you about brotherly love, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰and you are practicing it toward all the brothers throughout Macedonia. ¹¹But we appeal to you, brothers, to keep advancing in it and to cherish ambition for a peaceful way of living; to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands as we recommended to you, ¹²in order that your behavior toward the outsiders will be honorable and you need not depend on anyone.

¹³But we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do, who have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in a similar way through Jesus God will bring with Him those who have died. ¹⁵We tell you this by the word of the Lord: we, the living who remain at the coming of the Lord, will not take precedence over those who have died. ¹⁶For with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord Himself will descend from heaven, and those who died in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Afterward we, the living who remain, will

be caught up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall forever be with the Lord. ¹⁸So then encourage one another with these words.

5 CONCERNING TIMES AND SEASONS, brothers, you need no writing from me,^m ²for you are yourselves aware that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. ³When they say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction will come upon them like the birthpangs of a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape.

⁴You, however, brothers, are not in the dark, so that the day should surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all sons of light and sons of the day. We belong neither to night nor to darkness. ⁶So then, let us not be asleep like the rest, but let us be on our guard and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep sleep at night, and the drunkards are drunk at night. ⁸But as we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, equipped with faith and love for our breastplate, and the hopeⁿ of salvation for our helmet.

⁹For God has not destined us for His anger, but for the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who experienced death for us so that we, whether awake or asleep, might live together with Him. ¹¹Encourage one another, therefore, and build up one another, as in fact you are doing.

¹²We beg of you, brothers, to recognize the workers among you, those who are leaders in the Lord and your advisers. ¹³Because of their work, hold them lovingly in highest regard. Enjoy peace among yourselves.

¹⁴But we appeal to you, brothers: warn the idle, encourage the faint-hearted, give your support to the weak, exercise patience toward everyone. ¹⁵See to it that no one pays back evil for evil; instead, always try to be helpful to one another and to all people.

¹⁶Always be cheerful. ¹⁷Pray un-

l) Verses 3-12 describe some practical, moral outcomes of sanctification.

m) That Christ will come again is the important thing. How and when He will come is known by God alone. In His Word He has given some hints as to the manner and time of the event, but He has not revealed every detail concerning it.

n) Faith, hope, and love is a spiritual triad common to Paul's writings, e.g. ch. 1:3; I Cor. 13:13.

ceasingly.^o ¹⁸Under all circumstances give thanks, for such is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Do not stifle the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophetic utterance, ²¹but test it all and retain what is good. ²²Keep away from evil in every form.

²³And may the God of peace Himself make you holy through and through. May your whole being—spirit, soul, and body—be kept blame-

less at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful and He will accomplish it.

²⁵Brothers, pray for us. ²⁶Greet all the brothers with a sacred kiss.

²⁷I solemnly charge you in the Lord's name to have this letter read to all the brothers.

²⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

o) Compare Luke 11:5-8.

THESSALONIANS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 51-52, at Corinth

1 PAUL AND SILVANUS^a AND TIMOTHY^b to the church of the Thessalonians^c in God our Father^d and the Lord Jesus Christ: ²Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³We are always bound^e to give God thanks for you, brothers, as is befitting, because your faith is growing so splendidly and the love of each of you for one another is increasing, ⁴so that we ourselves mention you with pride among the churches of God for your fortitude and faith amid all the persecutions and distresses which you endure. ⁵This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, that you may be made worthy of the kingdom of God, on account of which you are suffering, ⁶inasmuch as God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, ⁷and to give relief along with us to you who are afflicted, when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in a blaze of fire.

⁸He will inflict retribution on those who ignore God and who pay no attention to the good news concerning our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will pay the penalty of everlasting ruin separated from the presence of the Lord and from His glorious power, ¹⁰when He comes on that Day to have His glory shown

in His saints^f and to be admired in all those who believe, because our witnessing among you was believed.

¹¹For this purpose we constantly pray for you, that our God may render you worthy of His call, and by His power may fulfill every desire for goodness and every faith-inspired effort, ¹²so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in Him to the measure of the grace of our God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 NOW WE BEG OF YOU, BROTHERS, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our meeting together with Him, ²not to allow your minds to be readily unsettled or disturbed, either by spirit, or by message, or by letter allegedly from us, as if the day of the Lord had arrived. ³Let no one in any way deceive you; for the apostasy^g is to come first, and the man of sin is to be revealed, the one doomed to hell, ⁴the adversary who opposes and rises up against every so-called god and what is worshiped, so that he seats himself in the temple of God with the claim that he himself is God.

⁵Do you not recollect how I told you this when I was still with you? ⁶So you know now what impedes his being revealed at this time; ⁷for the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only

a) See note at 1 Thess. 1:1.

b) See note at 1 Tim. 1:2.

c) See note at 1 Thess. 1:1.

d) The relationship of believers to God as His sons is through Christ in the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:14-17.

e) Because of being indebted to God.

f) See note at Acts 9:13.

g) Literally, *falling away, departure*.

the one who is impeding now will do so until he is taken out of the way.^h

⁸Then will the lawless oneⁱ be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will remove with the breath of His mouth, and bring to an end by the visible manifestation of His coming.

⁹The coming of the lawless one is according to Satan's working, with great power and signs and miracles, all of them false, ¹⁰and with limitless deceit of wickedness for those who, because they did not welcome the love of truth for their salvation, are going to destruction. ¹¹And for this reason God visits them with a delusion that operates on them to believe the falsehood, ¹²so that all who have not believed the truth but have taken pleasure in wickedness may be judged.

¹³But we are always bound to offer thanks to God for you, brothers, beloved by the Lord as you are, because from the beginning God chose you for salvation by the Spirit's sanctifying work and by faith in the truth. ¹⁴He called you for this purpose by means of the good news which we preached, that you might share the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers, stand firm and hold on to the traditions you learned of us, whether orally or by letter.

¹⁶And may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and has graciously given us eternal comfort and well-founded hope, ¹⁷encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good work and word.

3 FINALLY, BROTHERS, PRAY FOR US, that the word of the Lord may run its course and be glorified as it was among you, ²and that we may be rescued from morally evil and malicious people;^j for all men are not believers. ³But the Lord is faithful, who will

make you strong and guard you from the evil one. ⁴So through the Lord we have confidence in you, that you are practicing and will practice what we command. ⁵And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God^k and into the patient expectation of Christ.

⁶But we charge you, brothers, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid every brother who, instead of observing the tradition you received from us, is living in idleness. ⁷For you know yourselves how you should follow us, because we were not idle among you, ⁸neither did we eat anyone's food without paying for it; instead, we worked and knew hardship night and day, so as not to impose on any of you. ⁹Not that we did not have the right to support, but to furnish you ourselves as an example which you should follow.

¹⁰For while we were with you, we gave you this charge, "If anyone does not want to work, then he should not eat either."^l ¹¹For we are hearing that some of you are living in idleness, not working but busy in other people's affairs. ¹²Such persons we direct and charge in the Lord Jesus Christ that by doing their work quietly, they earn their own living.

¹³As for you, brothers, do not get tired of doing good. ¹⁴If someone does not follow our instruction in this letter, note him well; do not associate with him, so that he may grow ashamed. ¹⁵But do not consider him an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

¹⁶And may the Lord of peace Himself grant you peace at all times under all circumstances. The Lord be with you all.^m

¹⁷The greeting in my own, Paul's handwriting; which is a sign in every letter. It is the way I write.ⁿ

¹⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

h) In vss. 6, 7 someone or something that impedes lawlessness is introduced. It is the view of some scholars that that which restrains iniquity is government, specifically Rome in the first century A.D., in the person of the emperor. Others believe that the Holy Spirit is meant and that His impeding influence will continue until He is taken out of the way as a restrainer at the return of Christ. i) The Antichrist.

j) Paul had an unhappy experience in Thessalonica with men of this kind, Acts 17:5-9.

k) Divine love fostered in our hearts.

l) It appears that there were some people so sure that the Lord would return at any moment that they ceased from working for a living. m) Cf. Matt. 28:20.

n) As a safeguard against false messages allegedly from him, cf. ch. 2:2. Paul signed this letter by hand.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

Date of writing: c. A.D. 64

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST Jesus by order of God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope, ²to Timothy,^a my genuine child in faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³As I requested of you when on my way to Macedonia, stay in Ephesus so that you may warn certain people not to teach any other doctrine, ⁴neither to pay attention to legends and interminable genealogies such as cause disputes rather than divine training that is in faith. ⁵The purpose of our instruction, however, is love that rises out of a pure heart, a clear conscience, and undisguised faith. ⁶Swerving from this, some have strayed into empty talk, ⁷wanting to be teachers of the Law without understanding what they say or about what they are making their confident assertions.

⁸But we know that the Law is admirable if one makes lawful use of it, ⁹keeping in mind that a law is not laid down for an honest person but for the lawless and the rebellious, for the ungodly and sinful, for the impious and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰for immoral people, for sexual perverts, kidnapers, liars, perjurers and whatever else is contrary to wholesome teaching ¹¹according to the glorious good news

of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

¹²I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who strengthened me; for He considered me to be faithful and appointed me for service—¹³me, although I was formerly a slanderer, a persecutor and an insulter. But I found mercy, for in unbelief I acted ignorantly^b; ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord was present in greater abundance with faith and love that rest in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵Trustworthy is the saying and deserving of wholehearted acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost. ¹⁶But I found mercy, so that in me, the foremost of sinners, Jesus Christ might display His unlimited patience, that I might be an example to all who would put their trust in Him for life eternal. ¹⁷Now to the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁸I charge you with these instructions, Timothy my son, in agreement with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you, that you may with their aid fight the good fight, ¹⁹holding faith and a clear conscience. By rejecting their conscience some have shipwrecked their faith; ²⁰for instance, Hymenaeus^c and Alexander,^d whom I

a) Timothy (called also Timotheus) was a native of Lystra in Lycaonia, a part of modern Turkey. His father was a Greek, his mother a Jewess, Acts 16:1. A convert of Paul, vs. 2, Timothy was very close to the apostle and was his companion on Paul's second and third missionary journeys. That the two were often together in Rome is evidenced by their names being linked in Paul's prison epistles, Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philem. 1. At the time that I Timothy was written Timothy was in Ephesus, ch. 1:3, overseeing the church there. Paul's last letter, II Timothy, which was written shortly before his martyrdom in A.D. 67, was addressed to this young man.

b) With faith came mercy; there had been no purposed opposition to the Holy Spirit.

c) II Tim. 2:17. d) Perhaps this man was the metalworker of II Tim. 4:14.

have surrendered to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2 FIRST OF ALL, THEN, I URGE THAT petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all who hold high positions, that with all reverence and dignity we may lead a quiet and undisturbed life. ³This is good and acceptable before God our Savior, ⁴who wants all persons to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave Himself a ransom for all, which was attested in due time. ⁷For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am telling the truth; I am not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and in truth.

⁸So it is my desire that the men everywhere should pray, as without anger and disputing they lift up dedicated hands.^e ⁹In a similar spirit the women should dress themselves modestly and prudently in attire that is becoming, not adorned with braided hair and gold or pearls or expensive clothes ¹⁰but with good works, as is appropriate for women who profess reverence for God.

¹¹Let a woman learn quietly with complete submission. ¹²I do not allow a woman to teach, neither to domineer over a man; instead, she is to keep still. ¹³For Adam was first formed, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, since she was deceived, experienced the transgression. ¹⁵She will, however, be kept safe through the child-bearing, if with self-control she continues in faith and love and consecration.

3 TRUSTWORTHY IS THE SAYING, "Whoever aspires to the office of bishop^f desires to do a splendid work." ²The bishop, then, must be above reproach, the husband of only one wife,

temperate, discreet, well-behaved, hospitable, qualified to teach; ³neither a drunkard nor a bully, but genial, conciliatory, not after money; ⁴presiding well over his own home, keeping his children under control with complete respect, ⁵for if a person does not know enough to manage his own home, how will he take care of God's church? ⁶He should not be a new convert, so that he may not become conceited and fall into the condemnation of the devil.^g ⁷He must also enjoy a favorable reputation among the outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and into the trap of the devil.

⁸Similarly deacons^h should be dignified, not gossips, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for gain, ⁹but with a pure conscience keeping hold of the secretⁱ of the faith. ¹⁰They should first be put on probation and then, if they are without blame, they may serve as deacons.

¹¹Their wives should also be serious-minded, not given to slandering, but temperate and altogether trustworthy. ¹²A deacon should be the husband of one wife only, managing his children and his own household well. ¹³Because those who have rendered helpful service gain a good standing for themselves and much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁴I am writing you this in the hope of shortly coming to you so that, ¹⁵in case I am delayed, you may know how we should behave in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth. ¹⁶And, confessedly, the secret of our faith is great:

He who was revealed in the flesh was vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among Gentiles, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.^j

e) Jews often lifted up their hands while praying.

f) "Bishop" is translated from the Gk. *episkopos*, meaning literally *overseer*. In the first century *episkopos*, bishop or overseer, and *presbuteros*, elder, ch. 5:17, 19, were used interchangeably, e.g. Titus 1:5 and 7, where both words refer to the same office. After the first century the office of bishop or overseer over that of elder developed.

g) It was pride that caused Satan's fall, Isa. 14:12-17.

h) "Deacon" is translated from the Gk. *diakonos*, meaning *servant, helper*, and in later years deacon, as referring to a church officer. The seven men who were chosen to help the apostles by being of service to believers in Jerusalem, Acts 6:1-6, were the first appointed deacons. The noun "ministration," Acts 6:1, is *diakonia*, and the verb "serve," vs. 2, is *diakonein*.

i) See note at Rom. 16:25. j) These lines are probably a part of an early Christian hymn.

4 BUT THE SPIRIT SAYS DISTINCTLY that in later times some will fall away from the faith; they will yield to deluding spirits and demonic teachings ²by hypocritical liars, whose own consciences are seared as with a branding iron. ³They prohibit marriage and the enjoyment of foods which God has created to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴For everything which God created is good and nothing to be rejected when it is gratefully received, ⁵for it is consecrated through the word of God and prayer.

⁶If you will present these matters to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being reared on the messages of faith and of the noble teachings to which you have been conforming your life. ⁷But shun unholy legends that are suitable for old women only. Train yourself for godliness, ⁸because while physical training is of a little benefit, godliness is beneficial in every way; it holds promise for this present and for the future life. ⁹This is a trustworthy saying, deserving the acceptance of all. ¹⁰For this purpose we labor and wrestle, because we have placed our hope in the living God who is the Savior of all people, particularly of those who believe.

¹¹Command and teach these things. ¹²Let no one think little of you because of your youth; instead, become in speech, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity, an example before those who believe. ¹³Till I arrive, devote yourself to the public reading, the preaching and the teaching. ¹⁴Do not neglect the gift in you that was given to you through a prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the elders. ¹⁵Practice these matters, devote yourself so that your advance may be evident to everyone. ¹⁶Look to yourself and to the teaching; keep right on in that, for in so doing, you will save yourself as well as your hearers.

5 DO NOT REBUKE AN OLDER MAN but plead with him as a father,

and younger men as brothers, ²older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

³Honor widows who really are widows. ⁴But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice religion at home and so to make recompense to those who nurtured them; for so it is acceptable in God's sight.

⁵The real widow who is left alone has put her hope in God and is steadfast in her petitions and prayers night and day; ⁶while one who lives in self-indulgence is dead while she lives.¹

⁷Command these things so that they may live above reproach. ⁸Whoever does not provide for his dependents, and especially for his own family, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹Do not enroll^m a widow unless she is over sixty years of age, who was the wife of one husband, ¹⁰one who has a reputation for good works and has reared children, has practiced hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints,ⁿ has relieved the afflicted, and has been devoted to all kinds of good works.

¹¹But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when they feel sensuous impulses that alienate them from Christ, they want to marry, ¹²and become guilty of breaking their first promise to Him. ¹³Moreover, they acquire habits of idleness as they go around visiting the homes, and not merely are they idle but they are gossips and busybodies, saying things they should not.

¹⁴So I would have younger widows marry again, bear children, manage their home, and afford the opponent no opportunity whatever for reviling. ¹⁵For even now some of them have gone astray after Satan. ¹⁶If any believing woman has widowed relatives, let her take care of them so that the church may not be burdened and may look after those who are really widows.

¹⁷The elders who govern well are worthy of double honor, particularly those who labor in preaching and teaching; ¹⁸for the Scripture says,^o

k) Gk. *presbyterion*, from which the English word "presbytery" is derived. See note at ch. 3:1.
l) This is like the eternal existence of the unsaved. The kind of person described here is dead spiritually and in ruin but continues to exist. m) For some such office as deaconess.
n) See note at Acts 9:13. o) Deut. 25:4.

"Do not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and,^p "The worker deserves his wage."

¹⁹Do not recognize a charge against an elder unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.^q ²⁰In the presence of all, correct those who continue in sin, so that the rest may be awed.

²¹I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels,^r that you observe these commands without discrimination, that you act with no favoritism. ²²Lay hands of ordination on no one hastily; neither make common cause with the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

²³Do not any longer drink water only, but use a little wine for the good of your stomach and your recurring illness.

²⁴The sins of some people are soon in evidence; they lead on to judgment. But in the case of others they dog their steps. ²⁵Equally so are good works readily observed; while those which are otherwise cannot remain hidden.

6 LET THOSE WHO ARE UNDER THE yoke of slavery^p regard their masters as deserving of all respect, so that the name of God and our teaching may not be reviled. ²But those who have believing masters must honor them no less because they are brothers; instead, they should serve them better because those who benefit by their service are believers and are loved.

³Teach and urge these matters. Whoever teaches differently and does not adhere to the wholesome sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the teaching that is according to our faith, ⁴is conceited and without understanding, with a morbid craving for controversy and dispute about words, which result in envy, wrangling, slander, bad suspicions, ⁵perpetual contention between people of depraved minds and defrauded of the truth, who think of piety in terms of profit.

⁶Piety with contentment is great

gain indeed; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world and, obviously, we can carry nothing out. ⁸When we have food and clothing, we shall be content with these. ⁹Those who are eager to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into numerous thoughtless and hurtful cravings that plunge people into destruction and ruin. ¹⁰For the love of money is the root of all evils.^r In striving for it, some have wandered away from the faith and have pierced themselves with many sorrows.

¹¹But you, O man of God, shun these things and go after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called as you made a good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

¹³In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,^u ¹⁴I charge you to keep the commandment^v stainless and irreproachable until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which in due time He will make known, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone possesses immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no human being has ever seen or is able to see. To Him be honor and dominion forever. Amen.

¹⁷Command those who are rich in this present world not to be haughty, neither to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth but in God, who so richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Urge them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous givers, to practice sharing, ¹⁹and to treasure up for themselves a sound foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that is really life.

²⁰O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Keep away from ir-

p.) Luke 10:7. q) Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16.

r) New Testament writers follow our Lord in the assurance that angels are all around us.

s) This applies to all who are employed and the relationships between them and their employers. See note at Matt. 13:27.

t) The love of money fosters such things as selfishness, pride, cruelty, and separation from fellow men and from God. u) John 18:33-38. v) Concerning Christian behavior.

religious and empty discussions and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹which some people have

claimed to have, and so have missed the mark with regard to the faith.

Grace be with you all.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

TIMOTHY

Date of writing: c. A.D. 67, at Rome

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST Jesus by the will of God in accordance with the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus, ²to Timothy^a my beloved child: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³I am grateful to God whom, in line with my ancestors, I worship with a clear conscience as constantly I remember you night and day in my prayers. ⁴When I remember the tears you shed, I yearn to see you, so that I might be perfectly happy. ⁵I bring back to mind your sincere faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am convinced, in you as well.

⁶On account of this I would remind you to keep alive the flame of God's gracious gift^b that is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and love and self-control. ⁸Do not be ashamed, therefore, about bearing witness to our Lord or about me His prisoner, but share my suffering for the good news by virtue of the power of God, ⁹who has saved us and called us with a call for dedication, not because of any doings of ours but according to His own purpose and the grace that has been granted us in Christ Jesus before time began. ¹⁰But now it has been realized through the appearance of our Savior Christ Jesus,

who rendered death ineffectual and brought life and immortality to light through the good news, ¹¹for which I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

¹²Therefore I suffer in this way; but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed^c and am convinced that He is able to guard safely my deposit, entrusted to Him against that Day.

¹³Hold to the pattern of wholesome teachings which you heard from me, in faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Guard, by the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit within us, that precious deposit^d that was entrusted to you.

¹⁵Of this you are aware, that all those in the province of Asia have deserted me—Phygelus and Hermogenes^e among them. ¹⁶May the Lord grant favor to the family of Onesiphorus^f for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my being a prisoner. ¹⁷Instead, on arriving in Rome, he eagerly searched for and found me. ¹⁸The Lord grant him to find mercy with the Lord on that Day. And what services he rendered in Ephesus you know very well.

2 SO YOU, MY SON, BE STRONG BY means of the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²And what you have heard from me through many witnesses, this commit to reliable men who will be able to teach others as well.

a) See note at I Tim. 1:2.

b) God-given qualities remain alive only when they are used. Cf. I Tim. 4:14.

c) Not intellectual knowledge but personal trust. d) The truth of God's saving grace.

e) Many of Paul's acquaintances forsook him because of his imprisonment, cf. ch. 4:10, 16, but that he names these two men, and Demas also, makes it appear that their desertion was particularly distressing to him. f) Ch. 4:19.

³As a good soldier of Christ Jesus share my hardship. ⁴No soldier gets involved in affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him. ⁵Again, whoever competes in a game does not win the award unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶The toiling farmer must have first share of the produce.

⁷Consider what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything. ⁸Keep in mind Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David according to the good news that I preach, ⁹in which I suffer punishment like a criminal even to shackles; but the word of God is not shackled. ¹⁰I endure all this for the sake of the elect, so that they also may gain possession of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory.

¹¹This is a trustworthy saying:

If we have died together with Him, we shall also live together with Him.

¹²If we endure, then we shall also reign with Him.

If we deny Him, then He Himself will also deny us.

¹³If we are unfaithful to Him, He Himself will remain faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.^g

¹⁴Remind them^h of these facts and charge them in the presence of God to indulge in no wars of words; it helps no one and it completely upsets the listeners. ¹⁵Do your utmost to present yourself to God approved, a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly interpreting the message of the truth. ¹⁶But keep away from those godless, empty discussions, for they lead people further on into godlessness, ¹⁷and theirⁱ teaching spreads like gangrene. Hymenaeus^j and Philetus are of that group ¹⁸that has gone astray from the truth when they say that the resurrection has already occurred, and are playing havoc with the faith of some.

¹⁹God's foundation, nevertheless,

stands firm^k bearing this inscription,^l "The Lord knows those who are His," and "Let everyone who names the Lord's name stand aloof from wickedness."

²⁰But in a large house there are not only gold and silver utensils, but wooden and earthen too, and some are indeed for noble but others for ignoble use. ²¹Therefore, whoever will cleanse himself from these things will be a utensil for noble use, set apart and useful for the Master, prepared for good service of every sort.

²²But flee from the lusts of youth. Go in pursuit of integrity, faith, love, peace, in fellowship with those who call upon the Lord out of pure hearts. ²³Decline those foolish, stupid speculations, as you know they breed quarrels. ²⁴And a slave^m of the Lord must not quarrel; instead, he must be affable toward everyone, skilled in teaching, willing to suffer wrong. ²⁵In a gentle way he must correct those who put themselves in opposition to him, in the hope that God may grant repentance that leads to acknowledgment of the truth, ²⁶and that they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil under whom they had been taken captive, to do his will.

3 BUT UNDERSTAND THIS, THAT IN the last daysⁿ difficult times will come. ²For people will be lovers of themselves, avaricious, boasters, haughty, abusive, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, irreverent, ³without natural affection, relentless, slanderers, uncontrolled, brutal, with no love for the good, ⁴treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. ⁵While retaining a form of piety, they are strangers to its power. Turn away from such people.

⁶For from such people are those who worm their way into houses and captivate idle women loaded down with sins and controlled by all sorts of

g) Like I Tim. 3:16, vss. 11-13 probably constitute part of an early Christian hymn.

h) "Them" refers to believers, probably in Ephesus, cf. I Tim. 1:3.

i) "Their" points to those mentioned in vss. 17, 18. j) I Tim. 1:20. k) I Cor. 3:11.

l) Num. 16:5, 26; John 10:14, 27. m) See note at Matt. 13:27.

n) The days between Christ's ascension and His return.

impulses, ⁷ forever trying to learn and never able to reach a knowledge of the truth.

⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres^o opposed Moses, so do these men oppose the truth, corrupt thinkers as they are and counterfeits so far as faith is concerned. ⁹ However, they will not get very far, for their folly will be obvious to everyone, as was the case with those mentioned above.

¹⁰ But you have adhered to my teaching, my conduct, my purpose, my faith, my steadfastness, my love, my patience, ¹¹ my persecutions, my sufferings—all that happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium and in Lystra, such persecutions as I underwent and from all of which the Lord rescued me. ¹² In fact, all who want to live devotedly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But wicked men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

¹⁴ You, however, must remain faithful in what you have learned and are convinced of, aware from whom you learned, ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures that are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God^p and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be well-fitted and adequately equipped for all good work.

4 I CHARGE YOU IN THE PRESENCE of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, by His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the message; be at it when convenient and when not convenient; correct, exhort, rebuke with complete patience and teaching.

³ For the time is coming when they will not tolerate wholesome instruction; instead they will, to satisfy their

own desires, gather up teachers that will tickle their ears. ⁴ They will turn away from listening to the truth and will wander off to hear myths. ⁵ But amid it all, keep your head, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge to the full your duties as a minister.

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering and the time of my death has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. ⁸ Beyond that there is laid away for me the crown^q of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award me in that Day, and not to me alone, but to all who have loved His appearing.

⁹ Do your best to visit me soon, ¹⁰ for Demas^r has deserted me for love of the present world and has gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus^s to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke^t alone is with me. Get hold of Mark^u and bring him along, for he is helpful to me in service. ¹² I have sent Tychicus^v to Ephesus.

¹³ When you come, bring along the travel-cloak I left at Troas with Carpus; also the books, and especially the parchments.

¹⁴ Alexander,^w the metalworker, has displayed considerable ill will toward me. The Lord will pay him back to the measure of his doings. ¹⁵ You, too, beware of him, for he strongly opposed our messages.

¹⁶ In my first defense no one supported me; instead, they all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was rescued from the lion's jaws. ¹⁸ Indeed, the Lord will rescue me from every evil act and will save me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

o) These two men were the leaders of the Egyptian magicians of Exod. 7. Their names are not given in the O.T. but are found in Jewish tradition.

p) The Gk. word *theopneustos*, translated "inspired by God," literally means God-breathed.

q) See note at Phil. 4:1.

r) Earlier Demas has been with Paul in Rome, Col. 4:14; Philem. 24.

s) See note at Titus 1:4.

t) Luke, the physician, author of the Third Gospel and The Acts. See note at Col. 4:14.

u) John Mark, author of the Second Gospel. See note at Col. 4:10.

v) See note at Col. 4:7.

w) 1 Tim. 1:20; cf. Acts 19:33, 34.

¹⁹My greetings to Priscilla and Aquila^x and to the Onesiphorus family.^y ²⁰Erastus stayed at Corinth. I left Trophimus^z behind in Miletus; he was ill.

²¹Do your best to arrive before winter.

Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers, send you greetings.

²²The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you all.

x) Acts 18:2. y) Ch. 1:16. z) Acts 20:4

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 65

1 PAUL, A SLAVE^a OF GOD, AND AN apostle of Jesus Christ, to foster the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, ²based on the hope of eternal life which God, who does not lie, promised before time began ³and has at the proper time revealed as His message through the preaching entrusted to me by order of God our Savior, ⁴to Titus,^b my true child in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

⁵I left you in Crete for this reason, that you might correct the defects and appoint elders^c in each town, as I gave you directions, ⁶if a person is above reproach, the husband of one wife only, has believing children who are not charged with being profligate or unruly. ⁷For the bishop must, as God's steward, be irreproachable, not self-willed or hot-tempered, or a drunkard, or pugnacious, or greedy for dishonest gain.

⁸Instead, he must be hospitable, in love with what is good, self-controlled, fair, of holy life, disciplined. ⁹He must hold to the trustworthy message of the doctrine, so he may be able to en-

courage by his wholesome teaching, as well as to refute those who raise objections.

¹⁰For many are refractory, senseless talkers and deceivers, particularly among those of the circumcision.^d

¹¹These must be silenced because they upset whole families by teaching for dishonest gain what they should not teach. ¹²A prophet from their own people said^e of them, "Cretans are always liars, wicked brutes, lazy gluttons."

¹³This testimony is true. For this reason correct them sternly, that they may be sound in the faith ¹⁴instead of paying attention to Jewish fables and to commandments of people who turn their backs on the truth. ¹⁵To the pure everything is pure, but to the contaminated and the unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and their conscience are polluted. ¹⁶They profess to know God but by their practices deny Him. They are detestable and disobedient and unfit for any good deed.

2 BUT YOU MUST SPEAK WHAT IS fitting for wholesome doctrine: ²that the older men be temperate, ven-

a) See note at Matt. 13:27.

b) Although Titus is not mentioned in The Acts, he accompanied Paul on some of the apostle's missionary journeys, Gal. 2:3. He was a Gentile, a Greek, and may have been brought to faith in Christ by Paul, who speaks of him here as "my true child in our common faith," vs. 4. Titus was Paul's emissary to the difficult church at Corinth, II Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 16; 12:18, and was also sent by the apostle to Dalmatia, now part of Yugoslavia, II Tim. 4:10. As is shown in ch. 1:5, Titus was on the island of Crete to supervise the work of the churches there.

c) Regarding "elders," Gk. *presbuteros*, here and "bishop," Gk. *episkopos*, vs. 7, see note at I Tim. 3:1.

d) The Epistle to the Galatians has much to say about those who insisted that Gentile Christians should be circumcised and abide by Mosaic regulations. There were some in Crete who were troubling new converts to Christianity in the same way.

e) The statement is from the Cretan poet Epimenides, sixth century B.C.

erable, sensible, sound in faith, in love, and in patience; ³similarly that the older women be reverent in their behavior, neither slanderers nor slaves to drink. They should be teachers of what is good, ⁴that they may wisely train the young women to be loving wives and mothers, ⁵sensible, chaste, good housekeepers, good-natured, submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be slandered.

⁶Urge the younger men as well to behave prudently, ⁷and set in your own person an all-round example of doing what is good, manifesting in your teaching integrity and seriousness, ⁸giving a wholesome, unobjectionable message that will shame the opponent because he has nothing evil to say about us.

⁹Tell slaves to be submissive to their own masters, ¹to please them in every way, not to talk back, ¹⁰not to pilfer but to give evidence of such complete reliability that altogether they will beautify the teaching of God our Savior.

¹¹For the saving grace of God has appeared for all people, ¹²training us to renounce godlessness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present world, ¹³with expectation of that blessed hope, even the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify for Himself a people all His own who are eager to do good works.

¹⁵Assert these things and exhort and reprove with full authority. Allow no one to think little of you.

3 REMIND THEM TO BE SUBJECT TO the ruling authorities, to be obedient, to be prepared for every good work, ²not to slander anyone, not to be quarrelsome but gentle, showing

complete mildness toward all people. ³For once we ourselves were thoughtless, disobedient, led astray, slaves to passions and pleasures of all sorts, wasting our time in malice and envy, detestable, and hating one another.

⁴But when the goodness of God our Savior was shown and His love of men was evidenced, ⁵not because of righteous works that we have done but in agreement with His mercy, He saved us through the washing of regeneration and a renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He has poured out richly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, counted as righteous by His grace, we might be made heirs in accordance with our hope of eternal life.

⁸This is a trustworthy saying, and I would have you insist on these things with confidence, so that those who have become believers in God may be careful to apply themselves to good works, which are excellent and beneficial for all people.

⁹But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, strife, and wranglings about the Law, for they are futile and purposeless. ¹⁰Have nothing to do with a factious person after a first and second warning, ¹¹aware that such a person is perverted and goes on sinning, and is self-condemned.

¹²When I send Artemas or Tychicus, ¹³then do your utmost to visit me at Nicopolis, ¹⁴for there I have decided to stay for the winter. ¹⁵Equip Zenas the lawyer and Apollos ¹⁶carefully for their journey, so that they may lack nothing. ¹⁷And have our own people learn to apply themselves to honorable work to meet the urgent needs, that they may not be unproductive.

¹⁸All those with me send you greetings. Greet those who love us in faith.

¹⁹May grace be with you all.

f) See note at I Tim. 6:1. g) See note at Col. 4:7.

h) Nicopolis was on the west coast of Macedonia (Greece) almost directly across the Adriatic Sea from Rhegium in Italy. One of the reasons why Paul is thought to have had two imprisonments in Rome, with an interval between them, is his possible presence in Nicopolis when this letter to Titus was written, c. A.D. 65. For he was taken to Rome as a prisoner in about A.D. 60 and was martyred there in the year 67. i) Acts 18:24.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON

Date of writing: c. A.D. 60, at Rome

PPAUL, A PRISONER OF CHRIST JESUS, and our brother Timothy,^a to Philemon, our beloved fellow worker, ²and to our sister Apphia^b and to our fellow soldier Archippus,^c and to the church that meets at your home: ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I always offer thanks to my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵for I hear of the love and the faith you practice toward the Lord Jesus and to all the saints.^d ⁶I pray that by an understanding of all the good you enjoy among yourselves, the sharing of your faith may become effectual for Christ. ⁷For I have enjoyed much pleasure and comfort over your love, because through you, brother, the hearts of the saints have been refreshed.

⁸Therefore, although in Christ I feel very free to give you directions as to your duty, ⁹I prefer to make my appeal on the basis of love. Here I am, then, as Paul the old man,^e yet now a prisoner of Christ Jesus, ¹⁰appealing to you on behalf of my son, Onesimus, who became my son during my imprisonment.^f ¹¹Once he was use-

less to you, but now he is helpful both to you and to me.

¹²I am sending him back to you and my heart with him. ¹³I should like to retain him for myself, so that he might serve me instead of you during my imprisonment for the sake of the good news; ¹⁴but I do not wish to do anything without your consent, so that your kind action may not be compulsory but voluntary. ¹⁵For he was parted from you for a while perhaps for this very reason, that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave,^g but better than a slave, a beloved brother, unquestionably to me but how much more so to you both personally and in the Lord.

¹⁷So, if I am your partner, then receive him as you would me. ¹⁸And if he wronged you in any way, or is in debt to you, put it down to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing with my own hand,^h I will refund it—not to mention that, over and above, you owe me your very self. ²⁰Yes, brother, I should like to make some profit out of you in the Lord; buoy up my deepest feelings in Christ.

²¹I am writing you, confident that

a) See note at I Tim. 1:2. b) Apphia was Philemon's wife.

c) Archippus was probably Philemon's son. Paul, in writing his letter to Colossae, exhorted Archippus to be faithful in his service for the Lord, Col. 4:17. d) See note at Acts 9:13.

e) "Old man." Ck. *presbutes*. The addition of an "e" would make it read *presbutes*, meaning ambassador. Some scholars think that the original text may have been written in this way. Cf. II Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20.

f) "Onesimus." Ck. *Onesimos*, means *useful*. Onesimus was a runaway slave who had probably robbed Philemon. Evidently he met Paul in Rome and was converted. This letter was written to persuade his master, Philemon, who lived in Colossae, to receive and forgive the runaway slave. Notice the play on words in vs. 10, 11. Once "Useful," he had become useless to Philemon; now he was useful to Philemon and Paul. g) See note at Matt. 13:27.

h) Here Paul signed, as it were, a promissory note to pay back to Philemon the debt Onesimus owed him. So Christ through His sacrifice of Himself paid the debt we owe to God because of our sins.

you will listen to me, and knowing you will do more than I request.
²²Meanwhile, you may prepare a guest room for me, for I hope through your prayers to be restored to you.

²³Epaphras,^l my fellow prisoner in

Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. ²⁴So do Mark,^j Aristarchus,^k Demas,^l and Luke,^m my fellow workers.

²⁵The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

i) See note at Col. 1:7.

j) See note at Col. 4:10.

k) Aristarchus, a Macedonian, was one of Paul's travel companions, Acts 19:29.

l) At the time this letter was written Demas was quite close to Paul as a fellow worker in the service of Christ. But he was unable to endure the afflictions connected with the ministry and left the apostle, while the latter was in prison, to go to Thessalonica. "For Demas has deserted me for love of the present world," II Tim. 4:10. m) See note at Col. 4:14.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Date of writing: c. A.D. 68

1 GOD OF OLD SPOKE^a TO OUR FATHERS at various times and in many ways by means of the prophets. ²But He has at the end of these days^b spoken to us in His Son, whom He has appointed Heir of all things and through whom He made the world. ³As the reflection of God's glory and the true expression of His being He sustains the universe by His almighty word. And when He had effected our cleansing from sin, He took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

⁴He became as much greater than the angels as the name He inherited was superior to theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, ^c"Thou art My Son; today I have begotten Thee"? And again, ^d"I will be a Father to Him and He will be a Son to Me"? ⁶Once more, when He introduces the First-born into the world, He says, ^e"And let all God's angels worship Him." ⁷Referring to the angels He says, ^f"Who makes His angels winds and His ministers flames of fire"; ⁸but as to the Son, ^g"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of Thy kingdom is a scepter of righteousness. ⁹Thou hast loved righteousness and hast hated injustice; therefore God, Thy God, has anointed Thee with the oil of gladness rather than Thy companions."

¹⁰Further^h "Thou, Lord, didst found the earth at the beginning and

the heavens are the works of Thy hands. ¹¹They will perish, but Thou remainest. They will all wear out like a garment, ¹²and like a mantle Thou wilt fold them up and they will be changed; but Thou art the same and Thy years will not come to an end."

¹³Besides, to which of the angels did He ever say, ⁱ"Be seated at My right hand until I put down your enemies as a footstool for your feet"? ¹⁴Are they not all ministering spirits, sent for the assistance of those who are to inherit salvation?

2 WE MUST THEREFORE PAY THE more careful attention to what we have heard, so that we may not let ourselves drift from it. ^jFor if the message that was spoken through angels^k has held true, and every transgression and disobedience received its just retribution, ³how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was first spoken by the Lord; it was confirmed to us by those who heard Him; ⁴then it was corroborated by God with signs and wonders and a great variety of miraculous powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to His will.

⁵For He did not subject the future world of which we are talking under the control of angels, ⁶but one has somewhere testified, ¹"What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou lookest after

a) The name of the author of this epistle is nowhere stated in the N.T. It was evidently written prior to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, ch. 10:11. b) Since the Messiah came. c) Ps. 2:7. d) II Sam. 7:14. e) Deut. 32:43, *Septuagint*. f) Ps. 104:4. g) Ps. 45:6, 7. h) Ps. 102:25-27. i) Ps. 110:1. j) On a tide of unbelief. k) Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19. l) Ps. 8:4-c

him? ⁷For a little while Thou hast ranked him lower than the angels; with glory and honor hast Thou crowned him; ⁸all things hast Thou subjected underneath his feet."

In thus subjecting all things to him, nothing is left out that is not subjected; but at present we do not yet see all things subjected to him. ⁹But we see Jesus, ranked lower than the angels for a little while, crowned with glory and honor because of the sufferings of death, in order that by divine grace He might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰For it befitted Him, for whom and through whom the universe exists, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the Leader of their salvation by means of sufferings.

¹¹For the One who makes holy and those who are being made holy all have one Father, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹²when He says, "I shall proclaim Thy name to My brothers; in the midst of the congregation I shall sing Thy praise," ¹³and again, "I shall put My trust in Him," and once more, "Here am I and the children God has given Me."

¹⁴Since, then, the children share flesh and blood, He Himself shared these things with them, so that by means of His death He might destroy the one who wields the power of death, namely the devil, ¹⁵and set free those who throughout life were held in slavery by fear of death.

¹⁶For it is surely not to the angels that He reaches out to help, but to the offspring of Abraham; ¹⁷so He had to be made like His brothers in every respect in order to become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things related to God, for the atonement of the people's sins. ¹⁸For because He Himself suffered in being tempted, He is able to bring aid to those who are tempted.

3 SO THEN, HOLY BROTHERS AND sharers in the heavenly invitation, set your thoughts on Jesus, the Apos-

tle and High Priest of our confession. ²He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as Moses was in the whole household of God. ³For He is entitled to greater honor than Moses to the degree in which the builder of a house enjoys more honor than the house itself. ⁴Of course every house is built by someone, but the Builder of all things is God. ⁵And while Moses was faithful in His whole household as a servant, to bear witness to things that would be spoken of later, ⁶Christ was faithful as a Son in charge of God's household. And we are that household, if we firmly maintain the confidence and pride in what we hope for.

⁷Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you will hear His voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion at the time when you put God to the test in the wilderness, ⁹where your fathers for forty years tried Me by putting Me to the test and saw what I did. ¹⁰So I became sorely displeased with that generation and said, 'They are always going astray in their hearts; they did not learn My ways.' ¹¹As I swore in My anger, 'They shall not enter into My rest.'"

¹²Look out, brothers, so that there may not be a wicked, unbelieving heart in any of you that would lead you to fall away from the living God. ¹³Instead, give daily warning to one another so long as we may speak of today, ¹⁴so that not one of you may be hardened through the delusion of sin.

¹⁵For only if we maintain firmly to the very end the original assurance, then are we sharers of Christ, ¹⁶with this in mind, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

¹⁷For who heard and yet were rebellious? Was it not all who went out of Egypt under Moses? ¹⁸And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the desert? ¹⁹And to whom but the disobedient did He swear, "They shall not

m) Ps. 22:22. n) Isa. 8:17, *Septuagint*. o) Isa. 8:18.

p) All believers, Gal. 3:17; cf. Rom. 4:11, 12. q) Num. 12:7. r) Ps. 95:7-11.

s) The day of grace. t) Of salvation through Christ.

enter into My rest"? ¹⁹So we see that on account of unbelief they were not able to enter.

4 LET US THEN BE ON OUR GUARD so that, while the promise of entering into His rest still holds, none of you may be found to be delinquent, ²for we have had the good news preached to us, just as they did. But the message they heard did not benefit them, because it was not united by faith to those who heard it. ³For we who have believed enter into His rest, as He has said, "As I swore in My anger, they shall not enter into My rest"; although His works had been accomplished from the foundation of the world. ⁴For somewhere He says^u this about the seventh day, "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works," ⁵and again in this passage, "They shall not enter into My rest."

⁶Since, then, it is reserved for some to enter it,^v and those who previously received the good news did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷He fixes a new "today," as He says in David so much later, and as we have mentioned before, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹Consequently there is a sabbath rest reserved for the people of God;^w ¹⁰for one who enters into his rest, also rests from his works, just as God did from His.

¹¹Let us then exert ourselves to enter into that rest, so that none may fall on account of such disobedience as they exemplified; ¹²for the word of God is living and effective, and sharper than any two-edged sword. It penetrates even to the dividing line of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and judges the desires and thoughts of the heart. ¹³Not a creature exists that is hidden from Him, but all things lie bare and exposed before the eyes of Him with whom we have to reckon.

¹⁴Inasmuch then as we have a great High Priest, Jesus, the Son of God, who has passed through the heavens,^x let us hold firmly to our confession. ¹⁵For ours is not a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who was in every respect tested as we are, yet without committing any sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach the throne of grace with assurance, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

5 FOR EVERY HIGH PRIEST, CHOSEN as he is from among men, is appointed to represent the people in matters that pertain to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²And he can deal gently with the ignorant and the wayward, since he is himself liable to weakness. ³For this reason he is obliged to present offerings for his own sins as well as for the people. ⁴No one appropriates the honor for himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was.

⁵So, too, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "Thou art My Son; today I have begotten Thee," ⁶as also He says elsewhere,^y "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

⁷In the days of His flesh He offered prayers and petitions with strong crying and with tears to Him who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His humble devotion to God. ⁸Although He was a Son, He learned obedience by what He suffered ⁹and, when He was perfected, He became the Author of eternal salvation for all who obey Him; ¹⁰so He was called by God a High Priest after Melchizedek's order.

¹¹There is much to say about this, and it is difficult to explain, since you have grown hard of hearing; ¹²for whereas by this time you ought to be teachers, you stand again in need of someone to teach you the elementary

u) Gen. 2:2.

v) Of those who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua, and perhaps some who were infants at that time, entered the land of promise. w) In heaven.

x) Into the immediate presence of God the Father. y) Ps. 110:4.

principles of God's lessons; you have come to need milk and not solid food.¹³Of course, anyone who feeds on milk is inexperienced in the matter of righteousness² for he is an infant.¹⁴But solid food is for the mature person, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish between good and evil.

6 LET US LEAVE BEHIND THE ELEMENTARY teachings of Christ and advance toward maturity. Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance from dead works^a and faith in God,² of teaching on washings and the laying on of hands, of resurrection from the dead and eternal punishment.³God permitting we do this.

⁴For it is impossible to bring anew to repentance those who have once for all been illumined, have tasted the heavenly gift, have become participants of the Holy Spirit,⁵ have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the world to come,⁶ and have fallen away; for they repeat so far as they are concerned the crucifying of the Son of God and are exposing Him to public disgrace.⁷For the land that drinks the rain that often falls on it, and that grows vegetation useful to those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God,⁸ but if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless; it is facing a curse and ends up by being burned.

⁹Even though we speak this way, dear friends, we feel confident of better things about you, things that belong to salvation.¹⁰For God is not unjust so as to forget what you did and the love you showed for His name as you have ministered to the saints,^b and are still ministering.^c¹¹It is our desire, however, for each of you to evidence the same earnestness all the way through, to enjoy the full assurance of your hope to the end,¹² so you may not become sluggish but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

¹³For when God made His prom-

ise to Abraham, He swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater,¹⁴ and said,^d "I certainly shall bless you with blessings and multiply you abundantly."¹⁵So it was that after patient waiting he realized what had been promised.

¹⁶Men do indeed swear by one greater than themselves, and an oath serves for settlement beyond all dispute.¹⁷In this way God, in His desire to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, guaranteed it with an oath,¹⁸ so that by two unalterable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge in Him may have strong encouragement to seize the hope that is placed before us.¹⁹To this hope we anchor the soul safely and securely, and it reaches on beyond the veil into the Holy of Holies, where²⁰ Jesus entered in for us in advance^e for He has become a High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

7 FOR THIS MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he returned from the defeat of the kings and who blessed him,² to whom Abraham also apportioned a tithe of all the spoil,^f was first of all, as the name means, king of righteousness and then king of Salem, which means king of peace.³Without father or mother or ancestral line,⁴ with no beginning of days nor ending of life, made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

⁴Observe his greatness, to whom the patriarch Abraham gave a tithe of the first spoils.⁵Those who are the descendants of Levi, who receive the priestly office, are commanded by the Law to take tithes from the people, which means their own brothers, although they have sprung from Abraham's loins.⁶But a person without their ancestral line took tithes from Abraham and blessed the possessor of the promises.⁷Yet the lesser is unquestionably blessed by the greater.

z) Before God. a) The works of the Law. b) See note at Acts 9:13. c) Cf. ch. 10:32-34.
d) Gen. 22:17. e) A third guarantee. f) Gen. 14:18-20.
g) That is, insofar as priestly lineage is concerned.

⁸Furthermore, in this instance mortal men receive tithes, but in that case it was one of whom it is witnessed that he lives. ⁹And one might say that through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, ¹⁰for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchizedek met Abraham.

¹¹Now if perfection had been possible by means of the Levitical priesthood—for on its basis the people received the Law—why was it required to have another priest appointed after the order of Melchizedek instead of choosing one of the Aaronic order?

¹²For when the priesthood is changed, there comes necessarily a change of the Law. ¹³He of whom this was said belonged to a different tribe, no member of which has officiated at the altar; ¹⁴for obviously our Lord sprang from Judah, regarding which tribe Moses never mentioned priests. ¹⁵This is still even plainer when another priest arises who resembles Melchizedek, ¹⁶who has become such, not according to the norm of a law dependent on the physical life but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷For it is witnessed concerning Him, "Thou art a priest forever of the Melchizedek order."^h

¹⁸On the one hand, a previous regulation is set aside because of its ineffectiveness and its uselessness (¹⁹for the Law brought nothing to perfection) and on the other hand, a better hope is introduced through which we draw near to God. ²⁰And it was not without an oath. ²¹For the Levites became priests without an oath, but He with an oath by the One who said to Him, "The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, Thou art a priest forever." ²²And because of this difference Jesus became surety of a better covenant.

²³And those priestsⁱ were numerous because they were prevented by death from continuing; ²⁴but He, because He remains forever, holds a priesthood that is never transferred. ²⁵Hence, too,

He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him,^j because He always lives to intercede for them.

²⁶For such a High Priest also suited our need—holy, innocent, spotless, different from sinners and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷He does not, like those high priests, have daily need to offer sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered Himself as a sacrifice.^k

²⁸For the Law appoints weak human beings to the priesthood, but the word of the oath, that came later than the Law, appoints the forever-perfect Son, who has been made perfect forever.

8 NOW THE MAIN POINT OF WHAT we have been saying is this: we have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, ^{2a}as minister in the sanctuary; yes, of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched,^l not man.

³For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; so this One also must have something to offer.

⁴If, then, He were still on earth, He would not be a priest at all; for here they offer the gifts as prescribed by the Law, ⁵that serve as a copy and shadow the heavenly sanctuary, just as Moses was instructed when he was about to build the tabernacle. "See to it," He said,^m "that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

⁶But now He has acquired a ministry as far superior as the covenant He mediates is better, enacted as it is upon more excellent promises. ⁷For if that first covenant had been flawless, no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸But, finding fault with it, He says,ⁿ "The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ⁹not like the covenant I made with their fathers the

h) This spells the end of the Levitical priesthood. i) The successive line of high priests.

j) Cf. John 14:6. k) Christ our High Priest was at the same time the offerer and the victim.

l) Num. 24:6, *Septuagint*. m) Exod. 25:40.

n) Jer. 31:31-34.

day I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not remain faithful to My covenant. So I let them alone, says the Lord.

¹⁰"For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, the Lord says, I will fix My laws into their minds and will write them on their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be My people. ¹¹No longer shall each citizen be teaching his neighbor and each person his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they shall all know Me from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹²For I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings, and their sins I will no longer remember."

¹³By saying, "new," He has made the first out of date. But what is antiquated and obsolete approaches the vanishing point.

9 TO BE SURE, THE FIRST COVENANT had its worship regulations and its earthly sanctuary; ²for the first tabernacle was furnished in this way: in what is called the Holy Place were the lampstand and the table and the presentation loaves.^o ³Behind the second curtain was the tabernacle called the Holy of Holies, ⁴containing the golden altar of incense^p and the ark of the covenant completely covered with gold; inside it the golden jar of manna, Aaron's rod that sprouted,^q and the tablets of the covenant. ⁵Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat, — about which we cannot now go into detail.

⁶With these things so arranged, the priests always enter the first tabernacle to perform their priestly duties, ⁷but into the second the high priest alone enters once a year — not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the thoughtless sins of the people.

⁸Through this the Holy Spirit evidences that the way into the Holiest^r

was not yet opened with the first tabernacle still standing. ⁹This is a symbol for the present time. It means that the gifts and offerings which are presented cannot make the worshiper's conscience perfect, ¹⁰as they consist only of food and drink and various ablutions — physical regulations that are in effect until the time of the new order.

¹¹But when Christ appeared as High Priest of the good things that have come, He passed through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands — no part, that is, of material creation. ¹²And not with blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered once for all into the Holy Place, procuring eternal redemption. ¹³For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer, as it sprinkles those who were defiled, renders them holy so far as physical purity is concerned, ¹⁴how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself a flawless sacrifice to God, cleanse your conscience from lifeless work for the service of the living God!

¹⁵For this reason He is the Mediator of a new covenant so that, with a death occurring for atonement of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the eternal inheritance that was promised. ¹⁶For where there is a testament, the death of the testator needs to be established. ¹⁷A will is effective at death; it is not valid so long as the testator lives.

¹⁸Therefore, the first covenant was not ratified without blood. ¹⁹When Moses had spoken every commandment according to the Law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats along with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled it on the Book and on all the people, ²⁰saying,^s "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded upon you." ²¹Similarly he sprinkled the

^o) These loaves were dedicated to God and eaten by the priests as His representatives on earth.

^p) In O.T. times the altar of incense was in the Holy Place outside the veil (curtain), Exod. 30:1-6. Here it is included among the furnishings that were within the veil, the Holy of holies. Perhaps the writer of Hebrews was speaking symbolically in relocating the altar inasmuch as Christ, the eternal sacrifice, was now in the presence of God. ^q) Num. 17:1-10.

^r) Of heaven, vs. 12.

^s) Exod. 24:8.

tabernacle and all the service utensils with the blood.^t

²²According to the Law almost everything is purified by blood, and without bloodshedding there is no forgiveness. ²³So it was necessary that the copies of the heavenly things be purified by these sacrifices; but the heavenly things themselves require better sacrifices than these. ²⁴For Christ has not entered into a sanctuary made by hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear on our behalf in the presence of God—²⁵not to present Himself repeatedly as an offering, as the high priest enters annually into the sanctuary with blood not his own; ²⁶for if so, He must have suffered repeatedly since the world began. But as it is, He has appeared once for all at the close of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

²⁷And as it is reserved for men to die once for all with judgment following, ²⁸so will Christ, sacrificed once for all to bear the sins of many, appear the second time, with no reference to sin, to those who are eagerly looking for Him, and that for their salvation.

10 FOR WHILE THE LAW FORE-shadowed the promised blessings without expressing them in reality, it can never make perfect those who continually approach with the same sacrifices year after year. ²Else, would they not have ceased bringing their offerings, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? ³But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year; ⁴for the blood of bulls and of goats is powerless to take away sins.

⁵When Christ comes into the world, He therefore says, ^u "Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, but a body Thou hast prepared for Me."

⁶In burnt and sin offerings Thou hast taken no pleasure. ⁷Then I said, 'Here I come—it is written of Me in the roll of the Book—to do Thy will, O God.'

⁸Saying as He does above, "Thou hast not desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices, and offerings, and burnt and sin offerings," all of which are offered according to the Law, ⁹then He says, "Here I come to do Thy will." He takes away the first in order to establish the second, ¹⁰by which divine will we have been made holy by means of the offering up once for all of the body of Jesus Christ.

¹¹Furthermore, every priest stands daily for services to offer the same sacrifices repeatedly, which have no power whatever to take away sins; ¹²but this One, after offering for our sins one sacrifice forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³from then on anticipating until His enemies are placed as a footstool for His feet. ¹⁴For with a single offering He has forever perfected those who are being made holy.

¹⁵The Holy Spirit also affirms it to us, for after He says, ^v ¹⁶"This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, the Lord says, I will place My laws upon their hearts and inscribe them on their minds," ¹⁷He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will no longer remember."

¹⁸Now where sins have been forgiven there are no longer any offerings for them.

¹⁹Since, therefore, we have confidence, brothers, to enter the Holiest through Jesus' blood ²⁰by a new and living way, so recently made for us through the veil,^x that is, His flesh, ²¹and since we have a great Priest in charge of God's house, ²²let us draw near with honest hearts and full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled clean^y from an evil conscience, and our bodies bathed with pure water. ²³Let

t) Exod. 29:16, 20-21; Lev. 16:14, 15, 18. u) Ps. 40:6-8.

v) The Word that was always with God was made flesh, i.e., He took upon Himself a body that was prepared for Him and in which He lived on earth, died, and rose again for us.

w) Ch. 8:10-12.

x) Cf. Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45, where it is written that the veil (curtain) of the temple was torn from top to bottom when Christ died.

y) By Christ's atoning blood, just as priests were dedicated with blood.

us hold unwaveringly our grip on the hope we confess, for He who promised is faithful.

²⁴Let us also be mindful to stimulate one another toward love and helpful activities, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is habitual with some, but giving mutual encouragement, and all the more so since you see the Day approaching. ²⁶For if we go on sinning willfully after acquiring the knowledge of the truth, there is no longer left any sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but some dreadful anticipation of judgment and of a fierce fire that is to devour those who oppose God.

²⁸The person who disobeys the Law of Moses is put to death without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹How much worse, do you suppose, will be the punishment he is judged to deserve, who tramples on the Son of God and considers the blood of the covenant, by which he was made holy, something unholy, and who outrages the Spirit of grace? ³⁰For we know Him who said,^z "Retribution rests with Me; I will pay back," and also,^a "The Lord will judge His people." ³¹It is dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God.

³²Call to mind those previous days when, after enjoying the light, you endured sufferings that involved great struggle. ³³On the one hand you were publicly exposed to insults and affliction, and on the other you made common cause with those who were thus treated. ³⁴For you sympathized with the prisoners and accepted cheerfully the plundering of your property, knowing well that you yourselves had better and lasting possession.

³⁵Therefore, do not throw away your confidence; it carries a rich reward. ³⁶For you need endurance to gain the promised blessing upon accomplishing what God wills.^b ³⁷"For it will be just a little while before the coming One will come and will not delay; ³⁸but he whom I find righteous through faith will live,^c and if he shrinks back, My soul will not be

pleased with him." ³⁹However, we are not of those who shrink back so as to perish, but of those who have faith and save their souls.

11 BUT FAITH IS AN ASSURANCE OF what is hoped for, a conviction of unseen realities.^d ²The men of old gained approval by it.

³By faith we understand that the universe was created at God's command, so that what we now see was made out of what cannot be seen.

⁴By faith Abel brought God a sacrifice superior to that of Cain, and through faith he was witnessed to as being righteous; for God acknowledged his gifts, and though he died, through his faith he is still speaking.

⁵By faith Enoch was taken up, so that he did not see death, and was not found because God took him up; for before God took him up, so it is recorded, he was pleasing to God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who search for Him.

⁷By faith Noah, when he was divinely instructed about things that were not yet in sight, devoutly constructed the ark for the saving of his family, through which he condemned the world, while he fell heir to the righteousness that springs from faith.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance, and he migrated without any idea where he was going. ⁹By faith he lived in the land of promise as in a foreign country, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob who were joint heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking for the city with foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

¹¹Also by faith Sarah herself received power to conceive and that when she was past the normal age,^e because she regarded the One who promised to be trustworthy. ¹²And so from one person, and he already

z) Deut. 32:35.

a) Deut. 32:36. b) Hab. 2:3, 4. c) Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11.

d) This is not a precise definition of faith but rather a description of it.

e) Gen. 21:1, 2.

impotent, there were born descendants as the stars of heaven in numbers and countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³These all died in faith without having received what was promised them, but they saw it from a distance and welcomed it, confessing that they were foreigners and exiles on the earth.

¹⁴For those who say such things make it plain that they are looking for a homeland, ¹⁵and if they had in mind that country from which they went out, they would have had a chance to return. ¹⁶But now they are longing for a better, that is, a heavenly country; accordingly, God is not ashamed of being called their God. In fact, He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when he was tested, brought Isaac as an offering.^f Yes, the recipient of the promises offered his only son, ¹⁸of whom it had been said,^g "Through Isaac you are to have your descendants." ¹⁹For he reasoned that God was able to raise him from the dead, from which in a figure, he did receive him back.

²⁰By faith Isaac^h gave Jacob and Esau his blessing for their future. ²¹By faith Jacob, at the point of death, blessed each of Joseph's sonsⁱ and bowed in worship on the top of his staff. ²²By faith Joseph,^j when he was dying, mentioned the exodus of the Israelites, and gave instructions regarding his bones.

²³By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden by his parents^k for three months because they saw he was a beautiful child and they were not afraid of the king's order.

²⁴By faith Moses,^l when he reached maturity, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵and preferred sharing ill-treatment with the people of God rather than enjoying the short-lived pleasures of sin.^m ²⁶He considered the reproach, such as came to Christ, greater wealth than the treas-

ures of Egypt. For he fixed his eye on the final recompense.

²⁷By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king's anger; for he persevered as if he saw Him who is invisible.

²⁸By faith he instituted the Passoverⁿ and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the destroyer might not touch their first-born.

²⁹By faith the Israelites^o crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, and when the Egyptians tried it, they were drowned.

³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell^p down after the Israelites marched around them for seven days.

³¹By faith Rahab, the harlot,^q did not perish with those who were disobedient; for she had received the spies in peace.

³²And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to go on telling about Gideon,^r Barak,^s Samson,^t Jephthah,^u David,^v and Samuel,^w and the prophets, ³³who through faith overcame kingdoms, administered justice, procured promised blessings, shut the mouths of lions,^x ³⁴quenched the power of fire,^y escaped being killed by the sword, were made powerful when they had been weak, became mighty in war, turned to flight foreign armies.

³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection.^z Others,^a who refused release so that they might procure a better resurrection, were tortured.

³⁶Still others suffered mocking and flogging, and chains and imprisonment.

³⁷They were stoned; they were tempted to sin; they were sawed in two; they were killed with the sword. In sheepskins and in goatskins they roamed about, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated — ³⁸the world was not worthy of them, those wanderers in deserts and mountains and caverns and fissures of the earth.

³⁹And all these, while winning divine approval through their faith, did not receive the promised blessing; ⁴⁰for God had in view something better for

f) Gen. 22:1-14. g) Gen. 21:12. h) Gen. 27:26-40. i) Gen. 48.

j) Gen. 50:24, 25. k) Exod. 2:1-3. l) Exod. 2:11-15.

m) In sharing his people's lot Moses resembled Christ. n) Exod. 12. o) Exod. 14:13-31.

p) Josh. 6:1-20. q) Josh. 2:1-21; 6:23. r) Judg. 6:11; 7:1-25. s) Judg. 4:6-24.

t) Judg. 13:24-16:31. u) Judg. 11:1-29; 12:1-7. v) 1 Sam. 16, 17. w) 1 Sam. 7:9-14.

x) Dan. 6:22. y) Dan. 3:23-28. z) 1 Kings 17:8-24; 2 Kings 4:18-37.

a) Whereas through faith some escaped severe trials, others by faith were enabled to suffer torture and imprisonment.

us, so that without us they would not be made perfect.

12 SO THEN, ENCIRCLED AS WE ARE with such a great cloud of witnesses^b all about us, let us get rid of every impediment and the sin that ensnares us so easily, and let us run steadily the course mapped out for us, ²with our eyes on Jesus, the cause and completer of our faith who, in view of the joy that lay ahead for Him, submitted to the cross, thought nothing of the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Compare your experience with His, who was willing to stand so much hostility from sinners against Himself, so that you may not become weary and despondent.

⁴In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted so that it has cost you blood, ⁵and you have been forgetful of the appeal that speaks to you as sons:^c "My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline, neither become discouraged under His reproof; ⁶for the Lord disciplines the person He loves and punishes every son whom He receives." ⁷You must endure for the sake of correction; God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom the father does not discipline? ⁸If you receive no correction, such as all sons share, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

⁹Now, if we were corrected by our human fathers and respected them, shall we not far rather submit to our spiritual Father and live? ¹⁰For while they for a few days disciplined us as they saw fit, He does it for our benefit, so that we may share in His holiness. ¹¹Of course, no discipline seems at the time enjoyable, but it seems painful; later on, however, it affords those schooled in it the peaceful fruitage of an upright life.

¹²So, lift up your drooping hands^d and strengthen your shaky knees; ¹³step out straight ahead with your

feet,^e so that which is lame may not be dislocated but rather be healed.

¹⁴Seek eagerly for peace with everyone and for holiness without which no one shall see the Lord. ¹⁵See to it that no one falls short of divine grace; that no one cultivates a root of bitterness^f to cause a disturbance by which many will be defiled; ¹⁶that no one be immoral or profane like Esau, who for a single meal sold his own birthright. ¹⁷For you know how afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, because he found no opportunity to repent, although with tears he sought for the blessing.

¹⁸For you have not come up to a mountain that was not to be touched, a blazing fire and gloom, darkness and storm, ¹⁹to trumpet sound and audible words, the hearers of which implored that no further message be brought them, ²⁰for they could not bear the command,^g "Even if an animal touches the mountain it must be stoned." ²¹And the phenomenon was so dreadful that Moses said,^h "I am terrified and trembling."

²²Instead, we have come up Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to ten thousands of angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly of the first-born, whose names are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous who have been made perfect,ⁱ ²⁴and to Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that tells of better things than that of Abel.^j

²⁵Be careful not to refuse to hear the One who is speaking; for if those people did not escape who refused to hear the person who spoke God's message on earth, how much less shall we, if we turn away from the One who speaks from heaven. ²⁶His voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised,^k "Once more I will shake, not only the earth but heaven as well." ²⁷This phrase, "Once more,"

b) Translated from the Gk. *marturon*, from which comes the English word "martyr."

c) Prov. 3:11, 12. d) Isa. 35:3. e) Prov. 4:25, 26. f) Deut. 29:18. g) Exod. 19:12, 13.

h) Deut. 9:18, 19; cf. Acts 7:32. i) The redeemed in heaven.

j) Gen. 4:10. k) Hag. 2:6.

indicates the final removal of everything shaken — created things, so that the unshaken things may remain.¹

²⁸Let us, therefore, be grateful that the kingdom we have received cannot be shaken, and so let us serve God acceptably with reverence and awe.
²⁹For our God is a consuming fire.

13 LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE. ²Do not be negligent in showing hospitality, for in doing so some entertained angels without knowing it. ³Keep in mind those who are in prison as if you are in prison with them, and the ill-treated as though you are suffering physically yourselves.

⁴Let marriage be held in honor by all and the marriage bed unpolled; for God will judge the immoral adulterous.

⁵Let your conduct be free from the love of money. Be satisfied with what you have, for He has said,^m "I will not give you up nor desert you," ⁶so that we may say boldly, "The Lord is my Helper, I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

⁷Bear in mind your leaders, who spoke to you God's message; observe how they closed a well-spent life, and copy their faith: ⁸Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

⁹Be not led astray by all sorts of strange teachings; for it is well to have the heart strengthened by grace, rather than by ritualistic foods from which devotees derived no benefit. ¹⁰We have an altar of which those that serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat; ¹¹for the bodies of those animals, whose blood was brought by the high priest into the Holiest for sin, were burned outside the camp.

¹²So Jesus, too, suffered outside the gate, that He might sanctify the people by His own blood. ¹³Accordingly, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach, ¹⁴for we have here no permanent city; instead, we are seeking the future one. ¹⁵Through Him, then, let us at all times present a praise offering to God, which is the fruit of lips that confess His name.

¹⁶Do not forget to do good and be generous, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

¹⁷Obeys your leaders and yield to them, for they keep watch over your souls as persons who must give account. Have them do so joyfully and not with regrets, for that would be hurtful to you.

¹⁸Pray for us, for we are confident of having a clear conscience. In every respect we want to behave honorably. ¹⁹I especially beg of you to do this, so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

²⁰Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,ⁿ through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹furnish you with everything good to do His will, working within us through Jesus Christ what is well-pleasing in His sight. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²²I call on you, brothers, to listen patiently to this message for your encouragement, for I have written you briefly. ²³You should know that our brother Timothy has been freed.^o Along with him, if he comes here shortly, I will see you.

²⁴Extend our greetings to all your leaders and to all the saints.^p The Italian believers send you greetings.

²⁵Grace be with you all.

1) The material things pass; the spiritual things remain.

m) Deut. 31:6. n) John 10:11; 1 Pet. 5:4.

o) This is the only reference in the N.T. to Timothy's imprisonment.

p) See note at Acts 9:13.

JAMES

Date of writing: c. A.D. 48-50,
probably at Jerusalem

1 JAMES,^a A SLAVE^b OF GOD AND OF the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion,^c Greeting.

²Consider it complete joy, my brothers, when you become involved in all sorts of trials, ³well aware that the testing of your faith brings out steadfastness. ⁴But let steadfastness have full play, so that you may be completed and rounded out with no defects whatever.

⁵If any one of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to everyone without reserve and without reproach, and it will be granted him. ⁶But he should ask in faith with never a doubt; for one who doubts resembles a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷Let not that man imagine he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unsteady in all his ways.

⁹Let the lowly brother, however, be proud of his high position, ¹⁰and the wealthy of his humble place, because he shall fade out like a wild flower.

¹¹The sun rises with its searing heat and withers the grass; its flower drops off and its beauty disappears. So will the rich man fade away in his undertakings.

¹²Blessed is the man who stands up under trial; for when he has stood the

test, he will receive the crown^d of life that God has promised to those who love Him. ¹³Let no one who is tempted say, "I am tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He tempts no one. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then when the desire has conceived it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it reaches maturity, produces death.

¹⁶Do not be misled, my dear brothers. ¹⁷Every beneficent gift and every perfect present is from above; it descends from the Father of lights, with whom no variation occurs nor shadow cast by turning. ¹⁸Voluntarily He gave us birth by the word of truth,^e so that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

¹⁹Understand this, my dear brothers: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to talk, slow to get angry; ²⁰for man's anger does not promote God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore get rid of everything vile and the outgrowth of evil, and in humility receive the implanted word that is able to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word,^f and not deluders of yourselves by merely listening; ²³for whoever hears the message without acting upon it is similar to the man who observes his own face in a mirror; ²⁴he takes a look

a) James, who was the leader of the church at Jerusalem, Acts 15:13; 21:17, 18, was a half-brother of Jesus, Matt. 13:55. Like his other brothers James did not believe in the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry, John 7:5. It appears that he was converted after the risen Lord had appeared to him, 1 Cor. 15:7. b) See note at Matt. 13:27.

c) The Jews who had been driven out of Judea under persecution. See note at 1 Pet. 1:1.

d) See note at Phil. 4:2. e) The Spirit's instrument to reach the soul, cf. vs. 21.

f) As you accept Christian truth, put it into practice.

at himself and goes off and promptly forgets how he looks. ²⁵But whoever gazes into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, who is not a forgetful listener but an active worker, that person will be blessed in his work.

²⁶Whoever supposes he is religious without bridling his own tongue but, instead, deceives his own heart, that person's religion is worthless. ²⁷Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

2 MY BROTHERS, DO NOT COMBINE faith in Jesus Christ our glorious Lord with partiality. ²For should there enter into your gathering a man wearing a gold ring and splendid clothes, and there enter also a poor man shabbily clad, ³and you pay attention to the one who is well-dressed and say, "Have a good seat here," and say to the poor one, "You stand there," or "Sit down on the floor by my feet," ⁴have you not discriminated among your own and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵Listen, my dear brothers. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom He has promised to those who love Him? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor. Do not the rich domineer you and drag you into the courts? ⁷Do they not slander the good name by which you are known? ⁸If you observe the royal law according to the Scripture,^g "Love your neighbor as yourself," you behave well. ⁹But if you show partiality, then you are practicing sin; you stand convicted by the Law as culprits.

¹⁰For whoever observes the whole Law but slips in one point, becomes guilty in every respect.^h ¹¹For He who said,ⁱ "Do not commit adultery," also said,^j "Do not kill." So, if you do not commit adultery but you kill, you have become a breaker of the Law. ¹²Speak

and act in such a way as befits people who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For the judgment is merciless to those who have practiced no mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴What is the use, my brothers, for anyone to say he has faith, if he fails to act on it? His faith cannot save him, can it? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is poorly clad and lacks the day's nourishment, ¹⁶but one of you says to them, "Go away in peace; get warmed and get fed," without supplying them with their bodily needs, what is the use? ¹⁷Exactly so faith that does not issue in works is in itself dead.

¹⁸Someone, however, will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith without its works and I will show you my faith through what I do.^k ¹⁹Do you believe there is one God? Very well; the demons believe, too, and they shudder. ²⁰But do you want to know, O senseless man, how faith without works is useless? ²¹Was not our father Abraham made righteous by his works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see how his faith cooperated with his works and how faith was completed through his works. ²³So the Scripture was fulfilled that says,^l "Abraham believed in God and it was accounted to him as righteousness," and he was called^m the friend of God.

²⁴You see that a person is pronounced righteous by his works and not on account of faith alone. ²⁵Similarly, too, was not Rahab the harlot accounted righteous by her works, when she entertained the messengers and sent them away by a different road? ²⁶For as the body is dead without the spirit, so faith also is dead without works.

3 NOT MANY OF YOU SHOULD BE- come teachers, my brothers, for you know we are assuming the more accountability; ²because we all make many mistakes. Whoever makes no mistake with the tongue is certainly

g) Lev. 19:18. h) He is a lawbreaker. i) Exod. 20:14. j) Exod. 20:13.

k) The reality of a man's faith is shown by what he does. Christ said: "You will know them by the deeds they do," Matt. 7:16. l) Gen. 15:6. m) Isa. 41:8.

a perfect man, able as well to control his entire body. ³When we put bits into horses' mouths to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴Notice the ships, too, big as they are and driven by violent winds, how they are steered by a small rudder wherever the pilot wishes.

⁵So the tongue is a small organ and can speak big things. Think how great a forest ever so small a spark sets on fire. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of wickedness. Among the members of our body the tongue is situated where it taints the whole body and sets on fire the whole round of existence,^a while it is kindled by hell.^o

⁷Every kind of animal, of bird, of reptile and sea creature is tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being is able to tame the tongue, restless evil so full of deadly poison. ⁹We praise the Lord and Father with it; with it we also curse men who have been made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth blessing and cursing proceed. This is not right, my brothers; it must not be this way.

¹¹The spring does not well up sweet and bitter water from the same cleft, does it? ¹²Nor is it possible, is it, my brothers, for a fig tree to bear olives, or for a grapevine to bear figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh water.

¹³Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior that his actions are carried on with unobtrusive wisdom.^p

¹⁴But if you cherish bitter jealousy and rivalry in your hearts, do not pride yourselves in this and play false to the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from above; instead it is earthly, unspirited, demonic, ¹⁶for where jealousy and rivalry exist, there will be confusion and everything base.

¹⁷But the wisdom from above^a is first of all pure, then peaceable, courteous, congenial, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, and sincere. ¹⁸And the harvest, which righteous-

ness yields to the peacemakers, comes from a sowing in peace.

4 WHERE DO CONFLICTS AND FIGHTINGS among you originate? Do they not spring from your passions that are at war in your members?^r ²You covet and do not have; you murder^a and strive and cannot attain; you fight and battle, and do not possess, because you do not pray. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly; you want to spend it on your dissolute pleasures.

⁴Do you not realize, you adulteresses, that friendship with the world is enmity toward God? Therefore, whoever determines to be a friend of the world becomes God's enemy. ⁵Or do you suppose the Scripture speaks to no purpose? The Spirit, who took up His abode in us, yearns jealously over us. ⁶But He affords the more grace, for He says,^t "God opposes the haughty, but He grants grace to the humbleminded."

⁷So then submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Clean your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of divided interests. ⁹Be miserable and grieve and cry. Let your laughing be turned to sorrow and your enjoyment to dejection. ¹⁰Take a low position before the Lord and He will exalt you.

¹¹Do not malign one another, brothers. One who maligns or criticizes his brother, maligns the Law and criticizes the Law, but if you criticize the Law you are not a doer of it but its judge. ¹²There is one Lawgiver and Judge—He who has power to save and to destroy. But who are you to be judging your neighbor?

¹³Come on, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we shall go into this or that city and spend a year there to transact business and make money," ¹⁴when you have no idea about tomorrow. What is your life? You are a

n) Unfit speech also reacts harmfully on the speaker, Matt. 7:15, 20, 23.

o) Greek *geenna*. See note at Mark 9:43. p) Not only faith but also wisdom is shown by conduct.

q) God-given, therefore relating to life. r) Cf. Rom. 7; Gal. 5:16-18.

s) In the realm of Christian ethics to hate is equivalent to committing murder, 1 John 3:15.

t) Prov. 3:34.

vapor that appears for a little while and disappears. ¹⁵Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills and we live we shall do this or that." ¹⁶But as it is, you boast in your arrogance, all of which boasting is wicked. ¹⁷So, then, to the person who knows what is right to do and fails to do it, to him it is sin.

5 COME ON YOU WEALTHY, WEEP with loud wailings about the miseries that are coming upon you. ²Your hoarded wealth has decayed and your clothes have become moth-eaten; ³your gold and silver are covered with rust, and their rust will be evidence against you. As fire that you have stored up for the last days,^u it will consume your flesh.

⁴See, the pay of the workmen that mowed your fields, which you have withheld from them, is crying out, and the cries of the reapers have entered the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵You have been living an easy life on the earth; you have given yourselves up to pleasures; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.^v ⁶You have condemned, you have murdered the upright without his resisting you.

⁷Therefore, endure patiently, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Take notice how the farmer awaits the precious produce of the soil, continuing to be patient until it gets the early and the late rains. ⁸So you keep waiting patiently. Fortify your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

⁹Do not complain against one another, brothers, so you may not come under judgment. See, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰For an example

of ill-treatment that was patiently endured, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name. ¹¹We call blessed those who have endured. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and you have seen the outcome which the Lord brought about, because the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

¹²Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by the earth or with any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no, so that you may incur no judgment.

¹³Is any of you suffering trouble? Let him pray. Is anyone feeling cheerful? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴Is anyone of you ill? Let him call the elders^w of the church, and let them pray for him and in the name of the Lord anoint him with olive oil.^x ¹⁵The prayer of faith will restore the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sin, it will be forgiven him.

¹⁶Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for one another, that you may be cured.^y The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great effect. ¹⁷Elijah was a man of similar weaknesses with us, and he prayed an earnest prayer that it should not rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months. ¹⁸Again he prayed earnestly, and heaven gave rain and the soil yielded its produce.

¹⁹My brothers, if one of you strays from the truth and someone brings him back, ²⁰let him be assured that he who turns a sinner back from the wandering of his way will save his soul from death and a great number of sins.^z

u) The days just preceding Christ's return, vs. 8.

v) As animals are fattened, not for their own enjoyment but for the butcher.

w) See note at I Tim. 3:1.

x) The Lord's disciples anointed some sick people with oil, Mark 16:3. Oil is medicinal, cf. Isa. 1:6; Luke 10:34, but heartfelt prayer must accompany its application, vs. 15.

y) No confession to a priest or to a group is here intimated.

z) James does not mean that the prayer of faith covers the sins of him who prays but of him who is prayed for as he receives salvation. Spiritual health is more important than physical health. To pray for the salvation of souls and spiritual growth is an essential part of intercessory prayer.

PETER

Date of writing: c. A.D. 65, at Babylon

1 PETER, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS Christ, to the exiles of the Dispersion^a in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,^b ²chosen in accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, and consecrated by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ, and to be sprinkled with His blood: Grace to you and peace in increasing measure.

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to His ample mercy has given us new birth into a life of hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance imperishable, unsullied, and unfading that is kept safely in heaven for you ⁵who by the power of God are protected through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶You rejoice in this, although now for a little while, if it must be, you are distressed by various trials, ⁷so that the testing of your faith, far more precious than perishable gold that is tested by fire, may prove to be for praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed, ⁸whom having not seen, you love. In Him you have faith, though now you do not see Him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and heavenly joy, ⁹while you obtain the salvation of your souls as the goal of your faith.

¹⁰About this salvation the prophets,

who prophesied of the grace intended for you, ¹¹made inquiry and research to find out to whom or to what time the Spirit of Christ within them pointed, in predicting the sufferings that would happen to Christ, and the glory that would follow them. ¹²It was disclosed to the prophets that they were rendering their ministries not for themselves, but for you, concerning the things which have now been declared to you by those who have preached the good news to you by means of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which the angels long to stoop and look.

¹³Brace up your minds for action, therefore, and be alert, and fix your hope fully on the grace that will be coming to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.^c ¹⁴As obedient children, do not shape your lives by the passions that controlled you in your previous ignorance; ¹⁵instead, as the One who called you is holy, so you yourselves should be holy in all your conduct; ¹⁶for it is written,^d "You shall be holy, because I am holy."

¹⁷Besides, if you address Him as Father, who impartially judges according to each one's work, you need to behave reverently during the time of your exiles, ¹⁸well aware that you have been ransomed from your futile ways such as traditionally came down from your forefathers, not with perishable

a) The Dispersion, Gk. *diaspora*, relates to Israelites who, usually under persecution, cf. Jer. 25:34, were driven out of their land as a result of national disobedience to God, Lev. 26:33; Deut. 4:25-28. In N.T. times some of these families had never returned to their land. There were others who had been obliged to flee from Jerusalem because they believed in Jesus as their Messiah, Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19. See note at James 1:1. b) These five provinces were all in Asia Minor.

c) As Christ suggests for His return, cf. Luke 12:35, 36. d) Lev. 11:44.

things such as silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ as that of a flawless and spotless lamb,²⁰ foreknown, to be sure, before the foundation of the world, but disclosed at the end of the times for your sakes,²¹ who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory. So your faith and hope rest in God.

²²With your souls purified by obeying the truth that issues in sincere love for the brothers, you should love one another fervently from the heart.²³ For you have been born again, not from a perishable but an imperishable seed through the living and lasting message of God; for,^e ²⁴"All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass; the grass withers and the bloom drops off,²⁵ but the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the message of good news that has been preached to you.

2 THEREFORE, LAY ASIDE ALL malice and all deceit, all pretense, envy, and slander; ²like newborn babes, be thirsty for the unadulterated, spiritual milk, so that by its use you may grow up to salvation, ³presuming you have tasted how good the Lord is.

⁴Come to Him, a living Stone rejected by men, it is true, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵and be built up as living stones into a spiritual house, a dedicated priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that through Jesus Christ are acceptable to God.

⁶It is therefore contained in Scripture,^f "See, I place in Zion a chosen, precious cornerstone, and he who believes in Him will never be put to shame."⁷ To you, then, who believe, He is precious, but to the unbelieving, "the stone which the builders rejected, this has become the main cornerstone,"⁸ and^g "a stone to trip over and a rock to make them fall." They stub their toes because they disbelieve the message; they were destined for this.⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of His acquisition, so that you may proclaim

the perfections of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light,¹⁰ you who once were no people but are now the people of God, who once experienced no mercy but have now received mercy.

¹¹I implore you, dear friends, as aliens and exiles to keep from gratifying fleshly desires such as war against the soul.¹² Conduct yourselves well among the Gentiles so that, although they may defame you as criminals, they may see your good works and glorify God in the day of visitation.^h

¹³Be submissive to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to the emperor as supreme,¹⁴ or to governors as commissioned by him to bring criminals to justice and to encourage the well-behaved.¹⁵ For this is God's will, that by behaving well you should silence the ignorance of thoughtless people.¹⁶ Enjoy liberty, not by employing freedom to cover up wickedness but as slavesⁱ of God.¹⁷ Treat everyone honorably; have love for the brothers; revere God; respect the emperor.

¹⁸You domestic slaves should with unqualified respect be submissive to your masters, not only to the kind and considerate but also to those who are harsh;¹⁹ for this is meritorious, if with consciousness of God one endures the pain of unjust sufferings.²⁰ For what merit is there in standing a beating for doing wrong? But if you bear patiently with suffering when you are doing right, this is pleasing to God.

²¹To such experience you have been called; for Christ also suffered for you and left behind an example, that you might follow in His footsteps.²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth,²³ who did not return the insult when He was insulted; who did not threaten when abused, but committed Himself to the Righteous Judge.²⁴ He Himself carried our sins in His own body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live to righteousness. By His wounds you were healed.

²⁵For then you were straying like

e) Isa. 40:6-8. f) Isa. 28:16. g) Verses 7, 8 are cited from Isa. 8:14; Ps. 118:22.
h) When God's judgment will fall. i) See note at Matt. 13:27.

sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

3 IN A SIMILAR WAY YOU WIVES should be submissive to your own husbands, so that if any of them will not be persuaded by the message, they may without message be won over by the conduct of their wives, ²as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. ³Your adornment should not be outward—braided hair, putting on gold trinkets, or putting on robes;¹ ⁴instead it should be the inner personality of the heart with the imperishable qualities of a gentle and quiet spirit, something of surpassing value in God's sight.

⁵For in this way the holy women of the past, who fixed their hope on God, adorned themselves, submissive as they were to their own husbands. ⁶Sarah, for instance, obeyed Abraham, whom she called "Master." You have become her daughters if you do right and are not terrorized by any fear.

⁷By the same token you husbands need to live understandingly with your wives as with a weaker vessel, rendering them honor as joint heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your praying may not be hindered.

⁸Finally, let all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, loving as brothers, compassionate, humbleminded, ⁹returning no evil for evil or cursing for cursing. Quite to the contrary you will bless in return, because you are called for this, so as to inherit a blessing. ¹⁰For^k "he who wants to enjoy life and see happy days must keep his tongue from speaking evil and his lips from uttering deceit. ¹¹He must turn away from wrong and do right; he must search for peace and keep after it. ¹²For the Lord's eyes are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the Lord's face is set against those who practice evil."

¹³And who will hurt you if you become eager for the right? ¹⁴But even if you suffer on account of righteousness, you will be blessed. Be neither terrified nor troubled by their¹ threat, ¹⁵but revere Christ in your hearts as Lord and be always ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you for a reason of the hope that is within you; but do it gently and reverently. ¹⁶Maintain a clear conscience so that, in case you are slandered, those who falsely accuse your good Christian conduct may be ashamed; ¹⁷for it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

¹⁸For Christ also once died for sins on your behalf, the just on behalf of the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, being put to death physically but made alive in the Spirit, ¹⁹in whom He^m went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who were disobedient at the time when God's patience was waiting while Noah was constructing an ark in which a few, in fact eight souls, were brought safely through the water.

²¹Its counterpart, baptism, saves you now, not by removal of physical filth but the earnest seeking of a conscience that is clear in God's presence, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who is at God's right hand; for He went to heaven, and angels, authorities, and powers are subject to Him.

4 SINCE CHRIST, THEN, HAS SUFFERED physically, you also must arm yourselves with the same attitude; for he who has suffered physically has gained relief from sin, ²so that he no longer lives by human passions but for the rest of his natural life he lives by what God wills. ³For to have been practicing the ways of the Gentiles heretofore is quite enough, indulging in unbridled lusts, in passions, in drinking parties, in carousings, in dissipations and forbidden idolatries.

j) Obviously Peter is not forbidding attractive appearance but stressing the greater value of inner virtue. Sarah is used as an example of this kind of virtue, vs. 6. Sarah was certainly not unattractive in outward appearance or the princes of Pharaoh would not have commended her to him, nor would she have found favor in his sight had that been the case, Gen. 12:10-20. But above all Sarah possessed "imperishable qualities of a gentle and quiet spirit," vs. 4. k) Ps. 34:12-15.

l) "Their" alludes to the enemies of righteousness.

m) It was by the Holy Spirit that Christ preached through Noah to men of his day who are now in prison because they rejected the message.

⁴Theyⁿ are surprised that you are not sharing the same life of unbridled dissipation with them, and they are reviling you for it, ⁵but they must render an account to Him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this reason the good news was preached to the dead,^o so that, whereas they are judged as men, they might live with God spiritually.

⁷The end of all things is near; therefore be self-controlled so that you can pray. ⁸Above all else, cherish intense love for one another,^p for love covers up many sins. ⁹Practice hospitality toward one another without grumbling. ¹⁰Let each one serve one another to the measure of his endowment, as good stewards of God's richly varied grace. ¹¹If you are speaking, let it be as speaking God's messages; if you are serving, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in it all God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹²Do not be surprised, dear friends, at the fiery test that is coming upon you, as if you were experiencing something unheard of. ¹³Instead, be joyful that you are sharing to some degree the sufferings of Christ, in order that at the revealing of His glory you may be full of joy. ¹⁴If you are defamed for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, yes, the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

¹⁵Of course none of you should suffer as a murderer or a thief or a criminal or a meddler in others' affairs; ¹⁶but if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God because you bear that name. ¹⁷For the time has come for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it starts with us, what will be the destiny of those who disobey the good news from God? ¹⁸And if the righteous person is saved with difficulty, what chance have the impious and sinful?

¹⁹For this reason let those who are suffering according to the will of God, entrust their souls to God, the faithful Creator, while they do what is right.

5 THEREFORE, AS A FELLOW ELDER^q and a witness of Christ's sufferings, a sharer, too, in the glory that is to be revealed, I appeal to the elders among you: ²shepherd God's flock that has been entrusted to you,^r not because you have to but willingly, because God wants you to; not out of greed for gain but eagerly; ³not lording it over those who are under your charge but being examples to your flock. ⁴And with the appearing of the Chief Shepherd you will be awarded the never-fading crown^s of glory.

⁵So also the younger men should defer to those who are older, while you all put on the apron of humility toward each other,^t because^u "God sets Himself against the arrogant, but He grants grace to the humble." ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may in due time raise you up. ⁷Throw all your anxiety upon Him, for His concern is about you.

⁸Exercise self-control. Be on your guard. Your opponent, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion in search of someone to devour. ⁹Firm in your faith, resist him, aware that throughout the world, sufferings of this kind are imposed upon your brothers.

¹⁰But the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will, after you have suffered awhile, Himself equip, stabilize, strengthen, and firmly establish you. ¹¹To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

¹²I have written you this brief letter with aid of Silvanus,^v your faithful brother as I esteem him, to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it.

¹³She who is at Babylon,^w who is

n) The unregenerated. Cf. ch. 3:14. o) That is, to those who are now dead.

p) Such as God's love that forgives. q) See note at I Tim. 3:1.

r) Compare Christ's commission to Peter, John 21:15-17. s) See note at Phil. 4:2.

t) Peter has not forgotten the footwashing in the upper room, John 13:1-17, our Lord's example of humility. u) Prov. 3:34; James 4:6.

v) Silvanus, sometimes called Silas, was one of Paul's frequent companions. See note at I Thess. 1:1. w) Some scholars think that Babylon is used here figuratively for Rome.

chosen together with you, sends you
greetings, and so does my son Mark.^x
14Greet one another with a kiss of
love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ
Jesus.

^x) See note at Col. 4:10.

THE SECOND GENERAL EPISTLE OF PETER

Date of writing: c. A.D. 66-67

1 SIMON PETER, A SLAVE^a AND APOSTLE of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have been allotted a faith as precious as ours:^b **2** Grace and peace be yours in abundance through knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. **3** For His divine power has bestowed on us every requisite for life and godliness, through knowing Him who called us to His own glory and excellence. **4** Through these there have been granted us great and precious promised blessings, so that by means of them you might become sharers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption in the world that arises from passion.

5 For this very reason do your utmost to supplement your faith with virtue, your virtue with knowledge, **6** your knowledge with self-control, your self-control with patience, your patience with piety, **7** your piety with brotherly affection, and your brotherly affection with love. **8** For if you possess these qualities increasingly, they will render your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ neither inactive nor unproductive, **9** while he who does not have these is blind, short-visioned, oblivious of the cleansing from his former sins.

10 Exert yourselves the more then, brothers, to confirm^c your calling and election, for if you practice these things you will never stumble, **11** for so

an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be liberally provided for you.

12 I will, therefore, always remind you of these matters, even though you are aware of them and are established in the truth now available. **13** Still, I think it my duty, so long as I remain in this human body, to arouse you by reminding you; **14** for I know that shortly my body will be put off, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.^d **15** Besides, I will make every effort to enable each one of you to keep these things in mind after I am gone; **16** for when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we were not following cleverly devised fables. On the contrary, we were eyewitnesses of His majesty; **17** for when He received honor and glory from God the Father, a voice was borne to Him from the supreme Glory,^e "This is My Son, My Beloved, in whom I am delighted." **18** And we heard this voice borne to us from heaven, when we were with Him on the sacred mountain.^f

19 So we have the prophetic message reaffirmed,^g to which you do well to pay attention as you would to a light that shines in a dark place until the day dawns and the Daystar arises in your hearts, **20** with this most clearly understood, that no prophetic Scripture can be explained by one's unaided mental powers. **21** Because no prophecy

a) See note at Matt. 13:27. b) Including, therefore, all believers in Christ.

c) That is to say, validate your faith by what you do. d) John 21:18. e) Matt. 17:1-5.

f) The mountain where Christ was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John.

g) By the gospel of Christ which the writer has been preaching.

ever came by the will of man; instead men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 BUT THERE WERE ALSO FALSE prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you — the kind that will shrewdly introduce ruinous heresies, even denying the Master who bought them and so bringing on themselves swift destruction. ²Many will follow along in their shameless ways, on whose account the way of truth will be maligned. ³Motivated by greed, they will exploit you with their counterfeit arguments.

From of old their sentence has been hanging over them and their destruction has not been dormant. ⁴For if God did not spare the angels who sinned but committed them to the black dungeons of hell^h to be kept for judgment, ⁵and did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven with him, when He brought a flood upon a godless world; ⁶and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by turning them to ashes, an example to show the godless what is to happen to them, ⁷and if He rescued upright Lot, distressed as he was by the immoral behavior of the lawless ⁸(for day after day as that righteous man lived among them, his upright soul was tortured at seeing and hearing their lawless doings), ⁹then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation and to keep the wicked under punishment for the day of judgment.

¹⁰This is especially true of those who yield to fleshly desires, indulge in polluting passions, and despise authority. Bold, headstrong as they are, they have no qualms at libeling glorious beings, ¹¹whereas angels, far superior to them in strength and might, do not pronounce a defaming judgment against them before the Lord. ¹²These, however, like irrational brutes that are

naturally born to be caught and killed, while maligning what they do not know, will also be destroyed in the same destruction; ¹³they will be punished with suffering for the suffering they caused.

Revelry during the day is their idea of enjoyment; they are foul blots and blemishes that revel in their lusts as they stuff themselves at your table. ¹⁴They have their eyes full of adultery and their appetite for sin is never satisfied. They lure unsteady souls. Their hearts are practiced in greed — accursed children! ¹⁵Leaving the straight path, they have strayed as they have followed in the tracks of Balaam,ⁱ the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of wickedness. ¹⁶But he was rebuked for his own misdeed; a dumb beast of burden, speaking^j with human voice, restrained the prophet's madness.

¹⁷These are waterless wells, hurricane-driven winds for which the gloom of darkness is reserved. ¹⁸For as they utter arrogant nonsense, they entice, through appeal to immoral passions of the flesh, those who have barely escaped from those who live in error. ¹⁹While they promise them liberty they are themselves slaves of corruption; for a person is a slave to whatever overpowers him.

²⁰For if those who have escaped the contaminations of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, are again entangled and overcome by them, then their last condition becomes worse than the first. ²¹For it would be better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was imparted to them.^k ²²In their case the true proverb^l is realized, "A dog returns to his own vomit, and the scrubbed sow to wallowing in the mire."

3 THIS, DEAR FRIENDS, IS NOW THE second letter I am writing you, to

h) Gk. *tartaros*. The Greek Tartarus corresponds with the Hebrew Gehenna, the abode of the wicked and unbelieving dead. See note at Mark 9:43.

i) Balaam was a prophet of God, but he used his gift for personal gain, Num. 22:25. Cf. Jude 11; Rev. 2:14. j) Num. 22:26-30.

k) Compare Peter's strong language in this chapter with our Lord's pronouncements against the scribes and Pharisees recorded in Matt. 23:13-36. l) Prov. 26:11.

arouse your pure minds by way of remembrance,² so that you may be mindful of the sayings that were spoken beforehand by the holy prophets, and the commands of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

³First of all you should understand that in the last days scoffers will come on the scene with their scoffing, behaving in accord with their own lusts, and saying, "What about His promised coming? For ever since the forefathers fell asleep, everything has remained as it was from the beginning of creation."

⁵They willfully ignore the fact that long ago there were heavens by the word of God, and an earth standing partly above and partly amidst water,⁶ by means of which the then existing world was destroyed, deluged as it was by water. ⁷At present, however, the heavens and the earth are by the same word stored up for burning, and reserved for the day of judgment and the destruction of godless people.^m

⁸But do not overlook this one fact, dear friends, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.ⁿ ⁹The Lord is not negligent about His promise as some think of negligence; instead, He is exercising patience with you, unwilling that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.^o

¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. Then with a tremendous

roar the heavens will pass away, the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works in it will be burned up.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this manner, how consecrated and reverent your behavior should be, ¹²as you are expecting and hastening on the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be on fire and be dissolved, and the elements will meet with fire. ¹³But in accord with His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is at home.^p

¹⁴Therefore, dear friends, since you have these expectations, do your utmost to be found at peace with Him — spotless and blameless. ¹⁵And regard the continued patience of our Lord as salvation, as our dear brother Paul also has written you, according to the wisdom that has been granted him, ¹⁶speaking of those things, as he does in all his letters. There are some statements in them which are hard to understand. The untaught and unsteady twist those writings, as they do the other Scriptures,^q to their own ruin.

¹⁷You therefore, dear friends, forewarned as you are, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless, and lose your own stability; ¹⁸but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

m) Forgetting the Creator, they are unmindful of the Judge; insisting on license, they get themselves enslaved. Cf. Isa. 66:15; Dan. 7:9. n) Ps. 90:4.

o) Grace, not judgment, is the dominant note in God's music. p) Cf. Matt. 6:33.

q) The N.T. is here ranked with the O.T. as Scripture.

JOHN

Date of writing: c. A.D. 65-85

1 WE ARE WRITING TO YOU ABOUT the Word of Life: He was from the beginning;^a we have heard Him, we have seen Him with our eyes, we have looked at Him, and our hands have touched Him. ²Yes, the Life has been revealed and we have seen and are witnessing and are announcing to you the eternal Life who existed with the Father and has been revealed to us. ³We saw Him and we heard Him and are telling you, so that you too may enjoy fellowship along with us. And this fellowship of ours is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴This we are writing you so that our joy may be complete.

⁵The message we heard from Him and announce to you is this: God is Light and in Him there is no darkness whatever. ⁶If we say that we enjoy fellowship with Him while we are walking in the dark, we are lying and not practicing the truth. ⁷If, however, we walk in the light, as He Himself is in the light, then we enjoy fellowship with one another, and the blood of His Son Jesus cleanses us from all sin.

⁸If we say, "We have no sin," we are deluding ourselves and the truth is not in us.^b ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say, "We have not sinned," we make Him out to be a liar and His word is not in us.

2 DEAR^c CHILDREN, I WRITE YOU these things so you may not sin, and if anyone does sin, we have a counsel for our defense in the Father's presence, Jesus Christ the Righteous One. ²He is Himself an atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

³By this token we are sure that we know Him, if we observe His commands. ⁴He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commands, is a liar and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever observes His word, in him the love of God has truly reached maturity. In this way we are sure that we are in Him: ⁶one who claims to remain in Him ought himself to live the way He lived.

⁷Dear friends, I am writing you no new command, but only the old command which you have had from the beginning. The old command is the message you have heard. ⁸On the other hand I am writing you a new command,^d realized in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. ⁹He who claims to be in the light and hates

a) Compare John 1:1.

b) Light, life, sinlessness — all alike are God's and not ours, except as His gifts.

c) Here and sometimes elsewhere in the epistle John uses the diminutive form of the Greek word for children, *teknia*. He is writing to members of God's family in Christ and thus addresses them in this tender way, chs. 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21.

d) A fresh presentation of the eternal principle of love, without which life, light, and sinlessness are inconceivable.

his brother is in darkness to this very hour. ¹⁰He who loves his brother remains in the light and there is nothing within him to occasion stumbling. ¹¹But he who hates his brother is in the dark and walks in the dark; he does not even know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

¹²I am writing you, dear children, because for His name's sake your sins have been forgiven you. ¹³I am writing you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing you, young men, because you have conquered the evil one. I have written you, children, because you have come to know the Father. ¹⁴I have written you, fathers, because you have learned to know Him who is from the beginning. I have written you, young men, because you are vigorous; God's message stays in your hearts and you have conquered the evil one.

¹⁵Neither love the world nor the things in the world. Whoever loves the world has not the Father's love in his heart, ¹⁶because everything in the world, the passions of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the proud display of life have their origin not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷And the world with its lust passes away, but he who does the will of God remains forever.

¹⁸Children, the final hour is here and, as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen, from which we gather certainly that it is the last hour. ¹⁹They went out from us but they never belonged to us; for had they been ours, they would have remained with us. But it had to become clear that not all belong to us. ²⁰Besides, you have an anointing^e from the Holy One and you know all things.^f ²¹The reason I am writing is not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it and that nothing false originates from the truth.

²²Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³No one who denies the Son has the Father.^g Whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father as well.

²⁴What you heard from the beginning, let that stay with you. If what you heard from the beginning stays with you, then you will remain in union with the Son and with the Father. ²⁵And this is what He Himself has promised us, eternal life.

²⁶I am writing you these things about those who are trying to mislead you. ²⁷As for you, the anointing you have received from Him remains within you, and you stand in no need of teaching from anyone; but as His anointing instructs you about everything and is true and is no lie, so keep in union with Him just as it was taught you.

²⁸And now, dear children, remain in Him so that when He appears we may have confidence and may not shrink in shame from Him at His coming. ²⁹If you know that He is righteous, you also are sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him.

3 SEE WHAT A WEALTH OF LOVE THE Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God. And we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

²Beloved ones, we are God's children now, and what we shall be has not yet been shown; but we know that when He appears we shall resemble Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope resting on Him, purifies himself as He is pure.^h

⁴Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawbreaking; sin is lawbreaking. ⁵You know, too, that He appeared to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶No one who remains in Him

e) Gk, *chrisma*, meaning *an unguent* or oil for anointing, and symbolic of the entering of the Holy Spirit into the heart. f) Other ancient manuscripts read "you all know."

g) Because Christ is the Way to the Father, John 14:6.

h) The Spirit purifies; the believer in Christ cooperates.

practices sin.¹ Whoever practices sinning has neither seen Him nor known Him.

⁷Dear children, no one should deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He Himself is righteous. ⁸He who practices sin belongs to the devil, for from the beginning the devil has sinned. For this purpose the Son of God appeared, to destroy the works of the devil.

⁹No one who has been born of God commits sin, for the nature of God remains within him; because he has been born of God, he cannot practice sinning. ¹⁰By this the children of God and the children of the devil are differentiated: anyone who does not practice righteousness, or who does not love his brother, is not from God. ¹¹For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹²and not be like Cain,¹ who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And for what reason did he murder him? Because his own deeds were wicked and those of his brother were righteous.

¹³Do not be surprised, brothers, if the world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have moved out of death into life, because we love the brothers.⁶ One who does not love his brother remains in death. ¹⁵Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life with-in him.

¹⁶We understand the meaning of love from this, that He laid down His life on our behalf, and we ought to lay down our lives on behalf of the brothers. ¹⁷Whoever possesses the world's resources and notices that his brother is in need and then locks his heart against him, how is the love of God in him?

¹⁸Dear children, let us not love in word and tongue, but in deed and truth. ¹⁹In this way we shall become aware that we belong to the truth, and

in His presence we shall set our hearts at rest. ²⁰For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything.

²¹Beloved ones, if our hearts do not condemn us, then we have confidence before God, ²²and whatever we ask we receive from Him, for we observe His commands and practice what is pleasing in His sight. ²³And this is His command, that we put our faith in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as He commanded us. ²⁴He who obeys His commands remains in Him and He in him. By this we know that He remains in us, through the Spirit whom He has given us.

4 BELOVED ONES, DO NOT BELIEVE every spirit, but put the spirits to the test whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²By this we know the Spirit of God: ³every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ as having come incarnate is from God, whereas every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus, is not from God; it is the spirit of antichrist, of whose coming you have heard. Right now he is in the world.

⁴You are from God, dear children, and have defeated them,¹ because the One in you is greater than the one in the world. ⁵They are from the world, so they talk from a worldly point of view and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us. Whoever is not from God does not listen to us. In this way we distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of error.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love springs from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.^m ⁸He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. ⁹As for us, the love of God was revealed by the fact that God sent His only Son into the world, that through

i) In a Christian sinning is a contradiction. It is the new creature's nature not to sin, vs. 9. When we sin, as Paul and John agree we do, we betray our new birth in Christ.

j) Gen. 4:8. k) A never-failing criterion of the reality of our discipleship.

l) Antichristian teachers.

m) Chapter 4:13 shows that love of our brothers in Christ is under consideration throughout the epistle.

Him we might live. ¹⁰Love is manifested in this, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

¹¹Beloved ones, if God loved us so much, we ought to love one another also. ¹²No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³From this we know that we remain in Him and He in us, because He has imparted His Spirit to us. ¹⁴And we ourselves have seen and are bearing witness that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world.

¹⁵Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and he who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

¹⁷On our part love comes to completion in this, that we face the Judgment Day confidently because we are as He is in this world. ¹⁸Love has no fear in it; instead, perfect love expels fear, for fear involves punishment. Therefore he who fears has not reached love's perfection. ¹⁹We love because He first loved us.

²⁰If someone says, "I love God," while he hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, is not able to love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹And this command we have from Him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.

5 EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT Jesus is the Christⁿ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father will love the one born of Him. ²This is how we know that we love God's children: when we love God and obey His commands. ³For true love of God means this, that we observe His commands, and His commands are not irksome. ⁴Because everyone who has been born of God con-

quers the world, and this is the victory that triumphs over the world, the faith that we have. ⁵Who is the world's victor if not he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?^o ⁶That One is Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood; not by the water only but by the water and by the blood. The Spirit bears witness as well, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷So there are three witnesses, ⁸the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are one.

⁹If we accept human testimony, God's testimony is stronger, and God's witness is this which He testified regarding His Son. ¹⁰The believer in the Son of God possesses the witness within himself. He who disbelieves God, makes Him out to be a liar, because he has not believed in the evidence God has given regarding His Son. ¹¹And this is the evidence: God has granted us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has that life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have that life.

¹³I am writing this to you who believe in the name of God's Son in order that you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴And this is the confidence we have toward Him, that if we petition anything in agreement with His will, He hears us; ¹⁵and if we know that He listens to us whatever we may petition, then the requests we ask of Him are assured us.

¹⁶If anyone sees his brother commit a sin, not fatal, he will petition and will obtain life for him, presuming it is no mortal sinning. ¹⁷There is a sin that means death; I advise no prayer for that. Every wrong is sin,^p and there is sin which does not involve death.

¹⁸We know that no one who has been born of God practices sin;^a instead, He who was born of God keeps him, and the wicked one does not get a grip on him. ¹⁹We know that where-as the whole world lies under the

n) A faith that appropriates Him as Lord and Savior. o) Cf. John 16:33.

p) This appears obvious, but repeatedly believers have thought of seemingly plausible reasons for doing wrong.

q) Cf. ch. 3:6, 9. Certainly as a new creation one does not sin habitually.

dominance of the wicked one, we belong to God. ²⁰And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us insight to know the true One. And we are in union with the true One, with

His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and life eternal.

²¹Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN

Date of writing: c. A.D. 65-85

THE ELDER^a TO THE ELECT LADY^b
with her children, whom I truly love, and not I alone but all those who know the truth, ²for the sake of the truth that remains in us and will be with us forever: ³Grace, mercy and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and in love.

⁴I feel extremely happy to have found among your children those who live in a true way, just as we received instruction from the Father. ⁵And now I beg of you, lady, not by way of writing you a new command but instead the one we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. ⁶And this love consists in our behaving in agreement with His commands; this is the command, that you walk in love, as you heard from the first.

⁷For many impostors have gone out into the world, who do not confess Christ as having come incarnated.

Such a person is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸Look out for yourselves, so that you may not lose the results of what you worked for, but may obtain a full reward.

⁹Whoever assumes leadership and does not remain in the teaching of Christ,^c does not have God. He who remains in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you who does not bring this teaching, do not receive him in your home nor extend him your greeting; ¹¹for he who bids him welcome makes himself a sharer of those wicked works of his.

¹²Although I have many things to write you, I would rather not use paper and ink, but I hope to have a visit with you to talk with you by word of mouth, so that our happiness may be complete.

¹³The children of your elect Sister send you greetings.

a) See note at I Tim. 3:1.

b) As *ekklesia*, meaning church, is feminine, and the church is called the bride of Christ, "Lady," Gk. *kuria*, probably refers to a local congregation or perhaps the church at large. The possibility remains, however, that Kuria is the name of a woman of John's acquaintance. c) John 7:16, 17.

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF

JOHN

Date of writing: c. A.D. 65-85

THE ELDER^a TO THE ESTEEMED Gaius,^b whom I truly love.

²Beloved friend, I pray that you may get along well in every way and may enjoy health, just as your soul is prospering. ³For I was extremely happy when the brothers arrived and gave testimony about your fidelity to the truth, as indeed you are living the true life. ⁴Nothing affords me more joy than to hear that my children are leading the true life.

⁵Beloved friend, you are acting faithfully when you do anything for the brothers, and specially for strangers. ⁶They have testified before the church about your friendship. You will do well to send them forward on their journey in a way befitting God's service, ⁷because on behalf of that Name they have gone out without accepting anything from the Gentiles.^c

⁸So we ourselves ought to support such people in order to be fellow workers with them in the truth.

⁹I have written something to the

church, but Diotrephes,^d who loves to be prominent among them, does not accept our authority. ¹⁰For that reason I shall, on my arrival, call attention to his activities, casting reflections on us as he does with insinuating language. And not satisfied with that, he does not himself welcome the brothers, and he hinders those who are willing to do so, and expels them from the church.

¹¹Dear friend, do not imitate evil, but good. The well-doer is from God; the evildoer has enjoyed no vision of God.

¹²Demetrius^e enjoys a good reputation from everyone and from truth itself. We add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

¹³I had many things to write you, but I do not wish to write you with pen and ink. ¹⁴But I hope to see you shortly, and we shall talk face to face. Peace to you. The friends send you greetings. Remember me to the friends personally.

a) See note at I Tim. 3:1.

b) Gaius, Gk. *Gaios*, was a fairly common name in the first century. There are several men called by that name in the N.T.: (1) a Macedonian who was one of Paul's companions in Ephesus, Acts 19:29; (2) Gaius of Derbe, who was with Paul on his third missionary journey, Acts 20:4, who may be the same as (1); and (3) a Corinthian whom Paul baptized, Rom. 16:23; I Cor. 1:14, probably the Gaius of this epistle. c) That is, unbelievers.

d) Unfortunately there are still those in the church who are like Diotrephes.

e) One likes to think that this might have been the silversmith of Ephesus, Acts 19:24-41, and that he had been converted.

THE EPISTLE OF

JUDE

Date of writing: c. A.D. 68

JUDE,^a A SLAVE^b OF JESUS CHRIST and a brother of James, to those who have been called, loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ: ²Mercy, peace, and love be increasingly granted you.

³Dear friends, while I was making every effort to write you about the salvation we have in common, I found it necessary to write you an appeal, that you vigorously defend the faith^c which was once for all delivered to the saints.^d ⁴For certain people have sneaked in, who for a long time have been marked out for this judgment, impious ones, who pervert the grace of our God into unbridled lust and deny Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord.

⁵So I desire to remind you, although once you were quite familiar with all the facts, how the Lord, after rescuing the people from the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶Then, too, the angels who did not maintain their own office^e but abandoned their proper dwelling, He has reserved in everlasting chains under densest darkness for the judgment of the great day. ⁷Similarly, Sodom and Gomorrah with their neighboring towns, who in like fashion abandoned themselves to sexual immorality and

were bent on perverted sensuality, are placed before us as a warning by suffering the punishment of eternal fire. Nevertheless, ⁸in that same way these deluded dreamers defile their bodies; they reject authority and libel glorious beings.^f

⁹Yet, the archangel Michael, when in his encounter with the devil he argued about the body of Moses, did not venture to pronounce a reviling judgment against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." ¹⁰These people, however, revile what they do not understand, while whatever they do know sensually as reasonless brutes, by those things they are destroyed.

¹¹Woe to them, because they are traveling the path of Cain,^g and have given themselves up to Balaam's error^h for the sake of gain; they have perished in Korah's revolt.ⁱ

¹²These are stains in your love feasts^j as in your company they shamelessly gorge themselves; rainless clouds they are, carried along by wind; fruitless autumn trees, twice dead and uprooted; ¹³wildly raging waves of the sea that foam up their own disgrace; straying stars for whom the gloom of darkness is forever reserved.

¹⁴Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied about them

a) Jude was one of the half-brothers of Jesus, Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3. In the Gk. text the name "Jude" is "Judas," which was an honored name up to the time of Christ, when Judas Iscariot's act of betrayal ruined it. As a result translators generally soften the name to "Jude."

b) See note at Matt. 13:27.

c) The essential doctrines taught the church by the apostles, cf. Acts 2:42.

d) See note at Acts 9:13. e) Fallen angels, or demons. f) That is, angels. g) Gen. 4:8-12.

h) See note at II Pet. 2:15. i) Num. 16:1-7; 23-25. j) See note at I Cor. 11:33.

too when he said,^k "Behold, the Lord has come with His myriads of holy ones ¹⁵to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly for all their impious activities which in their godlessness they have practiced, and for all the harsh words those godless sinners have spoken against Him."

¹⁶These are grumblers, complaining of their lot, who go along in accord with their passions, and whose mouths give vent to arrogant remarks, while they flatter to one's face in hope of gain.

¹⁷But you, dear friends, remember the predictions that were made by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁸for they told you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, whose lives are guided by their own impious passions." ¹⁹These are the agitators, the worldly, who lack the Spirit.

²⁰You, however, beloved, as you build yourselves upon your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, all the while awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life. ²²Convince some who doubt, but save others by snatching them from the fire; ²³on still others have pity mingled with great caution, loathing even the clothing that has been polluted by their sensuality.

²⁴Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you faultless in the presence of His glory with abounding joy, ²⁵to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power and dominion before all time, and now, and forever. Amen.

k) The quotation is not from the O.T. but a pseudepigraphical book known as I Enoch, which is dated somewhere in the second century B.C.

THE REVELATION

OF JESUS CHRIST

Date of writing: c. A.D. 95

1 THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, which God granted Him to show His bond servants what must shortly take place. So through His angel He sent the communication to His slave^a John, ²who bears witness to everything he saw as the message of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

³Blessed^b is the reader,^c and blessed are those who hear the words of the prophecy, who observe what is recorded in it, for the time is near.

⁴John to the seven churches in Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits^d who are before His throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the trustworthy Witness, the First-born from the dead and the Commander of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His own blood, ⁶and has made us a kingdom, priests to God, even His Father, to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷Behold, He is coming on the clouds and every eye, even of those who pierced Him, will see Him, and all the tribes^e of the earth will beat their breasts over Him. Truly so, Amen.

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is coming, the All-Sovereign."

⁹I, John, your brother and partner in the distress and the kingdom and the endurance of Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the message from God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰On the Lord's day I was in the Spirit and heard behind me a voice as loud as a trumpet, ¹¹that said, "Write what you see in a book and dispatch it to the seven churches" — to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

¹²I turned to see whose voice was addressing me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the center of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, dressed in a robe that reached to the feet and girded around the chest with a golden girdle. ¹⁴His head and hair were white as wool, white as snow; His eyes were like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet were like precious ore as it glows in the furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters.^f ¹⁶In His right hand He held seven stars; from His mouth there issued a sharp, two-edged sword,

a) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

b) Seven times in this book the word "blessed" is used, chs. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14. It is translated from the Gk. *makarios* and means *happy*. See note at Luke 6:20.

c) Audible reading, may be referred to here, as implied by "those who hear the words."

d) The expression "the seven Spirits" is used also in chs. 3:1; 4:5; 5:6. It appears to allude to the Holy Spirit in His complete ministry, Isa. 11:2, seven often being employed in Scripture to imply perfection or completion. e) Cf. Zech. 12:10-14.

f) These seven churches were all located in the western part of Asia Minor, now Turkey. It is to be assumed that the virtues and faults of these churches were common to all the churches of the latter part of the first century and generally to churches today. Certainly the repeated exhortation, "Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches," chs. 2:7, 11, 17, 19; 3:6, 13, 22, is addressed to all men and women everywhere in every century.

g) Cf. Dan. 7:9; 10:6.

and His face shone as when the sun shines in its full strength.

¹⁷When I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead. Then He laid His right hand on me and said, "Do not fear. I am the First and the Last ¹⁸and the Living One. I experienced death and behold, I am alive forever and ever, and I possess the keys of death and of its realm. ¹⁹Therefore write what you have seen, both what is now and what will occur hereafter. ²⁰As to the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and of the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

2 "TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH in Ephesus write: 'He, who holds the seven stars in His right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this:

²"I know your activities, your toil, and your endurance, and how you cannot tolerate wicked men; how you have put to the test those who call themselves apostles though they are not, and you have found them to be impostors. ³You have been patient and have been bearing up because of My name, and you have not become exhausted. ⁴But I hold against you that you have given up your first love. ⁵Therefore, call to mind from what you have fallen, and repent and practice what you did previously; or else, if you do not repent, I shall come to you and remove the lampstand from its place. ⁶You have this, however, that you hate the doings of the Nicolaitans,^h which I hate too. ⁷Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. I shall grant the victor to eat from the tree of life that stands in the paradise of God."

⁸"To the angel of the church in

Smyrna write: "This says the First and the Last, who died and became alive.

⁹"I know your affliction and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who call themselves Jews but are instead a synagogue of Satan.ⁱ ¹⁰Do not dread what you are to suffer. True, the devil is going to throw some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and for ten days^j you will have trouble. Be loyal, though it means your death, and I shall give you the crown^k of life. ¹¹Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The victor will suffer no hurt from the second death."

¹²"To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'He, who has the sharp, double-edged sword, says this:

¹³"I know where you live; Satan's throne^m is there. And you are holding onto My name; you have not renounced faith in Me even in the days when My faithful Antipas,ⁿ who witnessed for Me, was put to death among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴I hold a few things against you, though; for you have those there who hold to the doctrine of Balaam,^o who instructed Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat idol offerings and practice immorality. ¹⁵Besides, you have as well those who adhere to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.^p ¹⁶Therefore, repent. Otherwise I shall shortly come to you, and make war on them with the sword of My mouth. ¹⁷Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the victor I shall give some of the hidden manna and I shall give him a white stone, and engraved on the stone a new name, which no one knows except the recipient."

¹⁸"To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: "This says the Son of

h) "Nicolaitans" is the name of a sect that identified itself with Christianity but apparently countenanced loose living.

i) At Smyrna the Jews allied themselves with the pagans in persecuting the Christians.

j) Ten days is probably a figure for a short period. k) See note at Phil. 4:2.

l) The soul's experience of eternal loss.

m) Pergamum's excessive paganism was symbolized by a magnificent altar-platform to Zeus.

n) An otherwise unknown Christian martyr. It is certain that his name is known in heaven.

o) See note at II Pet. 2:15.

p) What is described as "the doings of the Nicolaitans" in the church at Ephesus, vs. 6, was a teaching at Smyrna. q) Cf. Isa. 62:6.

God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire and His feet are like white-hot metal:

19““I know your doings, your love and faith and service and endurance, and that of late you are accomplishing more than at first. 20But I hold against you that you tolerate that woman Jezebel,” who calls herself a prophetess and teaches my servants^s deceitfully to practice immorality and to eat offerings made to idols. 21I have given her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality. 22Take note: I shall throw her on a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great distress unless they repent of her practices, 23and her children I shall put to death. Then all the churches will know that I am the Searcher of minds and hearts, who rewards each of you according to your works. 24But I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, who neither adhere to this doctrine nor have explored the hidden things of Satan, as they put it, I shall place no further burden on you, 25except that you hold on to what you have until I come. 26To the victor and the one who takes my deeds to heart until the end I shall grant authority over the nations. 27He will rule them with an iron rod as when clay jars are shattered to pieces, just as I received authority^t from My Father. 28I shall also give him the morning star. 29Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

3 “TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH in Sardis write: ‘He who has the seven Spirits^u of God and the seven stars says this:

““I know your doings, that you are said to live but you are dead. 2Be awake and invigorate the things that remain that are at the point of dying; for I have not found your works perfect before My God. 3Call to mind, then, what you have received and heard; observe it and repent. If you

do not keep wide-awake, I shall come like a thief and you will have no idea at what hour I shall come upon you. 4You have a few persons in Sardis, however, who have not soiled their clothes.” They will walk with Me in white, because they are deserving. 5Similarly the victor will be dressed in white robes and I shall not erase his name from the Book of Life; I shall confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” 6Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

7“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The Holy, the True, the One who holds David’s key, who opens and no one shuts; who shuts and no one opens, says this:

8““I know your doings. See, I have provided an opened door in front of you, one which no one is able to close; because, while possessing little strength, you have observed My word and have not renounced My name. 9Take note: I shall make those of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews but are instead impostors—indeed I shall make them come and bow at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.” 10Because you have observed the message of My endurance, I also shall preserve you from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole inhabited world, to put to the test those who live on the earth. 11I am coming soon. Hold fast to what you have, so that no one may rob you of your crown.” 12As for the victor, I shall make him a pillar in the temple of My God; he will leave it nevermore. And I shall inscribe on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem that is coming down out of heaven from My God, as well as My new name. 13Whoever has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

14“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘This says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 6

r) I Kings 16:31, 32. s) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27. t) Ps. 2:7-9.

u) See note at ch. 1:4. v) That is, their Christian character.

w) Cf. Matt. 10:32, 33; Mark 8:38; Luke 12:8, 9. x) Cf. Isa. 43:4; 60:14.

y) See note at Phil. 4:2.

z) That is, He was the source of creation.

15““I know your doings, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. 16So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to spew you out of My mouth. 17For you say, ‘I am rich; I have grown wealthy; I need nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18I advise you to buy from Me gold that has been tested in the fire, in order that you may be wealthy; and white clothes to put on, so that the shame of your nudity may not be shown; and selve^a to put on your eyes, so that you may see. 19The ones I love I correct and discipline; so burn with zeal and repent. 20Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone listens to My voice and opens the door, I shall come in to him and dine with him and he with Me. 21As for the victor, I shall grant him to sit beside Me on My throne, as I also conquered and sat down beside My Father on His throne. 22Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.””

4 AFTER THIS I LOOKED AND SAW A door standing open in heaven, and the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I shall show you what must take place hereafter.”

2Immediately I came under the Spirit’s power and saw a throne standing in heaven, and One seated on the throne. 3The One^b seated there resembled in appearance a jasper stone and a sardius. And a rainbow that looked like an emerald encircled the throne.

4Surrounding the throne there were twenty-four thrones with twenty-four elders^c sitting on them, clad in white robes and with golden crowns^d on their heads.

5Out from the throne issued lightnings and rumblings and thunderpeals. And seven torches of fire were burning before the throne, which are the

seven Spirits^e of God. 6Also in front of the throne it was like a glassy sea, as transparent as crystal.

Around the throne, on each side, there were four living beings^f full of eyes in front and behind; 7the first living being was like a lion; the second, like an ox; the third, with a man-like face; and the fourth, like a flying eagle. 8Each of the four living beings had six wings, and each living being was full of eyes all around and within. Neither by day nor by night do they cease saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is coming.”

9And whenever the living beings render praise and honor and thanksgiving to the Occupant of the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10the twenty-four elders fall down before the One seated upon the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and they cast their crowns^g before the throne, saying, 11“Thou art worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and dominion, because Thou hast created all things, and by Thy will they were and have been created.”

5 I ALSO SAW IN THE RIGHT HAND of Him who was seated on the throne a scroll with writing inside and outside, sealed with seven seals. 2I further saw a mighty angel, who was exclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?” 3And no one, either in heaven or on earth or under the earth, was able to open the scroll or to look inside it.

4So I cried bitterly because none was found worthy to open the scroll or to look inside it. 5And one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. You see, the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, the Offspring of David, has conquered, so as to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

6And I saw, standing midway between the throne and the four living

a) In Laodicea Phrygian powders of medicinal value for the eyes were made.

b) Cf. 1 Kings 22:19; Isa. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26-28; Dan. 7:9. c) See note at 1 Tim. 3:1.

d) See note at Phil. 4:2. e) See note at ch. 1:4. f) Cf. the Cherubim, Ezek. 1:5, 18.

g) All that they are and have comes from God.

beings and among the elders, a Lamb as if it had been sacrificed. It had seven horns and seven eyes,^h which are the seven Spiritsⁱ of God dispatched over the whole earth. ⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne; ⁸and when He took the scroll the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each of them having a harp, and holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers^j of the saints.^k

⁹And they sing^l a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because Thou wast sacrificed and hast bought them for God with Thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰and hast made them a kingdom, and priests to our God, and they shall reign over the earth."

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living beings and the elders, and they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹²saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and everything in them, exclaiming, "To Him who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

¹⁴The four living beings said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

6 AND I SAW WHEN THE LAMB opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living beings say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" ²Then I looked and saw a white horse,^m and its rider holding a bow. To him a crown was given, and

he went out conquering and to conquer.

³And when He opened the second seal I heard the second living being say, "Come!" ⁴Then another horse, fiery red, went out, and its rider was empowered to take peace from the earth, so that people would kill one another, and a huge sword was given him.

⁵When He opened the third seal I heard the third living being say, "Come!" Then I looked and saw a black horse, and its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶I also heard a voice in the center of the four living beings, that said, "A quart of wheat for a day's wage" and three quarts of barley for a day's wage, and do not damage the oil and the wine."

⁷When He opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living being say, "Come!" ⁸Then I looked and saw an ash-colored horse. The name of its rider was Death, and Hades followed him closely. Authority was granted them over a quarter of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine, with plague, and by means of the wild beasts of the earth.

⁹When He opened the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the sake of the word of God and the witness they bore. ¹⁰With a loud voice they cried out, "How long, O holy and true Sovereign, before Thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?"

¹¹And to each of them was given a white robeⁿ and they were told to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and of their brothers, who were to be killed as they had been, should be complete.

¹²When He opened the sixth seal I saw a tremendous earthquake occur. The sun turned as black as sackcloth and the full moon became like blood.^p

h) The expression "seven horns and seven eyes" symbolizes perfect power and wisdom.

i) See note at ch. 1:4. j) Incense symbolizes prayer. k) See note at Acts 9:13.

l) The present tense suggests that the song remains forever fresh. m) Cf. Zech. 6:1-3.

n) The Gk. word twice rendered "a day's wage" in this verse is *denarius*. A *denarius* would be worth about twenty-five cents in mid-twentieth century currency, a day's wage in the first century!

The prices of wheat and barley in this passage suggest famine.

o) A costume that suggests the righteousness of God in Christ that is graciously given to God's believing people. Cf. ch. 7:14. p) Cf. Joel 2:10, 31; Acts 2:19-21.

¹³The stars of heaven fell to the earth as when a fig tree, shaken by a violent wind, drops its unripe fruit. ¹⁴The sky retreated like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was dislodged.

¹⁵Then the kings of the earth and the nobles, the generals, the wealthy, the powerful, yes, everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and in the mountain rocks, ¹⁶and called to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of the One who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷for the great day of Their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"^q

7 FOLLOWING THIS I SAW FOUR ANGELS stationed at the four corners of the earth, restraining the four winds of the earth, so that no wind might blow on land or sea or on any tree. ²I also observed another angel ascending from the sunrise, holding a seal from the living God. He shouted with a loud voice to the four angels, who had been empowered to injure the earth and the sea: ³"Injure neither the earth nor the sea nor the trees until we have sealed the servants^r of our God upon their foreheads."

⁴And I heard the number of those sealed out of every tribe of Israel's sons, one hundred forty-four thousand. ⁵Of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Gad, twelve thousand; ⁶of the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand; ⁷of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand; ⁸of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand; of the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

⁹After this I looked and there was a vast host that no one could count

out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and with palm branches^s in their hands. ¹⁰And they shouted with a loud voice: "Salvation is due to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹Then all the angels stood surrounding the throne, the elders and the four living beings, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, dominion, and power be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

¹³Addressing me, one of the elders then asked, "These who are wearing white robes, who are they and from where have they come?" ¹⁴I said to him, "Sir, you know." Then he told me, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵For this reason they are before God's throne, and day and night they serve Him in His temple,^t while He who sits on the throne spreads His tent over them. ¹⁶They will nevermore either hunger or thirst, nor will the sun or any scorching heat whatever beat upon them; ¹⁷for the Lamb, who is in the center of the throne, will shepherd them and will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes."

8 WHEN THE LAMB OPENED THE seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

²Then I saw the seven angels who were standing before God, and they were given seven trumpets. ³Also another angel with a golden censer came and stood at the altar. A vast quantity of incense^u was given him, so that he might place it on the golden altar before the throne with the prayers of all the saints.^v ⁴And the smoke of the incense arose before God from the angel's hand, with the prayers of the saints. ⁵Then the angel took the cen-

q) Isa. 2:19. r) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27. s) In celebration of victory.

t) All believers are priests before God, chs. 1:6; 5:10.

u) In the temple the golden incense altar belonged in the Holy of Holies. v) See note at Acts 9:13.

ser and filled it with fire from the altar and poured it on the earth, and there followed thunderpeals, rumblings, lightning flashes, and an earthquake.

⁶And the seven angels with trumpets got themselves ready to blow them. ⁷The first angel blew his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, that was poured on the earth, so that one-third of the earth and of the trees was burned up, and all the green grass.^w

⁸Then the second angel blew his trumpet, and something like an immense mountain ablaze with fire was hurled into the sea, so that one-third of the sea turned to blood, ⁹and a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰The third angel blew his trumpet, and a huge star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky and came down on one-third of the rivers and on the water springs.^x ¹¹The star's name is Wormwood, and one-third of the waters turned to wormwood. Many people died from the water, because it had turned bitter.

¹²The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a blight fell on one-third of the sun, of the moon, and of the stars, so that a third part of them was darkened; no light shone for a third of the day, nor for a third of the night.

¹³Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven, that cried with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, for the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining trumpet blasts of the three angels who are about to sound."

9 THE FIFTH ANGEL BLEW HIS trumpet, and I saw a star² that had fallen to the earth from heaven, to whom was given the key to the pit of the abyss. ²He opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke whirled upward from the pit like the smoke of a gigantic furnace, so that the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

³Out of the smoke locusts went forth on the earth, and such power was granted them as the earth's scorpions possess. ⁴They were told not to damage the earth's grass, neither any vegetation, nor any tree, but only the persons who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵Power was granted them, not to kill them but for five months to torture them, and their torture was like that of a scorpion that stings a person. ⁶During those days people will seek death without finding it; they will be anxious to die, but death evades them.

⁷The locusts looked like horses equipped for battle.^a On their heads were something like golden crowns, their faces were like human faces, ⁸their hair was like that of women, and their teeth were like lion's teeth, ⁹their scales were like breastplates that seemed made of steel, and the drone of their wings was like the roar of many horse-drawn chariots charging into battle.

¹⁰They have tails with stings like scorpions, and power in their tails to hurt mankind for five months. ¹¹They have as king over them the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon.^b ¹²The first woe is past; two woes are still to follow.

¹³The sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar^c before God. ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel with the trumpet, "Release the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So the four angels, who were in readiness for that hour and day and month and year, were set free to kill one-third of mankind. ¹⁶The number of their divisions of cavalry was two hundred million. I heard their number.

¹⁷In my vision the horses and their riders looked like this: the riders wore breastplates as red as fire, as blue as sapphire, and as yellow as sulphur. The horses' heads resembled lions'

w) Of the third of the earth that was burned up. x) Supplying one-third of the rivers.

y) Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:31; Matt. 24:29; cf. Exod. 10:21-23.

z) The context shows this to be a person. a) Cf. Joel 2:4-7.

b) "Abaddon," Gk. *Abaddon* from a Heb. noun, means *Destruction*; "Apollyon," Gk. *Apolluon*, means *Destroyer*. c) The golden altar is associated with the prayers of the saints, ch. 8:2-4.

heads, and out of their mouths poured fire and smoke and sulphur.

¹⁸By these three plagues one-third of mankind was killed, by the fire, by the smoke, and by the sulphur that streamed out of their mouths. ¹⁹For the horses' power lies in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents; they have heads, and with them they do harm.

²⁰But the rest of humanity, who were not killed by those plagues, did not repent from the works of their hands, so as to cease worshipping demons and the idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, that can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹Nor did they repent of their murders, or of their magic arts, or of their immorality, or of their thefts.

10 THEN^d I SAW ANOTHER MIGHTY angel descend from heaven, robed in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun; his legs resembled fiery pillars, ²and he held an opened little scroll in his hand. His right foot he placed on the sea, and his left foot on the land, ³while with a loud voice like the roar of a lion he gave a shout. And as he shouted, the seven thunders raised their voices.

⁴When the seven thunders had spoken, I was going to write; but I heard a voice from heaven that said, "Seal up what the seven thunders have spoken and do not write it."

⁵Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted his hand heavenward ⁶and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created the heaven and what it contains, also the earth and what is in it, and the sea with everything in it, "There shall be no further delay; ⁷but in the days of the seventh angel's trumpet blast, when he is at the point of blowing it, the mystery of God will reach completion in agreement

with the good news He gave His servants" the prophets."

⁸Then the voice from heaven which I heard, addressed me again and said, "Go and take the little, opened scroll that is in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." ⁹So I went to the angel, asking him to give me the little scroll.

He told me, "Take and eat it! It will be bitter in your stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

¹⁰So I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. ¹¹Then he told me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

11 AND THERE WAS GIVEN ME A measuring reed like a rod, and I was told:

"Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count those worshipping in it, ²but omit the outer court of the temple; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample the holy city under foot for forty-two months.^e ³And I shall allow My two witnesses to prophesy for twelve hundred sixty days, clad in sackcloth.

⁴These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lamps that are standing before the Lord of the earth.^h ⁵If anyone wants to hurt them, fire issues from their mouths and consumes their enemies. Should anyone wish to injure them, he must be killed in that way.

⁶"These two have power to shut up the sky,ⁱ so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophecy; they also have power over the waters, to turn them into blood,^j and to scourge the earth with every kind of plague as often as they desire.

⁷"When they shall have finished

d) An interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets, chs. 10:1-11:13.

e) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

f) Cf. Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:3. To "eat" the scroll symbolizes appropriating God's message.

g) Forty-two months; 1260 days; three and one-half years; a time, times, and half a time — all signify the same period of time. Cf. chs. 12:6, 14; 13:5; Dan. 9:27; 12:7.

h) Cf. ch. 1:12, 20; Zech. 4:2, 3. i) Cf. 1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17. j) Cf. Exod. 7:14-25.

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9 THE FIFTH ANGEL BLEW HIS trumpet, and I saw a star^z that had fallen to the earth from heaven, to whom was given the key to the pit of the abyss. ²He opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke whirled upward from the pit like the smoke of a gigantic furnace, so that the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

³Out of the smoke locusts went forth on the earth, and such power was granted them as the earth's scorpions possess. ⁴They were told not to damage the earth's grass, neither any vegetation, nor any tree, but only the persons who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. ⁵Power was granted them, not to kill them but for five months to torture them, and their torture was like that of a scorpion that stings a person. ⁶During those days people will seek death without finding it; they will be anxious to die, but death evades them.

⁷The locusts looked like horses equipped for battle.^a On their heads were something like golden crowns, their faces were like human faces, ⁸their hair was like that of women, and their teeth were like lion's teeth, ⁹their scales were like breastplates that seemed made of steel, and the drone of their wings was like the roar of many horse-drawn chariots charging into battle.

¹⁰They have tails with stings like scorpions, and power in their tails to hurt mankind for five months. ¹¹They have as king over them the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon.^b ¹²The first woe is past; two woes are still to follow.

¹³The sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar^c before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel with the trumpet, "Release the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So the four angels, who were in readiness for that hour and day and month and year, were set free to kill one-third of mankind. ¹⁶The number of their divisions of cavalry was two hundred million. I heard their number.

¹⁷In my vision the horses and their riders looked like this: the riders wore breastplates as red as fire, as blue as sapphire, and as yellow as sulphur. The horses' heads resembled lions'

w) Of the third of the earth that was burned up. x) Supplying one-third of the rivers.

y) Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:31; Matt. 24:29; cf. Exod. 10:21-23.

z) The context shows this to be a person. a) Cf. Joel 2:4-7.

b) "Abaddon," Gk. *Abaddon* from a Heb. noun, means *Destruction*; "Apollyon," Gk. *Apolluon*, means *Destroyer*.

c) The golden altar is associated with the prayers of the saints, ch. 8:2-4.

heads, and out of their mouths poured fire and smoke and sulphur.

¹⁸By these three plagues one-third of mankind was killed, by the fire, by the smoke, and by the sulphur that streamed out of their mouths. ¹⁹For the horses' power lies in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents; they have heads, and with them they do harm.

²⁰But the rest of humanity, who were not killed by those plagues, did not repent from the works of their hands, so as to cease worshiping demons and the idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, that can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹Nor did they repent of their murders, or of their magic arts, or of their immorality, or of their thefts.

10 THEN^d I SAW ANOTHER MIGHTY angel descend from heaven, robed in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun; his legs resembled fiery pillars, ²and he held an opened little scroll in his hand. His right foot he placed on the sea, and his left foot on the land, ³while with a loud voice like the roar of a lion he gave a shout. And as he shouted, the seven thunders raised their voices.

⁴When the seven thunders had spoken, I was going to write; but I heard a voice from heaven that said, "Seal up what the seven thunders have spoken and do not write it."

⁵Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted his hand heavenward ⁶and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created the heaven and what it contains, also the earth and what is in it, and the sea with everything in it, "There shall be no further delay; ⁷but in the days of the seventh angel's trumpet blast, when he is at the point of blowing it, the mystery of God will reach completion in agreement

with the good news He gave His servants^e the prophets."

⁸Then the voice from heaven which I heard, addressed me again and said, "Go and take the little, opened scroll that is in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." ⁹So I went to the angel, asking him to give me the little scroll.

He told me, "Take and eat it! It will be bitter in your stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."^f

¹⁰So I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. ¹¹Then he told me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

11 AND THERE WAS GIVEN ME A measuring reed like a rod, and I was told:

"Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count those worshiping in it, ²but omit the outer court of the temple; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample the holy city under foot for forty-two months.^g ³And I shall allow My two witnesses to prophesy for twelve hundred sixty days, clad in sackcloth.

⁴"These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lamps that are standing before the Lord of the earth.^h ⁵If anyone wants to hurt them, fire issues from their mouths and consumes their enemies. Should anyone wish to injure them, he must be killed in that way.

⁶"These two have power to shut up the sky,ⁱ so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophecy; they also have power over the waters, to turn them into blood,^j and to scourge the earth with every kind of plague as often as they desire.

⁷"When they shall have finished

d) An interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpets, chs. 10:1-11:13.

e) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

f) Cf. Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:3. To "eat" the scroll symbolizes appropriating God's message.

g) Forty-two months; 1260 days; three and one-half years; a time, times, and half a time — all signify the same period of time. Cf. chs. 12:6, 14; 13:5; Dan. 9:27; 12:7.

h) Cf. ch. 1:12, 20; Zech. 4:2, 3. i) Cf. 1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17. j) Cf. Exod. 7:14-25.

their testimony, the beast^k that comes up from the abyss will make war against them, and will conquer them and kill them. ⁸Their dead bodies will lie in the streets of the great city^l that is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. ⁹And they of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will gaze at their dead bodies for three and a half days; they will not allow the bodies to be entombed. ¹⁰Those dwelling on the earth will rejoice over them and will celebrate; they will send one another gifts, because the two prophets had been vexing the dwellers on the earth."

¹¹And after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, so that they rose to their feet; and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹²The two heard a loud voice calling to them from heaven, "Come up here." And they ascended in a cloud into heaven while their enemies saw them.

¹³At that very hour there was a tremendous earthquake; one-tenth of the city collapsed and seven thousand persons were killed in the earthquake. Then the survivors were terrified and ascribed glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴The second woe is past. The third woe is speedily approaching.

¹⁵The seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven: "The kingdom of the world has become that of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever."

¹⁶Then the twenty-four elders who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷exclaiming, "We give Thee thanks, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because Thou hast assumed Thy great power and hast begun to reign. ¹⁸The nations raged^m

and Thy wrath has been realized; also the time for the judging of the dead and for the rewarding of Thy bond servantsⁿ the prophets and the saints"^o—in fact, all those who revere Thy name both small and great; also for the destruction of those who are destroying the earth."

¹⁹Then the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His sanctuary,^p and there were lightning flashes, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a terrific hailstorm.

12 A GREAT PORTENT THEN APPEARED in heaven: a woman robed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head, ²was pregnant, and as she agonized in the pangs of her delivery, she cried out.

³Then another portent appeared in heaven. There was a gigantic, fiery-red dragon^q with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. ⁴His tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and hurled them to the ground.

The dragon then stationed himself in front of the woman, who was about to give birth, so he might devour her child as soon as it was born.

⁵She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all nations with an iron rod.^r Her child was then snatched away up to God and to His throne, ⁶while the woman^s fled into the wilderness, where God had a retreat prepared for her to be cared for there during twelve hundred sixty days.

⁷Then war developed in heaven, Michael and his angels battling against the dragon, and the dragon with his angels waging war; ⁸but they were defeated; there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹And the

k) Chs. 13; 17. l) The scene is laid on earth, in Jerusalem. m) Ps. 2:1-5.

n) Gk. *doulos*. See note at Matt. 13:27. o) See note at Acts 9:13.

p) This may be a symbol of God's carrying through His covenant of grace to the end.

q) Satan, vs. 9.

r) The Messiah, of whom alone this is predicted, Ps. 2:7-9.

s) Identifications of the woman differ. An ancient interpretation, still held by many, is that she represents God's believing people in both the O.T. and N.T. Roman Catholics say that she is the virgin Mary. But many other commentators identify her with Israel, through which nation the Messiah came.

great dragon, the serpent of old, called the devil and Satan,¹ the deceiver of all humanity, was forced out and hurled to the earth, and his angels were flung out along with him.

¹⁰Then I heard a strong voice proclaiming in heaven, "Now have come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers, who kept accusing them day and night in the presence of our God, has been thrown out. ¹¹And they have conquered him by means of the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they have not loved their lives, even to the point of death. ¹²Be joyful, therefore, you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with raging anger, well aware that he has but a short season."

¹³When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he went in pursuit of the woman who had given birth to the male child; ¹⁴but to the woman were granted two wings of a giant eagle, so that she might fly to her retreat in the wilderness where, away from the presence of the serpent, she will be cared for during a time, times, and half a time.^u

¹⁵The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, that she might be swept away by the stream, but the earth came to the woman's aid; ¹⁶the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. ¹⁷And the dragon, enraged at the woman, went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, who observe the commands of God and adhere to the testimony of Jesus. And he^v stood on the sandy seashore.

13 AND I SAW A BEAST COMING UP out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on his horns, and a blasphemous name upon his heads. ²The beast I saw re-

sembled a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like that of a lion. The dragon invested him with his power and his throne and great authority. ³One of his heads seemed fatally wounded. His mortal wound was healed, however, and the whole earth followed the beast in wonder. ⁴They worshiped the dragon, because he had bestowed authority on the beast; they also worshiped the beast, saying, "Who matches the beast, and who is able to war against him?"

⁵He was also given a mouth to speak proud words, to utter blasphemies, and he was granted the power to exercise authority for forty-two months. ⁶So he opened his mouth to utter blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His abode and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷And he was allowed to make war against the saints^w and to conquer them, and authority was given him over every tribe and people and language and nation.

⁸All those who live on earth, whose names are not recorded in the Book of Life of the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, will worship him. ⁹Whoever has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰Whoever is to be led into captivity will be led into captivity; whoever kills with the sword must be killed by the sword. In this way the saints exercise their endurance and their faith.

¹¹Then I saw another beast who came up from the land. He had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹²He exercises the full authority of the first beast in his presence, and he makes the earth and those living in it worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed. ¹³He also performs impressive miracles; for instance, he causes fire to descend from heaven to the earth in the presence of the people. ¹⁴By means of the wonders he is allowed to perform in the presence of the beast, he leads those living on the earth astray,

t) Although Satan fell from heaven when he sinned, cf. Isa. 14:12, 13; Luke 10:18, God has allowed him access to heaven and authority in the universe, Job 1:6; Zech. 3:1; Eph. 2:2. Satan's final judgment is stated in ch. 20:10. u) Cf. vs. 6; ch. 13:5. See note at ch. 11:2.

v) Some ancient manuscripts read here, "And I stood," and place this sentence at the beginning of ch. 13. The most reliable Gk. texts place it here at the end of ch. 12. w) See note at Acts 9:13.

telling the earth's inhabitants to erect a statue to the beast that had the wound by the sword and came back to life.

¹⁵He was further permitted to infuse breath into the beast's statue, so that the beast's image might speak and to bring it about that those who did not worship the beast's statue should be killed. ¹⁶He also compelled all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the freemen and the slaves, to have a mark put on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷so that no one might be able to buy or sell unless he bore the mark of the beast's name or the number corresponding to his name. ¹⁸Here intelligence comes in. Let him who has the mind for it calculate the number of the beast, for it is a man's number, and his number is six hundred sixty-six.^x

14 THEN I LOOKED AND SAW THE Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred forty-four thousand,^y who had His name and His Father's name inscribed on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the peals of loud thunder. I then heard the music as of harpists playing on their harps.

³They were singing a new song before the throne and in the presence of the four living beings, and of the elders, and none was able to sing the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴They are those who have not defiled themselves with women,^z for they are celibates. They are those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and for the Lamb. ⁵No lie was ever found on their lips; they are faultless.

⁶Then I saw another angel, flying in mid-air with everlasting good news to proclaim to those living on the

earth — to every nation and tribe and tongue and people. ⁷With a mighty voice he said, "Revere God and ascribe to Him glory, for the hour of His judgment has arrived; so worship the Maker of heaven and earth and sea and watersprings."

⁸Another, a second angel, succeeded him, who said, "She is fallen, fallen, Babylon^a the great, who made all the nations drink of the wine of her passionate immorality."

⁹Then another angel, a third, followed them, who said with a loud voice, "Whoever worships the beast and his statue and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰shall drink of the wine of God's wrath that has been mixed undiluted in the cup of His anger, and he shall be tortured with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb." ¹¹The smoke of their torture ascends forever and ever, and the worshipers of the beast and of his statue, as well as anyone with the mark of his name, will enjoy no rest day or night.^b

¹²Here comes in the endurance of the saints^c who observe the commands of God and keep their faith in Jesus.

¹³I further heard a voice from heaven that said, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors; for the results of their labors follow them."

¹⁴Then I looked and saw a white cloud, and One seated on the cloud. One like the Son of Man.^d On His head He wore a golden crown, and in His hand was a sharp scythe. ¹⁵Another angel came out of the temple,^e who shouted with a loud voice to the One seated on the cloud: "Thrust in your scythe and reap, for harvest time has come,^f because the earth's harvest is overripe." ¹⁶So the One seated on the cloud swung his scythe on the earth, and the earth was harvested.

¹⁷Again, another angel came out

x) Since six falls short of number seven, which in Scripture implies perfection or completion, multiples of six magnify its connotation of failure. y) Cf. ch. 7:4.

z) In the Bible marriage never implies defilement. Discipleship requires complete dedication to Christ in spiritual celibacy, however.

a) Not the Babel or Babylon of the O.T., Gen. 10:10; Isa. 13:1; Dan. 1:1, etc., but a symbolic name for Rome.

b) Contrast ch. 4:8. c) See note at Acts 9:13. d) In anticipation of chs. 19, 20.

e) That is, in heaven. f) Cf. Jer. 51:33; Joel 3:13.

from the heavenly temple, who also had a sharp scythe. ¹⁸Yet another angel came forth from the altar, who had authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one with the sharp scythe, "Thrust in your sharp scythe, and harvest the clusters of earth's grapevines, for its grapes are overripe."

¹⁹So the angel swung his scythe on the earth and gathered the fruit of earth's grapevine, and threw it into the great wine press of God's wrath. ²⁰Outside the city the wine press was trodden and blood flowed out of the wine press, so that for two hundred miles it came up to the horses' bridles.

15 THEN I SAW ANOTHER PORTENT in heaven, great and marvelous — seven angels with seven plagues;^g the last seven, because with them God's wrath is completed.

²And I saw something like a glassy sea mixed with fire, and those coming off victorious over the beast and over his statue and over the number corresponding to its name; I saw them standing on the sea of glass, holding the harps of God. ³They sang the song of Moses,^h the bond servantⁱ of God, and the song of the Lamb:^j "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God the Omnipotent; just and true are Thy ways, O King of the nations. ⁴Who will not revere and glorify Thy name, O Lord? For Thou alone art holy. For all the nations shall come and worship before Thee, because Thy sentences of judgment have been made known."

⁵After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, ⁶and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels holding the seven plagues. They were clad in pure, resplendent linen, and wore golden girdles around their chests.

⁷Then one of the four living creatures handed the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever, ⁸and the tabernacle became filled with smoke

from the glory and the power of God. And no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

16 AND I HEARD A LOUD VOICE from the temple say to the seven angels, "Go your way and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of God's wrath." ²So the first angel departed and emptied his bowl upon the earth. And a loathsome and malignant ulcer attacked the men who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its statue.

³The second angel poured out his bowl upon the sea, so that it turned to blood as of a corpse, and every living creature that was in the sea died.

⁴The third angel poured out his bowl upon the rivers and the springs of waters, so that they turned to blood.

⁵And I heard the angel of the waters say, "Thou who art and who wast, the Holy One, art just in Thy judgments. ⁶Because they have poured out the blood of saints and prophets, Thou also hast given them blood to drink. They deserve it." ⁷And from the altar I heard a response,^k "Yes, Lord God Almighty, Thy judgments are true and just."

⁸The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was permitted to scorch humanity with heat. ⁹People were scorched with terrible heat and they blasphemed the name of God, who has control over these plagues. Yet they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

¹⁰The fifth angel emptied his bowl upon the throne of the beast; his kingdom was plunged in darkness, and people gnawed their tongues from pain. ¹¹They blasphemed the God of heaven for their sufferings and their sores, yet they did not repent of their practices.

¹²The sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates, and its waters dried up, so that the highway of the kings from the east might be made ready.

¹³Then I saw coming out of the

g) The third woe, composed of seven plagues.

h) Exod. 15:1-21, the song of Moses after Pharaoh's armies were engulfed in the Red Sea.

i) GK. *doulou*. See note at Matt. 13:27. j) A song of righteousness and mercy.

k) See ch. 6:9 for the source of this response.

mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet,¹ three unclean spirits like frogs. ¹⁴For they are spirits of demons that work miracles. They go out to the kings of the whole world to muster them for the war of the Sovereign God's great Day. ¹⁵"See, I come like a thief. Blessed is the alert one who takes care of his clothes so that he will not go around naked and people see his shame." ¹⁶So they mustered them at the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.^m

¹⁷The seventh angel emptied his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the sanctuary from the throne, saying, "It is finished!" ¹⁸Then there followed lightning flashes, rumblings and thunderpeals, and such a tremendous earthquake as had never occurred since man existed on the earth, so extensive and severe was it. ¹⁹The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. God remembered great Babylon,ⁿ and made her drink the cup of His furious wrath.

²⁰Then every island fled, and mountains could not be found. ²¹Hailstones, as big as hundredweights, fell down from the sky upon the people. And the people blasphemed God for the plague of the hail, because it was so fearful.

17 THEN ONE OF THE SEVEN ANGELS with the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying, "Come this way. I shall show you the doom of the great harlot^o who is seated on many waters. ²The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the inhabitants of the earth have become intoxicated with the wine of her immorality."

³So he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. And I saw a woman seated upon a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous titles. It had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was robed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold, a precious

stone, and pearls. In her hand she held a gold cup, full of the abominations and impurities of her immorality. ⁵On her forehead a symbolic title was inscribed, "Babylon, the great, the mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the earth."

⁶I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of those who witnessed for Jesus, and on seeing her I was utterly amazed. ⁷But the angel said to me, "Why are you amazed? I will tell you the mystic meaning of the woman, and of the beast with the seven heads and the ten horns, that carries her. ⁸The beast that you saw was and is not, and it is to ascend from the abyss and to go on to destruction. The dwellers of the earth, whose names are not inscribed in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they look at the beast because he was and is not and is coming.

⁹"Here is something for a mind having wisdom to ponder. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated. ¹⁰They also are seven kings; five have fallen, one is reigning, the other has not yet come; and when he does come, he must stay for a little while. ¹¹The beast that was and is not, is himself an eighth king; he springs from the seven and goes on to destruction.

¹²"The ten horns you saw are ten kings,^p who have not as yet received a kingdom; but for one hour they will receive royal authority along with the beast. ¹³These have one purpose; they give over power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴They will war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; while those with Him are called, chosen, and loyal."

¹⁵Then he said to me, "The waters you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples and crowds and nations and languages. ¹⁶The ten horns you saw and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked; they will consume her flesh

1) The false prophet seems to be identified with the beast of ch. 13:11.

m) Identical with Megiddo, Judg. 5:19; II Kings 9:27; 23:29.

n) Cf. chs. 14:8; 17:5, 18. Babylon is a symbolic name for Rome. o) See vs. 18.

p) Subservient to the beast.

and will burn her up with fire. ¹⁷For God has put into their hearts to work His purpose, and to act harmoniously in handing their kingdom to the beast until the words of God should be fulfilled. ¹⁸And the woman you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth."

18 AFTER THESE THINGS I SAW another angel descending from heaven, possessed of great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. ²With a mighty voice he shouted out: "She is fallen, fallen, Babylon the great! She has become a resort for demons; a haunt for every unclean spirit; a refuge for every filthy and detested bird. ³For all the nations have drunk of the wine of her passionate immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich on her abundance of wantonness."

⁴Then I heard another voice from heaven^a say, "Come away from her, My people, that you may not participate in her sins, neither be visited by her plagues; ⁵for her sins have piled up to reach heaven, and God has remembered her crimes. ⁶Repay her as she has paid; give her even double for what she has done; in the cup she mixed, mix her a double potion. ⁷As she has glorified herself and has lived in sensuality, to that measure impose on her torture and grief. Because in her heart she says, 'I sit as queen;' I am no widow, and I shall never see sorrow,' ⁸therefore on a single day her plagues will be upon her, pestilence, mourning, and famine, and with fire she shall be burned up. For the Lord God, who judges her, is mighty.

⁹"The kings of the earth, who committed fornication and were wanton with her, shall weep and beat their breasts over her, when they look at the smoke of her conflagration." ¹⁰Standing at considerable distance because dreading her torture, they shall exclaim, 'Woe, woe, for the great city, for Babylon the mighty city; for

her judgment is come in a single hour.' ¹¹And the earth's merchants^t will weep and mourn over her, because no one will any longer buy their cargo, ¹²their cargo of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet, besides all kinds of citron wood, all sorts of ivory articles and objects made of costly wood, of bronze, iron, and marble; ¹³also cinnamon, spice, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine and olive oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle, sheep, horses and chariots, bodies and souls of men.

¹⁴"The fruit for which your soul longed is out of your reach; all the elegance and the glitter you enjoyed are lost to you and never again will they be found.

¹⁵"The merchants of these products, who grew rich from her trade, will stand a long way off in terror of her torture, weeping and mourning, ¹⁶and exclaiming, 'Woe, woe, for the great city that was dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet and gilded with gold and precious stones and pearls, ¹⁷for in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.'

"Every pilot," too, and all who sail the seas, mariners and all who work the sea for their living, stood at a distance ¹⁸and cried out as they looked at the smoke of her conflagration, 'What city was as great as this?' ¹⁹They threw dust on their heads^v and shouted as they wept and mourned, 'Woe, woe, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew wealthy from her great wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste.'

²⁰"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints^w and apostles and prophets, for on your behalf God has passed judgment against her."

²¹Then a powerful angel picked up a stone like a big millstone and hurled it into the sea with the words, "With such violence shall Babylon, the great city, be hurled down and shall never again be found. ²²The music of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters shall not be heard in you any more; neither shall a skilled

q) Cf. ch. 16:7. r) Cf. Isa. 47:7-9. s) Cf. Jer. 50:46.

t) Cf. Ezek. 27:28-36. u) Cf. Ps. 107:23, 24. v) Cf. Ezek. 27:30. w) See note at Acts 9:13.

artisan be found in you any more; nor shall the grinding of the millstone be heard in you any longer. ²³And no light of a lamp shall shine in you any more, nor shall the voices of bridegroom and bride be heard in you any more.

"For your merchants were the earth's prominent men; by your magic charms all the nations were led astray. ²⁴In her, too, was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slaughtered on the earth."

19 AFTER THIS I HEARD WHAT sounded like the voice of a great throng in heaven that said, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to God, ²because His judgments are true and just. For He has judged the great harlot, who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has required from her hand retribution for the blood of His servants."^x ³And a second time they shouted, "Hallelujah! And her smoke will ascend forever and ever."

⁴Then the twenty-four elders and the four living beings fell down to worship God, who is seated upon the throne, exclaiming, "Amen! Hallelujah!" ⁵And a voice came forth from the throne that said, "Render praise to our God, all His servants who revere Him, both small and great!"

⁶And I heard what was like the voice of a mighty throng, like the sound of many waters, like the roar of thunders, saying, "Hallelujah, for the Lord our God the Omnipotent has begun to reign. ⁷Let us be joyful, and let us celebrate, and let us ascribe glory to Him because the wedding banquet of the Lamb has come" and His bride has gotten herself ready. ⁸It has been granted to her to be dressed in pure, resplendent linen." For the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

⁹Then the angel said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb."

He also told me, "These are the true words of God."

¹⁰So I fell at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brothers who hold to that to which Jesus has borne witness. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.^y

¹¹Then I saw heaven open and a white horse appeared. Its rider^a is called Faithful and True; justly He judges and wages war. ¹²His eyes are like a flame of fire,^b and on His head are many diadems with a name inscribed which no one knows except Himself. ¹³The robe He is wearing has been dipped in blood, and the name by which He is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴On white horses and clothed in fine linen, white and pure, the heavenly armies follow Him.

¹⁵Out of His mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations. He will rule them with an iron rod, and He treads the winepress of the furious wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶On His robe and on His thigh He has His name inscribed: King of kings and Lord of lords.

¹⁷And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who shouted with a loud voice to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, "Come, gather for God's great banquet, ¹⁸to feast on the flesh of kings, of commanders, of mighty men, of horses and of their riders, on the flesh of everyone, free and slave, small and great."^c

¹⁹Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies mustered to wage war against the One mounted on the horse and against His army. ²⁰And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet^d who performed miracles in his presence, by means of which he led astray those who received the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue. Both of them were flung alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. ²¹The rest were put to death with the sword

x) Gk. *doulon*; vs. 5, *douloi*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

y) The banquet is still future but it is certain.

z) Christ is the center of prophecy just as He is the center of all Scripture. a) Christ.

b) Ch. 1:14. c) Cf. Ezek. 39:17-20. d) Identical with the beast of ch. 13:11; cf. ch. 16:13.

that issued from the mouth of the One mounted on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

20 THEN I SAW AN ANGEL descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the abyss and an enormous chain. ²He seized the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He hurled him into the abyss, which he shut and sealed above him, that he might lead astray the nations no more until the thousand years are completed. After that he must be released for a little while.

⁴Then I saw thrones that were occupied by such as received power to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been slain for their testimony to Jesus and for God's message, and of those who had not worshiped either the beast or his statue, nor had received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection. Over them the second death exerts no power; instead, they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years.

⁷When the thousand years have ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will go out to lead astray the nations in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,^e to muster them for battle. Their number is as the sand of the seashore.

⁹They marched up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the encampment of the saints^f and the beloved city. And fire came down from heaven and consumed them. ¹⁰The devil, who had deceived them, was flung into the lake of fire and sulphur where also the beast and the false prophet were and they will be

tortured day and night forever and ever.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and One seated upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled, and no room was found for them. ¹²I also saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Another scroll was opened, the Book of Life, and the dead were judged according to their conduct from the entries in the scrolls. ¹³The sea also gave up the dead persons it contained, and death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and each person was judged according to his works. ¹⁴Then were death and Hades hurled into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. ¹⁵And whoever was not found recorded in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

21 THEN I SAW A NEW HEAVEN and a new earth;^g for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and no longer was there any sea.^h ²I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,ⁱ descending out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "Behold, God's dwelling place is among men, and He will dwell with them; they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them ⁴and shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death shall be no longer, nor mourning, nor crying, nor any further pain, because the former things have passed away."

⁵Then He who was seated upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." He also said, "Write; for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶And He told me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty, I will give him without charge from the fountain of the water of life. ⁷The victor shall inherit all this; I shall be his God and he shall be My

e) Cf. Ezek. 38:2, 14. f) See note at Acts 9:13.

g) A realm of righteousness.

h) The sea symbolizes nations in their turmoil. But the old order comes to its end, vs. 4.

i) Earth has here become like heaven; it is once more God's home.

son. ⁸As for the cowardly, however, and the unbelieving, and the depraved, the murderers, the immoral, those practicing magic arts, and idolaters, all liars — their lot is in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This is the second death."

⁹One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues came to talk with me and said, "Come this way. I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." ¹⁰He then conveyed me in the Spirit to a great and lofty mountain and showed me Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God ¹¹with the glory of God.

Her luster resembled a most precious jewel, a jasper stone as clear as crystal. ¹²It had a large, high wall with twelve gates and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names inscribed of the twelve tribes of Israel's sons: ¹³three gates on the east side, three gates on the north side, three gates on the south side, and three gates on the west side. ¹⁴And the city wall had twelve foundation stones, and engraved on them were the twelve names of the Lamb's twelve apostles.¹

¹⁵The one talking with me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city with its gates and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out as a quadrangle, with its length equal to its width. With the rod he measured the city, about fifteen hundred miles² — the length, the width and the height exactly equal. ¹⁷He measured its wall too, two hundred sixteen feet³ by human measure, that is, by the angel's.

¹⁸Its wall was made of jasper, and the city was made of pure gold, as transparent as glass. ¹⁹The foundation stones of the city wall were ornamented with every kind of precious stone: the first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, agate; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰the fifth,

sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; and the twelfth, amethyst.

²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each separate gate made of one pearl, and the street of the city was made of pure gold, as transparent as glass. ²²I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Omnipotent is its temple, and so is the Lamb. ²³The city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, because God's glory illumines it and the Lamb is its light. ²⁴By its light the nations will walk and to it the kings of the earth will bring their splendor.⁴ ²⁵Its gates shall not at all be closed during the day, for there will be no night there. ²⁶Into it they will carry the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷But nothing unclean nor anyone practicing immorality and falsehood shall ever enter it, but only those whose names have been recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

22 HE THEN SHOWED ME THE river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ²and running through the middle of the street, and on this side and that side of the river, the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.⁵

³There shall no longer be anything accursed there, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants⁶ shall worship Him. ⁴They shall look at His face and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵And night shall be no more; they will need neither lamplight nor sunlight, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign forever and ever.

⁶Then he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord,

j) Cf. Ezek. 48:30-34.

k) The text reads 12,000 stadia. A stadion (or stadium, Gk. *stadion*) is equivalent to 600, 607, or 625 feet, according to whether Greek, English, or Roman measurement is used. "About fifteen hundred miles" symbolizes the length, width, and height of the new Jerusalem.

l) The wall's thickness.

m) The new Jerusalem, the Lamb's bride, began with the first believers and will be completed when the full number of the redeemed is made up. n) Cf. Ezek. 47:12.

o) Gk. *douloi*; vs. 6, *doulois*. See note at Matt. 13:27.

the God of the spirits of the prophets has sent His angel to show His servants what must shortly take place. ⁷Behold, I come quickly." Blessed is he who observes the words of the prophecy of this book.

⁸I, John, am the one who saw and heard these things, and when I had heard and seen, I bowed down to worship at the feet of the angel who was showing me all this. ⁹But he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who obey the messages of this book. Worship God."

¹⁰Then he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹Let him who does wrong do wrong still, and let the filthy still be filthy; let the righteous still do right, and let the saint^p still be holy."^q

¹²"Behold, I am coming soon and My reward is with Me, to render to each according to his doings. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the

right to the tree of life and to enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵Outside are dogs, sorcerers, immoral persons, idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to you to witness these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the brilliant Morning Star."

¹⁷The Spirit and the bride^r say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let the thirsty come; he who desires it, let him take freely the water of life.

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are described in this book, ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of this prophetic book, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city as described in this book.^s

²⁰He who affirms this says, "Yes, I am coming very soon."

Amen, Come, Lord Jesus!^t

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all.

p) See note at Acts 9:13.

q) Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16.

r) The Spirit and the church unitedly, for believers are moved by the Holy Spirit.

s) The warning refers specifically to this book but is equally true concerning all divine revelation.

t) Christ and the church are agreed in desiring each other's company.